

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Policy area: 1 – Quality assurance
Date last revised: 23/09/18

Date established: September 2014
Date of next revision: September 2020

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Advisory Board and the Head of School on a biannual basis, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Advisory Board and the Head of School in November 2018. It is due for review in August 2019.

Signed

Daniel Jones
Chair of Advisory Board
Date: 23/09/19



Rod Jackson
Head of School
Date: 23/09/19



Overview

Policy statement

“There is a strong correlation between the amount of absence and the qualifications children achieve” [Department for Education, 2015](#).

Children must receive an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16, ([School Leaving Age, DfE](#)).

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. ICS is legally required to inform the local authorities when a student is persistently absent and the Home Office under the Visa Sponsorship Programme. Following the guidance on attendance by the DfE, we will authorise absence on individual request but only in exceptional circumstances.

Purpose

At ICS we are committed to providing a full and effective education for all our students to ensure they develop their potential in all that they do. We believe that full attendance from every student is required for them to be able to benefit from the education that we are offering. We expect all students to attend school regularly, arrive at school on time and be prepared for the school day. We will do all we can to ensure that any problems which impede attendance are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

Applicability

This policy applies to all ICS staff, parents/guardians and students.

Statutory guidance

This policy is written in accordance with DfE guidance on school attendance and absence: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>
[School attendance, DfE July 2019](#)
[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September, 2019\)](#)
[Consultation on improving information on identifying children missing education \(September, 2016\)](#)

and with due regard to:

The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
[The Education \(Independent Schools Standards\) Regulations, January 2014](#)
[The Independent School Standards Guidance April 2019](#)

Access

This policy is available on the ICS website and is available on request from the school offices. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join ICS, through our newsletters and our website.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

Failure to comply

Members of staff at ICS who do not comply with this policy must expect intervention from the Senior Leadership Team. Parents/guardians who do not ensure that their children go to school regularly must understand that ICS is legally required to inform the Local Authority or Home Office, as applicable.

Attendance and absence policy

1 When a child can miss school

A child can miss school if either:

- They are too ill to go in
- They have got advance permission from the school.

2 Holidays in term time

2.1 In exceptional circumstances parents may approach the Primary and/or Secondary Principal if they wish to take their child(ren) away during term time.

Parents/guardians can only do this if at least 5 days prior to travel, an Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances form is sent to the Primary or Secondary Principal using the form in [Appendix A](#). All such requests should be directed to the Principal through the appropriate school office:

Primary school: primary@ics.uk.net

Secondary school: secondary.attendance@ics.uk.net

If an Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances is submitted after the absence has begun, it is automatically marked as unauthorized

There are exceptional circumstances that will be taken into account on a case by case decision

2.2 The Principal decides how many days a child can be away from school.

2.3 Parents can be fined for taking their child(ren) on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

3 Parental responsibilities

- 3.1 Most parents recognise the importance of regular attendance in improving student achievement and they make sure their children come to school on time every day.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of all parents and guardians to report their child's absence from school by 9.00am by telephone, or email to either the Primary or Secondary school office.
- 3.3 For students who take the school bus, we request that parents and guardians inform the school bus service (Smartbus 01959 700476) as early as possible on the day of absence. (Please note it is also necessary to contact the school directly regarding the absence from school.)
- 3.4 When the school has not been notified of a student's absence, the school office will contact the family on the morning of the first day of the absence.
- 3.5 Where a student has not returned to School for ten days after an authorised absence, or has been absent without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the student can be removed from the Admissions Register when the School and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This applies if the School does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

Attendance and absence procedure

1 ICS's roles and responsibilities

- 1.1 Non-Attendance is a student welfare and safeguarding issue. The School takes its safeguarding responsibilities in these areas very seriously.
- 1.2 Should a student not arrive at school by the designated time and no explanatory telephone call/email has been received, a member of staff will make contact with the child's parent immediately.
- 1.3 If a student becomes unwell whilst at school, parents are informed and parents/carers are requested to collect their child as soon as possible.
- 1.4 The Primary and Secondary School Administrators ensure that the attendance of all students is closely monitored and absence is effectively dealt with.

What can parents do to help?

- ✓ Let the school know as soon as possible why their child is absent from school
- ✓ Send a note when their child returns to school
- ✓ Try to make appointments outside school time
- ✓ Do not allow their child to have time off school unless it is really necessary

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

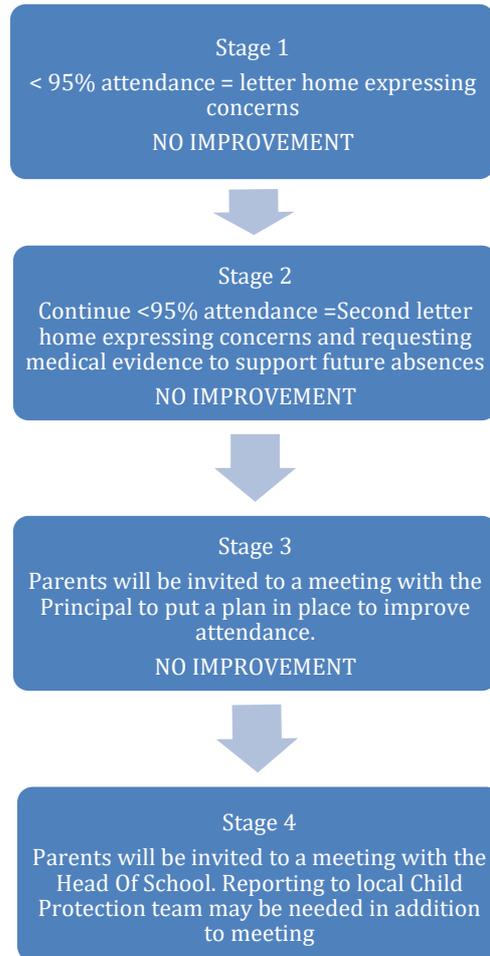
- ✓ Talk to your child, it may be something simple
- ✓ Talk to the Pastoral Co-ordinator and staff at the school

2 Absence

2.1 Students are expected to have 100% attendance rate to ensure maximum learning opportunities and development.

2.2 Persistent Absence

Where students are persistently absent, less than 95% attendance rate, the school will implement the following procedure:



3 Lateness

3.1 At the start of the school day all students are expected to be in school for registration. Any child arriving later than registration should enter school via the main entrance reporting to the school office. If accompanied, a parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register. The child will then be sent to their classroom.

3.2 Registration for all students is:

Primary: 8:45am

Secondary: 8:45am

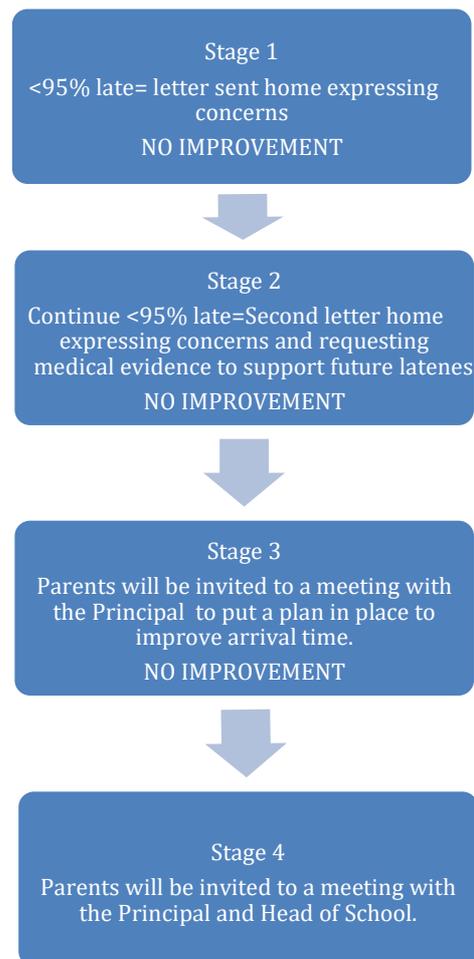
Students who arrive after the times above will be marked as tardy and must obtain an admission slip from reception before going to class.

*Secondary School students who arrive after 8.45 am must sign in on the late register at reception and meet with the Attendance officer or a member of the leadership team on duty to determine and record the consequences.

3.3 Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

- 3.4 If a child is late on a continuous basis (more than 5% of school days), parents/carers will receive a formal letter stating our concerns with a copy placed in the student's file.
- 3.5 Persistent lateness and absence

Where students are late more than 95% of the time, the school will implement the following procedure:



4 The role of parents/carers, students and teachers

Parents/carers

- 4.1 Strong links and effective communication with parents is vital.
- Parents must telephone the School by 9:00am on the first day of any absence to explain the reason for absence and give an expected return date.

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance. Students must arrive on time and be ready to learn.
 - Parents must provide an up to date contact number and an emergency number that may be used in exceptional circumstances. It is important that, should the need arise, we can contact parents without delay.
 - On a student's return to school, following an absence, a written note or a doctor's note should be provided. The Principal reserves the right to ask for medical evidence before making a decision as to whether to authorise the absence.
- 4.2 Parents who do not give an acceptable reason for the absence of their child must understand that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, if no notification is received.
- 4.3 If children have medical appointments parents/carers are asked to supply appointment cards.
- 4.4 The journey to school for some students may involve the use of one or more forms of public transport. Parents and carers must ensure that their child leaves in plenty of time to allow for possible delay.
- 4.5 Parents must commit to ensuring that students attend on a full time basis unless medical evidence proves that this is not possible.

Students

- 4.6 Students are expected to be responsible and independent. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, they are personally responsible for maintaining good attendance.
- 4.7 Good attendance also means good punctuality.
- 4.8 Good attendance means attending lessons. Arriving in school and not attending lessons does not constitute good attendance.
- 4.9 All students will be provided with a timetable showing clearly their own lesson schedule.
- 4.10 Students must attend all lessons on their timetables
- 4.11 Students are expected to attend punctually every day.
- 4.12 Students will not leave the School site without permission from staff.

Teachers

4.13 Teachers record attendance at each lesson.

4.14 Teachers report absence from lessons to the leadership team.

5 Overnight trips

5.1 As a part of our curriculum, both Primary and Secondary students may be asked to attend an overnight trip during term time. These trips are considered a part of our regular school attendance policy and absence from these trips must be requested in advance. Only in extreme circumstances will absences from these trips be authorised.

6 Children at Risk of Missing Education

6.1 ICS must inform the local authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer (do we have one of these? Who is it) that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded.

6.2 ICS informs the 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 5 days or more. Where children have been absent from school and the school has been unable to contact a parent or guardian the Local Authority will be informed after 5 consecutive days.

6.3 ICS must inform the local authority using the 'starters and leavers' form designated by Westminster to notify the authority of children that have not arrived as expected and children who have left.

Appendix A: Request for leave of absence during term time

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES -REQUEST FORM

STUDENT/PUPIL DETAILS		
NAME OF STUDENT:	YEAR LEVEL/FORM	DATE OF BIRTH:
SIBLING DETAILS AT PRIMARY/SECONDARY ICS SITE:		
Name:	Date of Birth	Primary/Secondary
Name:	Date of Birth:	Primary/Secondary
I request permission for my child to be absent from school between:		
First Day of Absence from School	Date of Return to School	Total School Days absent
<p>Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Principal will not be able to consider your request without a clear rationale and you may be requested to submit supporting documentation.</p>		
<p>NUMBER OF DAYS PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED THIS ACADEMIC YEAR _____</p>		
Signed (Parent/Guardian):		Date:
Print Name:		
For School Use Only		
The school has considered your request for absence in exceptional circumstances and the absence will be recorded as follows:		
Number of Authorised Sessions:	Number of Unauthorised Sessions:	Number of Unauthorised Sessions to date:
Signed:	Position:	Date: