

Why attendance matters

Regular attendance helps students to make good progress and enjoy learning. We take a whole college approach to maintaining excellent attendance; it is a joint responsibility of parents, students and staff. Being at school is a very important part of any young person's life. It enables them to learn and make friends and to gain important qualifications and to develop a variety of skills, which will prepare them for adult life. School and parents/carers are partners in making this a success. As parents/carers it is your responsibility to make sure that your child makes the most of this opportunity by ensuring a high level of attendance is maintained.

The school is required by law to record and publish rates of absence to include unauthorised absence. It is therefore imperative that registers are accurately marked and unexplained absences are investigated.

Attendance thresholds

% Attendance	
97% or more	Outstanding
95-96%	Excellent
91-94%	Cause for concern
90% or less	Persistently absent

80%

Attendance

This equates to **one year** of absence over 5 years

90%

Attendance

This equates to **six months** of absence over 5 years

97%

Attendance

This equates to **six days** of absence a year – expected level

INFORMATION & ADVICE ON ATTENDANCE

This leaflet provides information and advice on attendance for parents. Our full attendance policy can be found on the college website: www.southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk

South Dartmoor Academy

ATTENDANCE MATTERS



www.southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk

"Be the very best you can be. Believe in yourself: you can achieve it"

Reporting Absence

Attendance is checked on a daily basis. If a student is absent without a given reason the college (Attendance Coordinator) calls the parents/carers using Truancy call.

Parents can inform the college of absence by;

1. Call the College **01364 652230**, select the option to report an absence and leave a message
2. Call the College **01364 652315**, and speak to the Attendance Coordinator directly

Parents should notify the school for the reason for an absence before 8.30 am.

8.30

am

Punctuality – Arriving at school

8.55am Warning Bell
9.00-9.25am Tutor Registration
3.35pm End of the Day

Illness during the school day

In the event of illness in school, no student is permitted to contact parents and sign out without first seeking permission from the relevant members of staff in Student reception.

Your role as a parent/carer

You play a very important role in ensuring the good attendance of your children. All parents/carers want the best for their children and a good education helps ensure that children have the best start in life. School equips them for succeeding both academically and socially so that they can achieve in their exams and learn how to make and manage relationships.

As a parent/carer, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually.

Authorised and Unauthorised absences

Authorised absences

Absence for the following reasons is authorised, but patterns will be monitored and investigated if necessary. More detailed absence information is available from our full attendance policy.

Illness	Study leave
Medical appointment	University visits
Funerals	External examinations

S2 Form - The law states that the Principal can authorise absence in exceptional circumstances, and that this must be sought in advance of the proposed absence using the S2 form.

Persistent absence

If attendance is persistent or suspicious, contact will be made with parents/carers outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support.

	Stage of concern	Intervention
1	< 95%	Raising awareness letter Tutor intervention
2	< 93%	Raising awareness letter Tutor intervention
3	< 90%	Head of House intervention Meeting with parents/carers Medical request letter sent
4	< 90% no improvement	Educational Welfare Officer intervention

Unauthorised absences

More detailed information on unauthorised absence can be found from the attendance policy on the college website.

Examples of unauthorised absence are shown below;

Truancy	Any absence not approved by the school
Looking after younger children	Any absence school not informed about
Looking after sick relatives	Holiday during term time
Birthdays	Resting after a late night
Relatives visiting	Attending concerts/events

Holidays in term time

It is important that all parents and carers are aware and understand the **amendment** to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which give greater clarity regarding the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforce the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances'.

A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised.

We want to take the opportunity to remind you, that should you choose to take your child out of school without the authorisation of the school, then Parental Responsibility Measures could be instigated.

At South Dartmoor we take school attendance very seriously and are committed to attempting to engage every child with the school environment and education. We consider ourselves a supportive and inclusive school, and will try and make considerations for students who need extra support. We are, however, bound by law to ensure that each student attends school.

As always, if your child is experiencing any difficulties at school, however big or small, please do not hesitate to contact us. Your child can always talk to:

Their Personal Tutor
Their Head of House
School counsellor
School Nurse