



INGFIELD MANOR SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy implemented: April 2021
Last reviewed: September 2023
Next review due: November 2024

Overview

Our policy statements below align with Government guidelines and those of our host authority, West Sussex, whereby the following expectations are in place:

- All students will attend school regularly and on time during term time.
- Students can only miss school if they are too ill to attend school OR their absence has been authorised.
- Any authorised absence needs to have prior permission from the school principal.
- Unauthorised absences will be shared with your child's funding local authority.
- Unauthorised absences may be subject to a fixed penalty notice in accordance with West Sussex (or your child's funding authority guidelines; [School absences - West Sussex County Council](#)). This decision will sit with the funding authority.
- Ingfield Manor school will record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to manage these.

Daily Attendance

The school day starts promptly at 9am and finishes at 3.30pm. For Woodview students, the school day finishes at 3.15pm. The main school is open, with staff ready to receive students, from 8.45am. Woodview classes open at 9am.

If students arrive late (after 9am (L) or after the register closes at 9.15am (U)) they may be marked down and coded as such within the registers. Due to the nature of the needs of our

students, there is a heavy reliance on others in attending school on time (i.e. specialist transport). Whereby circumstances dictate that a student's lateness is due to a situation beyond student and / or parental control, then consideration will be given as to alternative coding.

Whereby there may be persistent issues with lateness detected due to school transport, then this would get communicated back to the funding authority.

Authorised absence

When a student is too unwell to attend school then parents / carers must notify the main school office on the day of absence between 8.30am and 9.00am. (01403 782294). Whereby parents /legal guardians know that their child will not be returning the next day then they will be asked to give the estimated date of return.

If the estimated date of return is unknown, then the school office will need to be notified on each day of absence.

For all other 'authorised absence' an absence authorisation request form is available on request and should be completed and returned for the attention of Nicola Dodds, school principal.

Due to the nature of our student's complex needs, permission will always be granted to attend medical appointments. However, where possible parents / carers should try and secure as many appointments outside of term time as possible.

Other authorised absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are when a student has been marked in the school attendance register as being absent from school without authority. It is only the school principal who can authorise absence for any reason from school.

This includes:

- any absence marked in the register as unauthorised ('O' or 'N' codes)
- persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken ('U' codes)
- a holiday in term time, which has not been authorised by the principal ('G' codes). The Government has directed that headteachers / principals may now only grant leave for a holiday in term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Please be aware that even in 'exceptional circumstances' the maximum amount of days in any academic year that will be authorised is 5 days. Whereby absence exceeds this (for purposes of taking a holiday during time term) your child's local authority will be notified.

We have a duty to follow up on any unauthorised absences. When the register closes at 9.15am, if we have not heard direct from students' parents or legal guardians as to a reason for absence then our procedures for following up on unauthorised absences will be followed, as detailed below:

- Attempts will be made to contact parents / legal guardians in first instance
- Whereby attempts to contact parents / legal guardians are unsuccessful then emergency contact numbers will be used (ie. of other family members)
- Whereby a student is on a child protection plan, then the allocated social worker will be informed of the unauthorised absence on the same day.
- If contact cannot be made and there are welfare concerns about any student, this will be escalated with a referral to the student's local authority safeguarding team.
- Whereby contact has not been able to be made, in some circumstances it may be deemed that a direct home visit is necessary.
- The school has a statutory duty to inform the local authority in all circumstances whereby any child has had a period of unauthorised absence of 10 days. Ingfield Manor school will alert the local authority sooner whereby there becomes a safeguarding concern.

Recording

All student's attendance data will be recorded in the morning and again in the afternoon, using our electronic management system, RM Integris.

Data will be supplied to the Department of Education in line with school census requirements.

Attendance data will be recorded as part of a student's annual review.

Any student on a child protection plan or child in need plan will have attendance data feedback to the local authority as part of this process.

Attendance audits are completed throughout the academic year to capture any potential patterns and areas of concerns.

Whereby there may be individual concerns around a student's attendance then the parent / legal guardian will be contacted and an action plan discussed, which may include a separate meeting to discuss attendance, and / or correspondence with the local authority.

Further Government guidance on attendance and register codes used can be found using the following link:

[DfE Working together to improve school attendance](#)