



St Swithun's WINCHESTER

ST SWITHUN'S SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

(Incorporating the teachers' guide to registration)

Policy History	
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Education Committee

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Contents

Introduction	3
Management of the register.....	3
Morning and afternoon registration	4
Lateness to school	4
Absence form school	5
Requesting leave of absence	6
Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities	6
Informing the local authority.....	6
Ongoing monitoring and analysis	6

Other provisions	7
Returning to school.....	7
Appendix 1 Guidance for form tutors and teachers	8
Visiting students	8
Health centre	8
Music lessons before and during registration	8
Communication and performance (C and P) lessons before and during registration	8
Students preparing for assembly during registration.....	8
Students assisting with open afternoons	8
Visits and trips.....	8
Senior students in the prep school.....	8
In the event of a fire alarm	9
Lesson registration.....	9
Examinations.....	9
Appendix 2 Common Codes.....	10
Appendix 3 Guide to taking registers in SIMS.....	11
Contents.....	11
Introduction	11
Accessing Registers.....	11
Entering Marks.....	11
Editing Marks	12
Minutes Late.....	12
Comments.....	12
Cover	12
Covering a lesson	12
Having a lesson covered	12
Accessing other registers	13
Accessing Past/Future Registers.....	13
Adding Extra Students	13
Dealing with a Timetable Clash	13
Photos	14
Dealing with unauthorised and unknown absence codes.....	14
Attendance statistics	14

Introduction

At St Swithun's we see attendance at school is vital to the pastoral and academic development of students and we seek to ensure that all of our students receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach their full potential. Research shows that there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment.

Absence, whatever its cause, is detrimental to any student's academic, social, and emotional development. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in secondary school, with a cumulative effect. Regular or persistent absence can also indicate a pupil welfare issue.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly. Parents can only allow their child to miss school if they are too ill to go in or they have advance permission from the school.

The school expects high attendance from all students and will work in partnership with parents and other agencies to strive towards every student achieving this.

It is a legal requirement that a register of students present is taken at a stated time in each session of the school day and recorded by a teacher in the form register at that time. It may be required as proof of attendance and its accuracy is the responsibility of the form tutor who should not delegate this task to a student.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2023) (KCSIE)
- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, January 2024)
- Children missing education (DfE, September 2016)

It should also be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and the Children Missing from Education Policy.

School staff to support attendance

The School's strategic leader for attendance is Graham Yates (deputy head pastoral). You can contact him via email at: yatesg@stswithuns.com or via telephone: 01962 835700.

The School's attendance officer is Mrs Tyler-Smith. You can contact her via email at: tylersmithb@stswithuns.com or via telephone: 01962 835700.

Management of the register

All students are registered twice a day by their form tutor: in the morning at 08.15 and in the afternoon at 14.10. Students must arrive punctually to ensure that they are on time for registration. Students arriving after these times **will** be marked as late.

We have an expectation that all students will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. Students who do not attend these registration points will miss out on important information.

It is the responsibility of the form tutor to keep the register up to date and accurate. All absences marked 'N' should be followed up by the form tutor as soon as possible and codes should be amended as necessary.

Morning and afternoon registration

- Students should be seated when the register is taken
- Form tutors must emphasise the importance of attending registration on time to students in their tutor group.
- Any student not able to register at the correct time with the form tutor **must register with the school office before they do anything else in school.**
- Morning registration should be taken in the form room at 08.15 and afternoon registration at 14.10; after these times students should sign in at the school office where they will be entered as late in the register
- Form tutors should record any student as absent (N) in their register if they are not present for the form's registration, unless they have been informed of illness or prior appointment/activity, when they should use the appropriate code.
 - A student must be physically present in the room to be marked as such: they cannot be registered as present on the basis of an email or message that they themselves have sent saying that they are going to be late, or from another member of the Form or teaching group.
- Students should sign in and out in the school office if they arrive late or leave early
- The school office will follow-up students who are absent from morning and afternoon registration by checking whether they are in lesson 1 or 9. If present a mark of late will be given. If not, the school office will begin to follow the Missing Student Policy.
 - NB Whilst the student may simply be off sick at home with appropriate care, this may not be the situation. The student may be at risk of harm and may be in distress. The student may have been involved in an incident whilst on their way to school. The student may be truanting (possibly because of anxiety about something happening at school).
- The school office will produce a copy of the absentees soon after lesson 1 and lesson 9 has started and will distribute to all staff
- Boarding house staff should inform the school office of any students in their house who are unwell by phone or email.
- To avoid any problems caused by a delay in logging on, form tutors are advised that where possible, they should log on in advance of registration and check their emails for correspondence from parents
- If a pupil is absent from school for more than two days, the Form Tutor should contact home to ask about the pupil's health and wellbeing (even though contact will normally have been made with and the relevant information passed on to the relevant office).

Lateness to school

As stated above, if a student arrives after 08.15 or 14.10 they should sign in at the school office before going to assembly, form time or joining a lesson. Lateness data is regularly monitored by the form tutor and head of year. Where students are late to school more than once a week, or if there is

a regular pattern to the lateness, this will be flagged to the head of year, who will monitor and deal with the situation and, if necessary, escalate to the deputy head pastoral.

Where necessary, a dialogue will be had with students and parents/carers to support students and families to improve time keeping. If lateness does not improve in the short term (e.g. over 2 weeks), the form tutor will agree with the head of year an appropriate course of action. This could include:

- Requirement for student to attend daily registration at 08.00 for an agreed period of time
- Sanction for disregard of school rules.
- Removal of privileges – e.g. free time, access to Winchester (sixth form only)

With no improvement in the situation, the matter will be referred to the deputy head pastoral (safeguarding) who will discuss the matter with the parents/carers.

Leaving the school site

If a student needs to leave school early, their parents or housemistress/master should contact their Form Tutor beforehand (copying in the school office), giving the reason for their early departure. The student must sign the signing-out book in the Office. At the end of each day, the Attendance Officer will email the list of students who signed out to Heads of Year, who should ascertain and/or corroborate the reason given.

If a student is ill during the school day, they must report to the Heath Centre in the first instance and, following an assessment, they may be discharged to home. A nurse will contact parents/guardians to arrange this. Under no circumstances should a student self-certify their own illness and leave school.

Sixth Form

L6 students may leave the school site between 12.35 and 14.10 on a Friday only. They should sign out and in at the school office.

U6 students may leave the school site on any day site between 13.05 and 14.10. On a Friday they may leave from 12.35. They should sign out and in at the school office.

Absence form school

It is the parents/carers responsibility to contact the school concerning the reason for a student's absence on the first day of absence and to provide further information as may be required. The preferred method to report a student absence is via the parent portal but parents/carers may also email absence@stswithuns.com or phone the school office on 01962 835700.

This should be by 09:00 at the latest on the day of absence. If parents/carers do not contact the school, the school office will contact parents/carers to confirm an authorised absence; this may be by phone or email.

Where the reason for a pupil's absence on the previous day remains unknown, this becomes a pastoral matter and the Form Tutor or Head of Year will contact home. Once the reason for a student's absence, they should inform the Attendance Officer so that the relevant code can be added to the register.

Other than as part of a school organised group, students may not leave the school premises during the school day without authorisation. If authorised, they must sign out at the school office, stating the time of and reason for departure. Separate rules apply for the sixth form, as outlined above.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their child's attendance, they should contact the form tutor in the first instance.

Requesting leave of absence

Parents requesting leave of absence should email absence@stswithuns.com . This will be forwarded to the headmistress for approval. The executive assistant will email the form tutor and school office with permission, if given. The form tutor will pre-code the register for the appropriate date.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Each request will be considered individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted the headmistress will determine the length of time the student can be away from school.

As leave of absence should only be granted in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Students with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Whilst good attendance is an expectation for all students at the school, we recognise that this may be more of a challenge for some students, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, or those suffering from long term medical conditions or mental health issues. The school will allow for these circumstances when working with such students and their parents and will develop individualised support approaches that meet their specific needs where appropriate.

Informing the local authority

As is required by law, the school will inform the relevant local authority of any student who:

- fails to attend school regularly; or
- has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

The local safeguarding partners will also be informed if absence amounts to a safeguarding concern.

The school shall also inform the relevant local authority of any student who is going to be added to or deleted from the school's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Ongoing monitoring and analysis

Tutors and Heads of Year are expected to monitor and review the attendance record of the students for whom they are responsible. An individual attendance record of below 95% must be followed up by the school, as will noticeable patterns, or sudden or unexplained absence.

Attendance reports, produced by the Attendance Officer, will be reviewed regularly by senior pastoral staff (heads of year and the deputy head pastoral) in order to:

- Identify pupils who are regularly late or with attendance of less than 95% and intervene as necessary. This is likely to be a conversation with parents/guardians to understand the barriers to being in school and agreeing appropriate actions/interventions to address them.
- Review each absence with the code N and, if the reason is still not established, replace this with an O (an N must not be allowed to remain in the register indefinitely).

Heads of year meet with the deputy head pastoral every two weeks. At this meeting, attendance data is discussed. This goes beyond headline attendance percentages and looks at individual students. School wide data is shared with the deputy head pastoral every half term. Any trends, year groups or groups with concerns are flagged and appropriate strategies put in place.

Letters will be sent home to parents of students with 95% attendance or less each half term.

Persistent or severe absence

Where absence or a pattern of absence appears to be at risk of becoming problematic, the school will meet with the parents to discuss how to support the pupil and remove barriers to attendance where possible. This may include referrals to external services and other organisations. These actions will be regularly reviewed and stepped up if there is no improvement to the situation. Where a whole family response is appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment. Ultimately if voluntary support is not effective the school will work with the local authority to put more formal measures in place. Persistent or severe absence is always treated as a safeguarding risk.

Other provisions

The deputy head pastoral is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school. You can contact him via yatesg@stswithuns.com or telephone 01962 835700.

This policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in a non-discriminatory fashion in accordance with the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The school will always consider the individual needs of students and their families who may have specific barriers to attendance.

See the Missing Pupil Policy for further provisions in relation to missing and/or lost children.

Returning to school

Sometimes a student who has been off school for some time finds it difficult to return. In such circumstances it is of paramount importance that parents contact the Head of Year to discuss procedures for supported reintegration.

Appendix 1 Guidance for form tutors and teachers

Visiting students

- **International guest students** – recorded by the form tutor at morning and afternoon registration with others in the form
- **Students in school for testing** – provided with a visitor's badge and accounted for by the admissions office
- **Students in school for familiarisation visits** – remain with the form and should be accounted for by the form tutor

Health centre

If a student is in the health centre, the nursing staff will mark her as ill and in the health centre by using the code 'K'.

Music lessons before and during registration

The student will be registered in the music school. The music administrator will update the electronic registers with this information using the code '%'.

Communication and performance (C and P) lessons before and during registration

The student should sign in with the school office before going to their C and P lesson and will be coded using the code '&'. Lists of students in C and P lessons are circulated weekly by email.

Students preparing for assembly during registration

The student should report to the school office before going to Harvey Hall.

Students assisting with open afternoons

The student will be accounted for in Harvey Hall and a list of names will be returned to the school office by the marketing office.

Visits and trips

Students should be registered in the morning and afternoon sessions on the day of visit or if known the information can be pre-coded in the register and amended on the day of the trip. If the trip leaves before registration, a list of students registered on the trip should be returned to the school office prior to departure.

Senior students in the prep school

The student should sign out in the school office before leaving the senior school and sign back in again on their return.

In the event of a fire alarm

- The school office will bring a list of absentees and the signing in and out book outside
- Heads of year will consult form tutors and inform the deputy headmistress who will check against the list of absentees

Lesson registration

Teachers should register their classes in SIMS at the **start** of each lesson.

- If a student is in the health centre during a lesson, she will be marked K by the health centre staff.
- If a student is in a music lesson during the timetabled school day, she should give advanced notice of her absence and the subject teacher should code the lesson register appropriately.
- If a student is in a communication and performance lesson during the timetabled school day, she should give advanced notice of her absence and the subject teacher should code the lesson register appropriately. Lists of students in C and P lessons are circulated weekly by email.

Examinations

- The examinations office will provide the school office with registers for all public examinations so that the e-registers can be pre-coded with the information. The e-register will be coded 'Q' for an examination.
- Prior to study leave, a copy of the study leave forms for U5 should be sent to the school office. The register will be pre-coded by the school office. Form tutors should emphasize to students that any changes to study leave plans must be given to the form tutors in writing with parental confirmation. The e-register will be coded 'S' for study leave or 'A' if studying in house.
- In the morning, during the public examination period, all students should register with their form tutor.
- In the afternoon, during the public examination period, those **U5 not taking an examination**, will be registered by the boarding house staff (boarders only) or by their form tutor (day students only) at the **normal** registration time.
- **U5 students taking a public examination** will be registered in E5 at 13.05 by form tutors and/or head of year. These will take the form of paper copies of the register which will be transferred to SIMS by the form tutors taking the register.
- The e-register for U6 students will not be maintained during study leave and will be pre-coded 'X'. All students with an examination, should register in Finlay common room at 08.15 for a morning examination and 13.00 for an afternoon examination.

Appendix 2 Common Codes

Present at school

/ or \	Present in school
L	Late arrival before registration closed
A	Study in house
K	Health Centre
Q	Examination
\$	Late after lesson register closed
%	Music lesson
&	Communication and Performance lesson

Approved off-site educational activity

B	Off-site educational activity
D	Dual Registered - at another educational establishment
J	At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience

Authorised absence

C	Leave of absence authorised by the school
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
H	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
M	Medical or dental appointments
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Unauthorised

G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Absent from school without authorisation
U	Arrived in school after registration closed

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19). A comment should also be added, using the numbers below, that provides more detail: 1 - for a student with COVID 2 - for a student who has symptoms of COVID 3 - if a family member has COVID 4 - if a family member has symptoms of COVID 5 - if the student is quarantining (on return from abroad)
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Administrative codes

X	Non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Student not on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure

Appendix 3 Guide to taking registers in SIMS

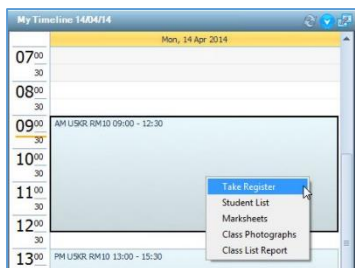
Contents

- Introduction
- Accessing Registers
- Entering Marks
- Editing Marks
- Minutes Late
- Comments
- Cover
- Covering a lesson
- Having a lesson covered
- Accessing Other Registers
- Accessing Past/Future Registers
- Adding Extra Students
- Dealing with a Timetable Clash
- Photos
- Dealing with unauthorised and unknown absence codes
- Attendance statistics


Introduction

Here is a quick guide to entering registration marks for your lessons into SIMS Lesson Monitor. Class teachers should complete, save and close their registers before the end of the teaching period.

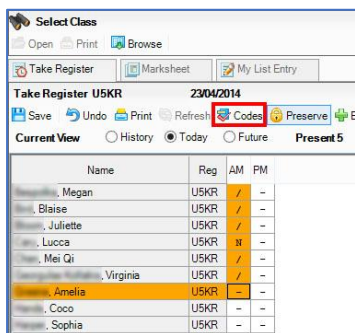
Accessing Registers



The easiest way to access your register is via the timeline on your SIMS homepage.

Simply double-click a lesson to open the register. Alternatively, you can right-click the lesson and select 'Take Register' or use the take register button at the top of the screen .



Entering Marks



The appropriate attendance marks can now be entered into each cell. Students who are present should be assigned a \ or / mark, late students should be marked with an L code and absent students should have the appropriate absence code assigned. For a list of the available absence codes and their meanings click the 'Codes' button at the top of the register (highlighted right). If you do not know why a student is absent they should be marked as N, which signifies that they are absent and no reason has yet been given. (A list of common codes can be found in the Common Codes section, [here](#)).

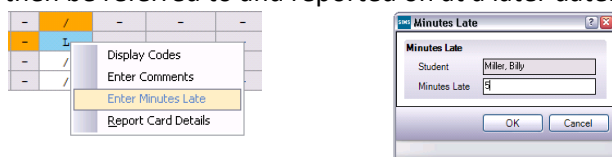
Once completed please save your changes using the save button in the top left-hand corner of the register. It is good practice to close the register at this stage.

Editing Marks

After saving a register the marks automatically become locked to prevent any accidental changes. However, if for example, the register has been saved and a student arrives late during the registration session, it is possible to edit the register to reflect this. Simply re-open the register and click the 'Preserve'  button which will then toggle to 'Overwrite' . You will now be able to overwrite the student's absence with an L code. Make sure to add the number of minutes late (see below). Now save and close the register as before and the register will automatically return to preserve mode.

Minutes Late

Once a student has been marked with an L code the number of minutes late can be added. This can then be referred to and reported on at a later date.




To add the number of minutes late right-click the students' code and select 'Enter Minutes Late' (alternatively click the minutes late button at the top of the screen). Type the number of minutes in the resulting box and click OK. The L code will now be coloured blue.

Hovering over the code will display the minutes late.

Comments

Comments can be added to a cell for reference purposes e.g. forgotten kit or homework. To enter a comment right-click the cell and select 'Enter Comments' (alternatively click the 'Comment' button at the top of the screen) type a short comment and click OK.

The cell will now be flagged with a red triangle in the top-right corner .

Hovering over the cell will display the comment.

Please use this feature sparingly and always remember that any comments entered will potentially be visible to parents/carers as well as other staff.

Cover



Covering a lesson

Cover lessons assigned to you will appear in yellow on your timeline. Simply double-click the lesson to access and complete the register as normal.

Having a lesson covered

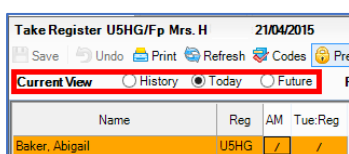
When one of your lessons is down to be covered, that class will disappear from your timeline as it will have been temporarily assigned to someone else.

Accessing other registers

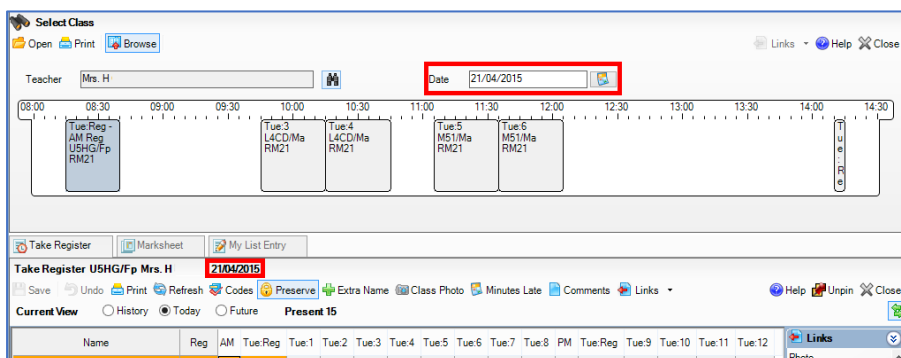
From time to time you may need to access someone else's register, this can be achieved by using the 'Browse'  button in the top-left of the screen under the main navigation bar. Clicking the browse button will display your registration timeline, from here you can access other registers in the system. Use the binoculars  button next to your name to bring up the lesson browse window. Use the browse window to find the period you are looking for, double-click the period to open the register.

Accessing Past/Future Registers

From within a register you can use the 'History' radio button at the top of the screen to quickly see the last 10 lessons you were timetabled to see that particular group. Conversely selecting 'Future' will show you the next 10 lessons. While using this view you are able to add comments, amend historical marks and add future absences etc.




If you need to access a date that is beyond this 20-session window, click the 'Browse' button to display your timeline.



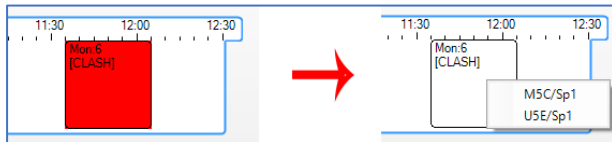
Change the date displayed above your timeline to the desired date and double-click the session you would like to access. Check the date at the top of the register (above the 'Codes' button) to ensure the correct session has been opened.

Adding Extra Students

You can add a student to your group for just that one lesson by clicking the 'Extra Name'  button and searching for the required student. Once selected the student will be added to the bottom of your class list and automatically marked as present.


Dealing with a Timetable Clash

If your timetable contains a clash it will be displayed in red on your timeline. Right-clicking the clash will give you a choice of the clashed registers. Click the appropriate class to access its register. This process can be repeated for the other class if necessary.



Photos

There are two ways to display photos from within your register.

You can generate a printable whole class grid format by clicking the 'Class Photo'  **Class Photo** button and clicking OK on the options window. Alternatively, you can display just the selected individual's photo in a floating window by clicking 'Photo' in the Links pane on the right-hand side of the register. The photo will change to the next student as you move down the register.

Dealing with unauthorised and unknown absence codes

A brief guide on picking up on and dealing with unauthorised absence codes can be found in the Knowledge base section of the IT Services site on the staff portal ([Link](#)).

Attendance statistics

A brief guide to running reports that extract attendance statistics from SIMS can also be found in the Knowledge base section of the IT Services site on the staff portal ([Link](#)).