

Attendance Policy

ISSR Part 3, Paragraph 7, 15

Recommended review period:	Annual
Review by:	Vice Principal – Pastoral and Boarding
Date reviewed:	September 2018
Next Review:	September 2019



St Joseph's College prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to each of its pupils, from EYFS across to Sixth Form, including Boarding. *The Governing body has ultimate responsibility for meeting all the College's regulatory requirements, which they delegate to the Principal, supported by the Senior Leadership team. In line with good practice and as part of the Governors' due diligence, the Board of Governors' reviews this policy annually.*

St Joseph's College, as an aware employer, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and young people as its number one priority. Robust recruitment, selection and induction procedures operate throughout the College and extend to organisations and services linked on its behalf.

1. Introduction

The College is required by law to maintain a pupil attendance register and ensure that the admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education Regulations 2006¹. The register must be taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon for all day pupils of compulsory school age. For welfare, health and safety, pastoral and educational reasons, St Joseph's also registers its EYFS, Sixth Form and Boarding students. With regard to attendance matters, the College complies with The Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, The Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014, as well as DfE National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning, academic success and students achieving their potential.

2. Responsibilities and Rights

The College

- The College expects all pupils to attend school regularly and to arrive on time in a fit condition to learn
- The College will encourage good attendance and will promptly investigate unexplained and unjustified absenteeism and lateness
- The College's staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality
- The College will work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern
- The College will instigate its Missing Child policy as soon as a child is identified as not being where they should be
- The College will maintain its attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The College will report to the LA in which the pupil live, if:
 - A student has 10 days or more days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence)
 - There are significant concerns about a child's attendance (failure to regularly attend)
 - A child leaves the school and their next school is unconfirmed or found to be a false school
 - A child is being educated outside the school system
 - When the family has apparently moved away,
 - When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend school,
 - When the child is in custody for more than four months,
 - If the child is permanently excluded²

Pupils

- Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time

¹ ISSR, Part 3, Paragraph 15

² ISSR, Part 3, Paragraph 7



- Pupils will attend all lessons punctually
- Pupils will not leave the school site without permission
- Pupils will sign in and out at Reception if they have permission to leave school before the end of the day, or arrive after registration

Parents

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance. The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the child regularly attends the school at which he/she is registered
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents are responsible for immediately informing the College of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first morning of any absence
- Parents will avoid arranging family holidays during term time
- Parents will request and complete from the Principal/Head of Prep a Leave of Absence form if their child requires time off school for reasons other than illness or medical appointments
- Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance and punctuality
- Parents of overseas students will ensure their child travels on appropriate dates which ensure that their child is present on the first and last date of each half term
- Parents must, on removing a child from the College, provide the name and address of their child's next school

3. Roles

The Form Tutor (Senior School) Class Teacher (Prep School)

At St Joseph's College the Form Tutor/Class Teacher is seen as the key figure in monitoring regular and punctual attendance.

The Tutor should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual to registration;
- carry out registration in the prescribed manner and accurately maintain the registration document
- not rely on students' hearsay regarding whether another student is present – only students who are visibly present can be marked as present
- challenge students who are not punctual
- be alert to emerging patterns of absence and lateness
- alert the relevant Pastoral Manager/Head/Deputy Head of Prep when there is a problem which has not been solved by the above procedures;

The Subject Teacher in the Senior School

Subject teachers should:

- take a register at the beginning of every lesson
- not rely on students' hearsay regarding whether another student is present – only students who are visibly present can be marked as present
- follow up any concerns immediately about a student's whereabouts by checking with either Reception, the Form Tutor, or relevant Pastoral Manager

The Pastoral Manager/Head/Deputy Head of Prep



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Pastoral Managers and the Deputy Head of Prep are responsible for monitoring the attendance of their year groups. They should:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality on a regular basis by checking registers, signing in and out books at Reception, attendance and punctuality data, as well as through pastoral meetings and liaising with individual Tutors and the relevant Receptionist
- Monitor individual Tutor groups, following up with individual Tutors, instances where incidents or patterns of absenteeism are causing concern or not being effectively addressed
- Regularly discuss attendance at Pastoral Meetings
- Ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attenders
- Follow up any instances of internal truancy with appropriate sanctions
- Liaise as relevant with SLT and other key pastoral staff including the College Nurse, Head of Boarding and Child Protection Officers
- Consult where appropriate with other agencies, in liaison with the Child Protection Officer, where there are serious concerns about a pupil's attendance

Senior and Prep School Reception

Each receptionist should:

- Carry out first day calling arrangements for unexplained absences;
- Record reasons for absence from school or from a lesson on SIMS registers, including information re peripatetic lessons, medical and dental appointments, student in sick bay/with Nurse
- Liaise with other key pastoral staff to determine possible causes for absences
- Alert relevant staff if a child is deemed to be 'missing'

Reception

- Prepares weekly % attendance, unexplained absences and punctuality lists for Pastoral Managers, Assistant Key Stage Managers, Senior Pastoral Manager, the Head and Deputy Head of Prep and the Vice Principal

SLT

- Will instigate the College's Missing Child procedures if staff are unable to locate a student who is marked as present in school or in Boarding
- Will inform the relevant LA if a student has had 10 day or more days of unauthorised absence, fails to attend regularly, or if the name of a student's next school on leaving the College is unknown, or found to be false, if a child is permanently excluded, or educated outside the school system

Procedures

4. Registers

Schools are required by law to call attendance registers twice daily for students of a compulsory school age. At St Joseph's, a register is taken at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions by the Form Tutor (Senior School, including Sixth Form) and Class Teacher (Prep School) for all year groups across the school. As an additional layer of health and safety, a register is taken for each lesson during the school day in the Senior School. It is recognised that registers are of paramount importance and that whether kept in paper form or electronically – they are legal documents. At St Joseph's, registers are taken electronically.

The College complies with and uses the 2009 DCSF recommended use of codes for recording attendance and absences – see Appendix A



The register must show whether a pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- attending an approved educational activity
- unable to attend through exceptional circumstances.

The College will follow up absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to use

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the College has either given approval in advance for the child to be away, or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Parents may not authorise absence; only schools can do this. Should the College have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- illness, medical or dental appointments;
- part-time and/or temporary education off-site
- days of religious observance;
- study leave;
- exclusion;
- attending interviews or taster days;
- approved sporting activities;
- educational visits
- family bereavement;
- a child caring for a sick or disabled family member (authorisation should, in such instances, be of limited duration);
- involvement in a public performance;
- family holidays (when the school has given approval in advance and for no more than 10 days);
- work experience;
- 'special' occasions as approved by the Principal;
- lateness (when the child arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation)
- a student is unable to attend through exceptional circumstances

Excessive amounts of authorised absence are damaging to the continuity of learning. Holidays are not generally allowed in during term time except where there are mitigating exceptional circumstances. The College will therefore, authorise absence sparingly and only after careful consideration, particularly where a child may have a history of irregular attendance, be in examination years, or be making inadequate progress.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence, or where the explanation offered is considered by the College to be unacceptable.



Absence should not be authorised in the following circumstances:

- no explanation is offered by the parent/carer;
- the explanation offered is unsatisfactory (eg shopping, minding the house, etc);
- family holidays (which are taken without the College's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed by the school);
- lateness when the child arrives after the register has closed and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation.

Persistent Absence

The College recognises that persistent absence may be a sign of more serious issues affecting a child. The Form Tutor must liaise with key pastoral staff including the College Nurse, Pastoral Managers, Senior Pastoral Manager, Vice Principal or Child Protection Officer where there are concerns about persistent absences. In cases of continued persistent absence the College will inform the relevant LA

Approved Educational Activity

Children who are educated off site or dual registered, or who are engaged in supervised educational activities away from school premises, need not be marked as authorised absent, provided that such activities are:

- of an educational nature,
- approved by the school,
- supervised by a person approved by the College

These children may be recorded as on an approved educational activity. This means that for statistical purposes, particular activities (such as approved work experience, field trips and educational visits, approved sporting activities and link courses) can be counted as statistically 'present'. The nature of the activity must, however, be recorded by use of appropriate code. This is important in order to ensure that an accurate record of those children physically present on site at any given time is instantly available.

First Day Response

First day response to pupil absence is undoubtedly the most effective way of monitoring attendance and safeguarding pupils. It is a strategy which is aimed at the entire school community. It can demonstrate that a school is, at the same time, both vigilant and caring. It is a proactive means of ensuring that pupils and parents know that the College will promptly investigate all questionable or unexplained absenteeism.

At St Joseph's the Prep and Senior Receptionists will make every effort to contact the parents of any child who is absent that day. The College will also record the reason for the absence on SIMS.

Registration

While there is a statutory requirement to complete registers - the daily requirement to register children can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children formally from home and serve as an introduction to the school session, whilst setting the tone for the rest of the school day. It is also an opportunity for Tutors to engage with their students, develop relationships with tutees and check on their academic progress, uniform and general well-being.



Prep School

In our Nursery, a register is completed for each morning and afternoon session by the Nursery Coordinator or her deputy. In addition, parents / carers sign, date and time the arrival and collection of their child on the daily Nursery Registration Sheet.

Registration in the morning for Reception to Year 6 lasts from 8.40am to 8.45am, Monday to Friday. Registration in the afternoon lasts from 12.55pm to 1.00pm (Reception, Infants Juniors). During registration time the Class Teacher should:

- Greet the class formally
- Take the register, only marking as present those students who are physically in the room.
- Students will be called by their first name and will respond formally
- Foster and promote good habits for attendance, time keeping and punctuality
- Engage with students, monitoring informally their pastoral and academic progress
- Read out any notices and reminders
- Check uniform and challenge any infringements
- Hand out any letters
- Request replies to any College letters, invitations etc
- Remind students about imminent key dates/events
- Acknowledge/respond to any notes from parents

At the end of the day pupils are personally handed over to their parent / carer by the teacher. Pupils remaining for after-school Clubs or Prep are marked on the class' weekly after-school register. Pupils who remain in Prep are signed out (date and time) by their parents / carer on collection. Children who attend Clubs are handed over to their parent / carer at the end of Clubs at 4.45 pm.

Senior School

Registration in the morning for Years 7-13 lasts from 8.40am to 8.45am, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 8.40am to 9.10am on Tuesday and Friday but this will usually include a year assembly. Registration in the afternoon, Monday to Friday lasts from 1.50pm to 2.00pm. During registration time the Tutor should:

- Greet the class formally
- Take the register, only marking those students who are physically present in the room. Students will be called by their first name and will respond formally
- Foster and promote good habits for attendance, time keeping and punctuality
- Read out any notices and reminders
- Check uniform and challenge any infringements
- Request replies to any College letters, invitations etc
- Remind students about imminent key dates/events
- Check Study Diaries are being filled in and kept correctly
- Check parents are signing Study Diaries and acknowledge/respond to any notes from parents
- Engage with students, monitoring informally their pastoral and academic progress

Students who are late must sign in at Reception and all students who leave the premises during the day must sign out and have permission from their parents, which is checked by Reception staff.

Sixth Form students are not allowed off site during the school day apart from Upper Sixth students who can go off site as a privilege one lunchtime a week and then only with permission from the Assistant Head of Sixth Form.



Senior School Clubs

Students have to sign in and out of the after school homework club in the library. For all other after school clubs, staff maintain paper registers to sign students in and out.

Boarding

Boarding staff must know the whereabouts of boarders in their charge at all times. If a boarder is deemed to be 'missing' staff must implement the College's Missing Child Policy, including working with the police where appropriate.

- Boarding students are registered each morning before Breakfast in the relevant Boarding house
- Boarding students are registered each evening immediately before or after supper
- Boarding students are registered before 'lights out' and a check made that every student is in their room
- There are signing in and out books in both Boarding houses
- At weekends, boarders must see a member of staff before signing out and when signing back in they must see a member of staff again
- Boarders are not allowed into town on their own, they must be in groups of at least 3. Boarders who are deemed not old/mature/responsible enough will not be allowed into town at the weekend
- Boarders who request permission to visit a family member/guardian overnight at the weekend etc will have to have had a fax/email approved from their parents/guardian by the Head of Boarding
- Students who are off site must all have their mobile phones with them and switched on.
- Students who expect to return later than expected should warn staff as soon as possible

Reference:

College's Missing Child Policy

DfE NMS for Boarding Schools 2015

DfE EYFS Statutory Framework 2014

DfE School attendance - Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities 2014

Keeping Children in Education 2018

Education Regulations 2006



Appendix A

In order for the College to comply with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the national codes below will be used,.

Authorised Absences

/\	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical / Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code / description)
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study leave
T	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller absence
U	Late (after registration closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances or not required to be in school – eg severe weather, transport disruptions
Z	Pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure

