

SECTION 3.1 – ADMISSIONS, ATTENDANCE, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY

Introduction

Frensham Heights is a unique school with a distinctive ethos. To be successful it requires both staff and students to work together to maintain the special community spirit and to enable students to achieve their best. The following guidelines on admissions, attendance, discipline and exclusions are designed to ensure that this continues to happen.

Admissions

Entry to Frensham Heights School is by selection. Admission is dependent on a range of criteria based on academic ability and the individual's personality. In all cases the School will, if not full, offer a place to a student who will benefit from a Frensham education, who will contribute fully to the community and who will grow into a positive and involved member of the school. The exact criteria for admission will vary dependent on the point of entry.

- **Entry to Reception—Year 6.** The School will review a reference or school report from any previous/present school. In addition students will attend a taster day, during which their numeracy and literacy skills, socialisation and suitability will be assessed. Children entering the Nursery and Reception will only need to attend for a half-day.
- **Entry to Years 7 and 9.** Selection will be based on a combination of an interview with the Head and the relevant Head of School, results from the Frensham Heights School entrance examination/scholarship examination/audition and relevant information gathered from the student's present school, including recent reports. Candidates from Preparatory Schools will be assessed by our entrance process, though offers may then be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the Independent Schools' Common Entrance Examinations. Current Frensham students will follow the same admissions process and transfer to Year 7 should not be assumed as automatic. Applicants from an international background will also take an English as a Second Language assessment to ensure they are in a position to access the whole school curriculum and culture.

We consider all of the above information in the expectation of 9 GCSEs being taken in the future, achieving a minimum of Grade C in all. The entrance process normally takes place in January.

- **Entry to Other Year Groups below Year 12.** Whilst the School will consider offering admission to students at other points in their school career, it is seen as unusual and will depend on the availability of places. In this event we will set an appropriate entrance examination, review recent school reports and conduct an interview. The School does not view entry into Year 11 as advisable given the difficulty in matching GCSE courses, coursework and examination boards, though entry into Year 10 is possible.
- **Entry to the Sixth Form.** External candidates will sit a 'general examination paper', either an entrance examination or a scholarship examination, and be interviewed by the Head and Head of Sixth Form.

Those seeking scholarships will be auditioned or submit a portfolio, or achieve high grades in the scholarship written paper. Scholarship candidates for creative and performing arts scholarships, including music, will be expected to perform well both in their audition/portfolio and in the written paper. Internal scholarship candidates will also sit the general and scholarship examinations, be interviewed and submit an audition/portfolio.

All candidates for entry to the sixth form are expected to achieve at least 6 A* - C grades at GCSE, with a requirement for B grades and above in the subjects they wish to pursue for AS Level. The entrance process normally takes place in November.

Any student who achieves solely low pass grades (D/E/U) at AS level will have their progress to Year 13 reviewed and it may be decided that repeating Year 12 is the best educational option.

- **Overseas Candidates.** Candidates who are living overseas and unable to attend the entrance examinations days can normally receive a copy of the relevant examinations which must be sat under supervised conditions.
- **Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.** The School is not designed to meet the needs of all Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). However, the School is sympathetic to those with special educational needs or difficulties and we do have a qualified Learning Support Coordinator who can assist in arranging some support (which may involve extra cost) where appropriate for students. The parents of candidates with LDD should consult with the school's Registrar who will organise for a review of any educational psychologist's reports, recent reports and any other relevant information by the School's Learning Support Coordinator before advising if a candidate should be put forward for the entrance process.
- **Bursaries.** The School offers a limited number of means-tested bursaries for those with genuine financial need. Application forms are available from the Registrar or Bursar's Office.

Admission Register

The School will maintain an admission register for each student, compiled before their first day of attendance, containing:

- Name in full
- Sex
- Name and address of every person known to be a parent, and with whom they normally reside, and who holds parental responsibility
- If notified that a student will live at another address: the full name and address of the parent with whom the student will normally live in future, and the date effective
- At least one telephone number at which the parent can be contacted in an emergency
- Day, month, year of birth
- Day, month, year of admission or re-admission to the School
- Name and address of the school last attended
- An indication of day or boarding status

- The name of the destination school (or schools) notified by a parent, and the first day of attendance there

Notifying Local Authority

The School will notify Surrey County Council when a pupil's name is added or removed to the admissions register at non-standard transitions, ie where a compulsory school-aged child joins School other than in Reception Class (this is called a non-standard admission) and leaves School before completing Year 11 or Year 13. The School will also provide information to Surrey County Council for standard transitions if requested.

For deletions from the Admissions Register the School must notify Surrey County Council as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, and in any event before deleting the child's name. For non-standard admissions the notification is to be made within 5 days of the entry on the admissions register.

The School will also notify the local authority when a pupil fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days (continuous).

Where a pupil has not returned after 10 school days of authorised leave, or 20 school days after unauthorised leave, the School and Local Authority will jointly make reasonable enquiries about the child's whereabouts, and only if these fail, and in accordance with the School's terms and conditions, the pupil may be deleted from the Admissions Register.

Attendance Register

The School maintains an attendance register for all pupils, the register will be completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. It will show whether the pupil is:

- present;
- absent;
- attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the Governors and supervised by a person approved by the Head, and including work experience or sporting activity);
- unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it; unavailability of transport provided by school or local authority, where the home is not within walking distance);
- taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the Governors or a person acting on the Governors' behalf; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs);
- taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

A pupil may be marked in the attendance register as unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances where the school site, or part of it, is closed or where transport normally provided for that pupil by the School is unavailable. Where a pupil is attending another school at which he/she is a registered pupil he/she must be marked in the attendance register as attending an approved educational activity.

DfE has a standard set of codes for schools to use in registers. The School recognizes this system in which an N is first entered when no reason has yet been provided for absence, and this is later corrected (ideally within two weeks) using the appropriate symbol (in this case only, overwriting is allowable in an electronic system) and N must not be allowed to remain indefinitely. Where the reason for absence is not initially known an O is entered and a reason entered within the O at a later stage if it is known (ideally within two weeks) but, if a reason is never established, the O remains as unauthorised absence. In the case of sixth-form students, the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence is not necessary, and the timing of registration may be more flexible.

Attendance and Absence

There is no longer a requirement for the School to return absence data to the DfE but it will comply with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements. The School will use the Attendance Register and tutor registration to monitor student attendance and absence.

Dealing with absences – through tutors registration

If a student is absent without reason a tutor will mark the student as B on school base. This is in the first instance an unauthorised absence – and is followed up with a call home from Reception. This is then changed to an A if the absence is authorised /explained by the parent (for example unwell /medical appointment/heads master permission has been given). If the student is a boarder, the House Master is contacted in the first instance to see if there is an explanation for their absence.

If a child is marked as “unauthorised absence” and no contact has been able to be made with the parents for 24 hours, the tutor/House Master would flag this up to HoS / or DH) for information, advice and further investigation.

Students who are sitting exams and whose timetables have been suspended for a period of time – will be marked as SL (Study Leave) during the day. Students will complete study leave forms which are collated and held by Reception.

Boarders

In addition to the twice daily registration by the academic tutor, evening registers are taken to ensure we have all our boarders in our houses overnight and in our care.

- If a boarder is not present and is expected to be so, the housemaster is contacted by the duty member of staff in the first instance to see if there has been a late change of plan.
- If the House Master is unaware of a reason as to why the student is absent a call is made to the guardian or parent to start communications.
- If the parents /Guardian cannot be contacted or there is no explanation for the absence – the SMT on call is contacted and a “missing child” process is started.
- The House Master is responsible for monitoring known absences and any unexplained absences. All house staff are aware of the importance of monitoring attendance; in particularly for those students who are overseas boarders. If there is more than a week of explained absence from the boarding house, the Deputy Head would be advised and would if appropriate start making contact with the family to ensure all is well.

Tier 4 students/overseas boarders.

The Boarding Leadership Team are very aware of the challenges that being an overseas boarder or parents can face, in terms of logistics and getting to and from school and the beginning and end of term. It is here that we see most absences for this group. All known overseas boarders are asked for their end of term / beginning of term arrangements well in advance. The school assists in booking of taxis to assist parents and generally works with the parents to try and get the student back in good time.

- In the rare situation that a child does not return as expected, contact is made immediately with the family/guardian/agent and an update is expected. If contact cannot be made, the Housemaster would inform "SMT on call" – so that it can be followed up as necessary and appropriate (see Missing Person procedure)
- The Boarding Leadership Team know that if a boarder is absent overnight for more than 2 consecutive nights (even with permissions) that they should advise and inform the Deputy Head. She will then advise on further actions and communicating to ascertain the reason for a prolonged absence.
- If the student is not back in school after 2 days (unauthorised absence), the Head is informed.
- For Tier 4 students, on the 10th "instance" of consecutive unexplained absence the Head will contact the UKBA and inform them of the absence, knowing that this is likely to revoke their sponsorship. For the purpose of simplicity an "instance" would be an Evening registration on the boarding house and an am registration with the tutor)
- For overseas, non Tier 4 students, the head would formally communicate with the parents to start discussing the student's position and future in the school.

The report to UKVI on the above changes to student circumstances will include the last recorded residential address, telephone number and email address held for the migrant student (the Data Protection Act allows this disclosure). The report should be sent using the sponsorship management system (SMS) account.

KEEPING THE ADMISSION AND ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

The School's Registers are computerised. Amendments must show the original and amended entries, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name of the person making the amendment. An additional back-up copy of the Registers must be made either electronically or as a printed copy, not less than once a month. For example, each month's permanent electronic copy might be stored on a CD or flash drive/USB device. Each of these additional copies of the admission register and the attendance register must be retained for three years after the end of the school year in question.

Discipline

The School has a duty of care to all of its students, whilst parents or guardians have a duty to ensure attendance and the good behaviour of their sons/daughters. All students at Frensham Heights are expected to respond positively to the School's ethos, to contribute wherever they can to the community and to follow the School's policies as set down. A copy of the School Rules is available on application.

Regarding behaviour, procedures are based on the expectation that the majority of our students behave well most of the time. The School follows the classroom conventions, has a dress code and it has to be accepted that sustaining the positive atmosphere of the School is in part dependent on parental support for the School's behaviour management and other relevant policies (Section 2.8 of Staff Handbook –Behaviour Management Policy). Should students not behave appropriately, the School has a number of disciplinary sanctions which will be used:

- **Minor offences.** Minor offences, such as incomplete or late work or misbehaviour, will mostly be dealt with by an interview with the relevant staff member which will result in a decision on how to modify the behaviour and set a time for review. If offences are repeated then other more senior colleagues may be involved and students may be given lunch time, after school or Saturday morning catch up times or they may lose certain privileges. For non-academic issues they may also be asked to complete tasks which benefit the whole community.
- **Vandalism and Damage.** If a student causes damage to school property, either accidentally or deliberately, then this will be reported to the Head of School, Deputy Head and Bursar. In addition to minor sanctions, the cost of repairs may be charged to end of term bills.
- **Serious Offences.** Serious offences, even on the first occasion, may lead to suspension; all such decisions will be made by the Head (or in his absence the Deputy Head). The School considers the following to be an illustrative rather than an exhaustive list of examples of serious offences:
 - All forms of bullying (verbal, physical, emotional, in person or via technology).
 - Violent behaviour towards any other member of the school community.
 - Intolerance of others.
 - Theft.
 - Smoking offences.
 - Alcohol offences.
 - Any form of drug use.

In the event of a serious offence, the matter will be investigated by the Head and/or the Deputy Head and a decision will be made about the appropriate length of the suspension (extremely serious offences may lead to expulsion as set out below and in other policies, such as "Substance Use and MisUse"). These decisions will be communicated to the student and their parents as soon as is practicable and all such decisions can be appealed following the School's complaints procedure (this is available on request).

Suspensions are for a fixed time. A student is excluded from the School for this time, and this punishment must be seen as a warning that repeated behaviour of this sort may lead to expulsion. Suspensions are recorded in the School's Students' Sanctions Register.

Internal suspensions may be used to reinforce to students the need for a change in their behaviour and to remove them from situations which are felt to be affecting the positive education of others. Internally, suspended students will be expected to work, whilst closely monitored, on work set, but they will not participate in lessons, extra-curricular activities, games or shared experiences.

Removal/Withdrawals

Parents may be required, during or at the end of term, to remove a student, temporarily or permanently, from the School or boarding if, after consultation with the student and parent(s), the Head is of the opinion that by reason of a student's conduct or progress, the student is unwilling or unable to benefit sufficiently from the educational opportunities and/or the community life offered by the School. The Head will act fairly in all cases having due regard to the interests of the student and the School.

Exclusions

A student may be formally expelled from the School if it is proved on the balance of probability that the student has committed a series of repeat offences or a single grave breach of School discipline or a serious criminal offence. Expulsion is reserved for the most serious offences. In the event of an alleged serious offence the matter will be investigated by the Head and the Deputy Head and a decision will be made, following consultation with the student and parents. The Head will act fairly in all cases having due regard to the interests of the student and the School. The Head's decision can be appealed to a Governors' Review if requested by a parent (please see the School's Students' and Parents' Complaints Procedure for details).

Appeals

Students and parents can appeal against any disciplinary sanctions or expulsion using the School's Students' and Parents' Complaints Procedure. Initially this should be undertaken informally by talking to the appropriate member of staff. For more serious issues a formal written letter should be sent to the Head. If the appeal is against the decision of the Head then the letter should be sent to the Chair of Governors, via the Bursar (Clerk to the Governors), for an Appeal Panel Review.