CONCORD
COLLEGE

Policy and Procedure on Student Attendance and Absences

Updated:	November 2023
Reviewed by:	Daniel Wilson, Assistant Principal Professional Development and Learning
Approved by:	Trustees' Welfare Committee, December 2023
Next review date:	September 2025

CONCORD COLLEGE

Policy & Procedure on Student Attendance & Absences

(including CME = Children who go Missing from Education)

Monitoring attendance is an important factor in terms of safeguarding since a drop in school attendance or a child going missing from education could be indicators of potential abuse. This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (Staff Handbook document 11.16). The College has a duty to inform Shropshire Council of any pupil who is deleted from the admissions register. – The form to use in such cases can be found below.

It is also an essential element in terms of Concord's aims and ethos in seeking successful academic outcomes for its pupils because attending lessons regularly should enable students to make progress academically. Due to having far more boarders than day students, it is likely that much of what follows will usually apply to day students from the local area.

Procedure – Concerns about levels of Attendance

The current threshold for concern about attendance in Shropshire is 90%. While the Council has a staff of Education Welfare Officers (or EWOs) to help maintained schools follow up on poor attendance (including the ability to issue financial penalties to parents for unauthorised absence), the Concord College procedure to be followed when attendance drops below 90% is:

1. A Senior Teacher would write a first letter, or e-mail, seeking to: share with parents the College's concern about a drop in attendance; seek to discover the reasons for it; find solutions to enable improvement in attendance and/or enable academic progress (- perhaps by sending work home to the sick student for completion).
2. If there was no improvement in attendance after the first e-mail, a second e-mail will be sent.
3. If concerns continue, parents should be invited into College to discuss the reasons for poor attendance. During this discussion, parental consent for sharing concerns with external agencies might be sought. This could result in: information sharing leading to a multi-agency response; involvement of and assessment by social workers; Early Help support.

In the case of long-term absence for medical reasons (& with absences of longer than 1 week of lessons), the College should ask parents to provide a letter from the GP (or other medical professional in charge of treating the student – such as a consultant) declaring that the student is medically unfit for school.

In exceptional cases where concerns about attendance continue and parents are not compliant with the College, then consideration will be given to: contacting professionals directly for information; contacting concerned professionals to hold a meeting about the student; contacting the FPOC at Shropshire Council to arrange a consultation with a social worker; College staff seek to arrange a visit to the home of the student to discuss attendance with the

parents and visit the pupil; contacting the Shropshire EWOs to discuss arranging for them to complete an assessment of the situation on behalf of the College (-the College will need to pay for this service).

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

Shropshire Council require schools to complete an online MS Form when a school age pupil is to be removed from the register. This can be found here:

https://shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-or-exclusion/children-missing-education-cme/

STUDENT REGISTRATION AND ABSENCE PROCEDURE

Registration patterns vary between weekdays and weekends

- On weekdays students register themselves with their combined ID/ Registration cards on arrival at College (if day students), at morning registration, in lessons, in prep. Room check by Resident staff also occurs at the end of the day for all boarders. This information is recorded on Live Register &/or SIMS (with the exception of room checks Monday to Friday).

- On Saturdays students register themselves with their combined ID/ Registration cards between 0840 and 1130 for AM registration; 1630 and 1800 for PM registration; and Night roomcheck starts at 2215 for Lower School students and 2300 for Upper School students in boarding residences. All LS and 6,1 students should be back on campus by 1800 and 6.2 students may return no later than 2230.

- On Sundays students register themselves with their combined ID/ Registration cards at brunch in the dining room or in main hall between 1130 & 1300 for AM registration; 1730 and 1800 for PM registration; and final registration is completed by Boarding Parents and recorded on SIMS following room check at 2145 on Sunday nights. All students should be back on campus by 1800.

If a student is absent from morning registration or from a lesson or prep, the following steps should be taken:

Registration

1. During weekdays, the Tutor should ensure that students have registered using their combined ID/ Registration cards by clicking on the Live Register icon. If a student has lost or forgotten their ID/Registration card, they will be sent to the Front Office to be given a NO CARD FORM. Tutors should NOT manually register students on SIMS if they do not have their ID card. If students do not have their card, please send them to the Staffroom so Pastoral staff can confirm missing marks on Live Register and students will be given a NO CARD FORM.

2. For absent students, SIMS should be loaded and checked to see if there are any red flag comments or other codes entered therein.

3. The Assistant Principal (PDL) and Pastoral Assistants will pursue any absences to ensure that the student is safe and well, and has a satisfactory reason for not attending registration or failing to swipe correctly.

4. Medical and a student's ATTENDANCE email group will be informed of any student who is claiming ill health by the Boarding Parent at the morning room check. BPs can use their professional judgement and sign a boarding student off lessons until Period 3. This should be indicated via email to the previously mentioned groups AND by updating SIMS with an "I" mark for AM and Periods 1-2 along with a red flag comment including the BPs initials

5. If the student is still ill, Medical will then either give the student permission to miss the part or the rest of the day on the basis of ill health (indicating this with an I on SIMS), or encourage the student to attend lessons.

6. If the allocated member of staff suspects that the student is 'malingering' she will inform the Assistant Principal (PDL) who will follow the matter up and discipline the student accordingly.

NB. Any pattern of repeated absence should be reported to the Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Vice-Principal (Pastoral) or Head of Lower School.

Absence from lessons

1. The teacher should ensure that students have registered using their combined ID/ Registration cards by clicking on the Live Register icon.

2. For absent students, SIMS should be loaded and checked to see if there are any red flag comments or other codes entered therein.

3. The teacher should follow up any absences to ensure that they are legitimate (it is not enough to accept the word of other students that the missing student is 'ill'). Teachers should register the absence with an O and send an e-mail to the student's "Attendance" e-mail group and copying in "Medical Shared".

4. If a student is found to have missed a lesson without due cause, the teacher should liaise with the student's tutor. The latter should consult the student's other teachers to see if there is any pattern of absence. In the light of these findings, the tutor should take action as appropriate: in ascending order of seriousness, (1) warn the student, (2) place the student in detention, or (3) refer the matter to the Vice-Principals (Pastoral/Academic) or Head of Lower School.

5. If students report to the teacher that they are sick, they should be told to see Medical immediately. They should not return directly to their rooms. If Medical staff decide they are sufficiently ill to return to their room they will email relevant staff to verify this and change the registration on SIMS to an I. In the event of Medical being busy or unavailable, permission can also be issued by senior management. In the case of a day student being sick, Medical will either accommodate the student in the sick bay or make immediate contact with parents to arrange collection.

   More detailed guidance on dealing with sickness can be found in the relevant sections of the handbook.

NB. Any pattern of repeated absence should be reported to the Assistant Principal (PDL) who will then follow-up with relevant members of the CST.

Absence from Prep

1. The duty teachers should check for absentees by checking attendance on Live Register.

2. Visit every prep room/boarding residence and check on students.

3. Any student absent should then be checked against: SIMS; lists of other activities taking place during prep; exeat lists; signing out list etc.

4. If a student's whereabouts cannot be accounted for, the Duty Teachers or NSP should visit the student in his/her room at c.8pm. Any absences should be registered as an O on SIMS

5. Boarding Parents should check attendance in PR1 & PR2 sessions each night before going on room check and investigate absences and update SIMS.

NB. Any pattern of repeated absence should be reported to the Director of Enrichment & Examinations, who in turn may notify one of the Vice-Principals or Head of Lower School.

Unauthorised absence at bedtime

Boarding Parents should check with a student's close friends in order to ascertain a reason for absence, then:
For Lower School students – inform the Head of Lower School (Sue Correll) immediately.

For Upper School students – use discretion whether to inform the VP Pastoral (Jeremy Kerslake) or a Pastoral Manager immediately or wait until next morning

Overnight absence

If a student cannot be located quickly, then Jeremy Kerslake, Michael Truss and/or Pastoral Managers will undertake a risk assessment, and this might well result in them:

- notifying parents
- informing local Police and Social Services as necessary

Day Student Absences

If Day Students are absent from morning registration, the signing in & out information held on Live Register (since it could be that day students arrived a bit late and went straight to period 1). SIMS attendance can also be checked and classrooms can be visited too.

However, if day students are still not located, parents are to be contacted by 'phone and or email to check on the health and whereabouts of day students.

Procedure for Updating Registers (identifying and "converting" Ns = unauthorised absences)

The SIMS Administrator will update any missed registration into an N on SIMS when a lesson is scheduled for a student and Live Register does not receive a card registration swipe and/or there is no mark in SIMS. There is a tension here which we need to keep in mind since the

registers need to reflect the reality of attendance in the classroom. Although a tidy register is a thing of beauty, we also need to check students are not missing lessons. Therefore:

Teachers are responsible for converting Ns (showing unauthorised absences) from lessons 1-9 in the first instance. This ideally should be done in class with any Ns being converted to Os. The SIMS Administrator will send out every day just after 1600 a list of all students with N or O marks for that day period 1 to period 9. This will be sent to Teachers. Subject teachers should then consider if students were present and just forgot to swipe their cards. If so, subject teachers should convert Ns immediately. If unsure, or if the student was not present, then the teacher should convert the N to an O and speak to the students about the absence in the next lesson. Subject teachers should then update SIMS registers (normally using "Focus-Lesson Monitor-Edit Marks-Overwrite"). When converting Ns, red flag comments should also be left please explaining the situation (e.g. "student lost card at lunchtime, but was in lesson")

Ns and Os in PR1 & PR2, should be investigated by Boarding Parents. Before going on room check duty each night, Boarding Parents on duty are required to check the SIMS register for the students in their boarding residences and investigate any unauthorised absences from prep 1 or prep 2. These should then be converted by Boarding Parents as soon as possible and red flag comments would still be appreciated as above.

At the end of each week, The AP PDL and SIMS Administrator will look back at any Ns and Os and those which cannot obviously be converted (e.g. Ns for students with red flag comments saying they have lost their cards on a particular day) and will liaise with the subject teachers to update the registers.

Advance Notification of Absences

The SIMS Administrator can be contacted via the "Attendance" e-mail group so that registers can be updated in advance of known and planned future absences - due to sporting commitments, trips, medicals, tests. Staff organising events and trips should e-mail the "Attendance" group so that SIMS can be updated in advance. Parents of day students also e-mail this group address if they are notifying the College of absences (due to illness or medical appointments).

Tutors should update SIMS with known absences if students are known to be attending interviews and off campus for a day, or part of a day. Students should inform their Tutors of their plans to attend open days and interviews in advance.

In the case of overnight absences (or "exeats") for boarders, the Vice-Principal (Pastoral) will update SIMS registers and a paper list of the names of absentees is usually posted on the staff room notice board. (There is also an exeat folder

Arranging exeats

Boarding Parents should consider the age of the student when approving exeats as follows:

The College's concern for the welfare of its students and duty of care means that the permission of parents/ guardian is essential for each specific occasion when a student is to leave the campus overnight. It is important that the College knows as much as possible about where they are going/ what they are doing/ who they are staying with. This information should be contained in the e-mail/ letter/fax giving parental permission and also obtained from the student concerned and written down on an exeat form.

Parental permissions for boarders' overnight absences (both exeats and holidays) should normally be sent via e-mail to Holidays@concordcollege.org.uk.

Exeats should be limited to 2 or 3 per term under the College rules.

Exeat forms require the student to undertake some careful planning prior to their trip and to discuss the potential risks involved with the member of staff giving permission. If the student does not return from the overnight absence at the expected time, this written record could have very real practical and legal implications for finding the student and confirming that the College has taken "the actions of responsible parents".

Other absences

The SIMS Officer and AP PDL should be made aware of any planned or unplanned absences. This should be done via the Attendance email. The absence marks used in SIMS indicate whether an absence is authorised or not. Below is a table of attendance codes on SIMS and who will use them to update student attendance:

Appendix 1

Introduction

This document has been created to define the marks to be used for attendance/absences in SIMS and to guide groups of staff in which marks to use and where in SIMS. Please see below for a guide to the marks Concord uses in SIMS so attendance and absence can be accurately recorded:

Reg Code	Description	Stat Meaning	Value in SIMS	Who can use?	Examples of use
/	Present	Present	PRESENT	Academic/Pastoral/ Admin/ Medical/ Attendance	Present in class/registration
B	Educated off site	Present	PRESENT	Attendance	Day and Residential trips
C	Other authorised	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Attendance	Any other authorised reason
D	Interview	Attendance not required	N/A	Attendance	School or University Interview
E	Exeat	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Pastoral/Attendance	Boarders on day/overnight absence
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Medical/Pastoral/ Attendance	When pupil is ill/in Medical or Day student absent due to illness
K	Exams	Present	PFRESENT	Attendance	Pupils are taking exams
L	Late before Reg ended	Present	PRESENT	Attendance/Pastoral	Pupil is late to class/registration
M	Medical	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Medical/Pastoral/ Attendance	Pupil has medical appointment on or off site
N	No reason provided	Unauthorised Absence	ABSENT	Academic/Pastoral/ Admin/ Medical/ Attendance	Pupil is absent without reason (temporary mark)
O	Unauthorised	Unauthorised Absence	ABSENT	Academic/Pastoral/ Admin/ Medical/ Attendance	Pupil missed class without a valid reason
P	Sport or Music	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Attendance	Pupil has sports or music event
R	Religious observances	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Attendance/Pastoral	Absence due to religious faith
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Attendance	When 6.1/6.2 pupils have Study Leave in Summer Term
T	Travelling	Authorised Absence	ABSENT	Attendance/Pastoral	Pupils are travelling to or from school at start or end of term
W	Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity	PRESENT	Attendance/Pastoral	School sanctioned work experience
X	Holiday/Expected Absence	Attendance not required	N/A	Pastoral/Attendance	When Day students are not expected to attend Prep OR when school is closed for lessons (Half term/Easter)

SIMS Admin/Attendance/Holidays/Pastoral Office

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
All columns	All	See table above

Medical Staff

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
All columns	M	Please update SIMS after consultation and email STUDENT (Attendance) M – Medical appt onsite or off
	I	I - Illness

Boarding Parents - Lower School

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
Weekday Pr1	/	Please check SIMS prior to room check to see if students missed Prep that evening and investigate if needed
Sunday Pr1	/	Sunday night Residence Meeting. Use / if present
	O	Use O if absent
	E or X	Pastoral Office will pre-populate with any other marks such as E or X

Boarding Parents - Upper School

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
Weekday AM and Period 1-2	I	Weekday Morning Welfare Check BP may use professional judgement to sign student off if unwell for tutor time and P1-2. Should also email STUDENT (Attendance)
Weekday Pr1	/	Please check SIMS prior to room check to see if students missed Prep that evening and investigate if needed
Sunday Pr1	/	Sunday night Residence Meeting. Use / if present
	O	Use O if absent
	E or X	Pastoral Office will pre-populate with any other marks such as E or X

Tutors

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
AM Weekdays	None	Students should swipe as they enter tutor time. Any with no ID card should have a NO CARD form. If not, please send to Staffroom in Main Hall. Tutors should MONITOR tutees attendance during school week but do not enter/update any register entries

Teachers

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
Weekday Lesson periods	/	Students should swipe as they enter class. Any with no ID card should have a NO CARD form. If not, please send to Reception
	O	If student is missing, enter an O and email STUDENT (Attendance). Once reason for absence has been established, please update with relevant mark
	C	Other marks Use C if absent due to dropping class/timetable mix up
	O	Use O if absent for unauthorised reason (e.g. oversleeping)
	E or X	Pastoral Office will pre-populate with any other marks such as E or X

Pastoral Assistants

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
Weekday AM and PM	/	AM and PM are a snapshot of registration in the morning at lunchtime. Most students will have swiped and will have an / or an L if they swiped late. If they have no mark: If a student has swiped too early or swiped in Breakfast or P6 and not swiped in the correct location, please use /, red flag comment they did not swipe and add to Missing Registration spreadsheet
	I	Use I if parents/medical have informed of this
	O	Use O if absent/unknown. Locate and then update SIMS and Missing Registration spreadsheet if needed.

Prep Duty Staff

SIMS Columns	Mark to use	Registration details
Weekday Pr1 and Act	/	Pr1 is a snapshot of registration. Most students will have swiped and will have an / or an L if they swiped late. If they have no mark: If a student has swiped too early or swiped in Supper or not in the correct location, please use /, red flag comment they did not swipe and add to Missing Registration spreadsheet
	I	Use I if parents/medical have informed of this
	O	Use O if absent/unknown. Locate and then update SIMS and Missing Registration spreadsheet if needed.