

## P9 – PUPIL ATTENDANCE

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### 1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1. Continuity is a key part of a successful education. Very often, if a pupil misses a day, they do not understand fully the content of lessons the following day, further compounding the difficulties caused by absence.
- 1.2. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and to take seriously problems that may lead to non-attendance.

### 2.0 POLICY

- 2.1. This Policy is consistent with The Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2006: SI 2006/1751 and the subsequent Amendments (2010 and 2013)
- 2.2. The College believes that in order to enable effective teaching and learning to take place, regular attendance is necessary. It seeks to enable this by:
  - a. recording attendance during registration periods twice daily
  - b. recording attendance in every lesson in the Senior School
  - c. regularly checking reasons for absence with parents or guardians
  - d. supporting those who are having problems with attendance
  - e. supporting pupils in catching up work missed through absence
  - f. publishing terms dates at least 12 months in advance
  - g. arranging peripatetic music lessons so that they have a minimal effect on timetabled lessons
  - h. regularly reporting children's attendance to parents through the isams app
- 2.3. If pupils are absent from College for any reason, parents should email [absence@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:absence@sdmail.org.uk) or telephone the College Office before 9am on the first and each consecutive morning of absence with reason for absence and estimation of likely duration. The College switchboard (020 8516 7200) is open from 0800 to 1730, Monday to Friday, during term time.
- 2.4. On returning to the College, pupils must provide their form tutor with a letter from their parents explaining the reason for their absence. An email from the parental address which the College holds on file is acceptable in lieu of a letter.

No matter what the cause of absence, pupils are urged to catch up on missed lessons immediately. Normally, missed work will be found on Firefly. Teachers will make every effort to help the pupil to catch up if they ask for help.

- 2.5. Parents are obliged to inform the College in advance or on the day, before 0800, of pupil absence and the reason for it. In the event of an unexplained pupil absence, the College believes it to be best practice to alert parents and will endeavour to do so when practically possible.
- 2.6. Parents are asked, wherever possible, to make routine medical appointments (e.g. dental appointments, non-major or non-urgent operations and check-ups) outside of school hours or during holidays.
- 2.7. In the event of prolonged absence for medical reasons the school will make every effort to send set work to the pupil, normally via Firefly, but additional 'hard copy' material cannot be guaranteed.
- 2.8. Parents are requested not to take their children out of school for non-medical reasons unless the absence is absolutely essential. Parents are required to request permission for such absence well in advance by way of a letter or email addressed to the Headmaster, or the Head of the Junior School, as appropriate. Only the Headmaster has the discretionary power to grant any leave of absence for more than a day. DfES regulations on this matter are clear. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right and the school reserves the right to withhold permission if it feels that the educational drawbacks of the request outweigh the advantages.
- 2.9. Parents can send urgent messages to their children via the College Office during the school day. Parents should not request that their child is removed from timetabled lessons or activities to meet with them during the school day, unless such meetings are required by social services or court order, and are arranged in advance through the third party and the Deputy Head Pastoral (Junior School) or appropriate Head of Section (Senior School). This excludes meetings between College Staff, children and parents, which are arranged by the College.
- 2.10. The College is proud of its cultural diversity and, although holy days are taken into consideration in the setting of the College term dates, we recognise that families of different faiths have days of observance that fall within the school calendar. This is balanced against the need for consistency in the education of pupils and, where possible, parents are encouraged to consider ways of observing faith holidays that do not affect school attendance. Each request for absence on the grounds of faith will be considered on an individual basis and must be submitted to the Headmaster, or Head of Junior School.
- 2.11. Within the registration software that the school uses there is an important distinction between 'authorised' absence (which occurs if the Headmaster or his delegate has given permission) and 'unauthorised' absence (when permission has not been given). This information would appear on a school transcript and might, for example, impact adversely on the university application process for the pupil in question.

- 2.12. Teachers are not expected to set bespoke or additional work for pupils who are absent.
- 2.13. Tutors are responsible for keeping a watching brief over pupil attendance and will contact parents if they feel there is a matter of concern, such as frequent absence.
- 2.14. The College wishes to work closely with parents to ensure that attendance is as full as possible.
- 2.15. The College recognises the difference between wilful truancy and school refusal, and will support students who are school refusers or at risk of becoming a school refusal in line with the *Safeguarding Policy (P1)* and related document *Supporting School Refusers*.
- 2.16. The College has a duty to report frequent, unauthorised absence to the appropriate Local Area Authority if the pupil is deemed to be ‘missing from Education’ or if the College has safeguarding concerns about the pupil.
- 2.17. Frequent unauthorised absence and unauthorised lateness may result in sanctions as outlined in the *College’s Behaviour Management Policy (P3)*, including possible permanent exclusion from the College

<b>Pupil Attendance</b>			
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