


Attendance and Absence Policy

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| Next review (date): | January 2022 |
| Signed: (Head) |  |

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).

The aim of this policy is to:

- Make explicit the responsibilities of different members of the school community in promoting student attendance.
- Highlight the safeguarding implications of absence.
- Make clear how the school will record and report attendance and lateness figures.

Scope and Terms of Reference

The following government guidance has been consulted in the writing of this policy:

- [School Attendance](#) August 2020
- [Addendum: Recording Attendance in relation to Coronavirus](#) January 2021
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) January 2021
- [Children Missing Education](#) September 2016
- [The Education Act](#) 2011
- [The Independent Schools Standards](#) August 2019

The following ICS London policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

This policy applies to:

- Staff
- Parents and Guardians – referred to as Parents
- Students

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. 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.

School Responsibilities - Promoting Attendance

The value of consistent attendance is highlighted to all members of our community (students, parents and staff) during the induction period and at assemblies throughout the year.

Parent workshops are offered at the beginning of the year on the topic of motivating young people to attend school and making explicit links between attendance and attainment.

Should a student not arrive at school by 8.45 and no explanatory telephone call or email has been received, the School Attendance Officer will contact the student's parents immediately.

Students are expected to have a 100% attendance rate in order to access maximum learning opportunities. Where attendance drops below 95%, parents will be contacted in the first instance.

Attendance figures are noted on student reports and commented on where appropriate.

In Secondary, certificates are issued termly for excellent attendance. In keeping with our inclusive approach this may or may not equate to 100% attendance. For example a student who needs regular weekly therapy sessions but attends all lessons otherwise, should not be penalised.

During assemblies we acknowledge excellent attendance and time keeping.

Privileges are withdrawn for low attendance / tardiness. For example, Diploma students will not be allowed to go out for lunch.

See Appendices 2 and 3 for Procedures regarding Lateness and Absence.

Staff Responsibilities

Teachers will record attendance to every lesson (Secondary) and at AM and PM points during the day (Primary) on the school management system.

Teachers will report concerns about repeated absences to the leadership team.

Parental Responsibilities

Parents must provide up to date contact phone numbers, along with emergency numbers. It is important that, should the need arise, the school can contact a responsible adult without delay.

It is the responsibility of all parents and guardians to report their child's absence from school by 8.45am by telephone or email to the school office.

For students who take the school bus, we request parents additionally inform the school bus service as early as possible on the day of absence.

Appointments should be made out of school hours wherever possible. The school expects parents to not allow their children to have time off school unless it is genuinely necessary.

Parents are asked to supply appointment cards for medical appointments.

The Principal reserves the right to request medical evidence before deciding whether to authorise an absence.

Parents who do not give an acceptable reason for their child's absence must understand that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parents should support their children to leave home with adequate time to allow for delays on public transport or traffic hold-ups as applicable.

The School Wellbeing and Academic teams are available to support families that are having difficulties getting their child to attend school.

Parents must commit to ensuring that students attend school on a full-time basis unless medical evidence proves that this is not possible.

Student Responsibilities

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, students are held personally responsible for maintaining excellent attendance and punctuality - both to school and individual lessons.

Students must attend all lessons that are noted on their timetables and any additional lessons that they are given reasonable notice of.

Students will not leave the school site without permission from staff.

Persistent lateness disrupts the education of both the student responsible and the rest of the class. If a child is late on a continuous basis, the school will communicate with parents to work together to identify causes and potential solutions.

If lateness persists, a formal letter will be issued to parents stating our concerns with a copy placed on the student's file.

See Appendices 2 and 3 for Procedures Regarding Lateness and Absence.

Lateness

At the start of the school day all students are expected to be present for registration.

Registration for all students is 8.45am*

*Secondary students who arrive after 8.42 must sign the late register as they are expected to be seated in their form room by 8.45, in order to hear all daily notices.

Any child arriving later than registration should enter 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.

See Appendices 2 and 3 for Procedures Regarding Lateness and Absence.

Authorised Absences

Parents have a legal duty to ensure 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.

A child may miss school:

- if they are too unwell to attend.
- If they have received advance permission from the school.

Following the guidance on attendance by the DfE, we will authorise absence on individual request but only in exceptional circumstances.

Parents are informed when their child joins the school that authorisation for anticipated absences must be requested from the Principal. The form is available via the school website.

If a Request Form is submitted after the absence has begun, the absence will automatically be marked as unauthorised. There are exceptional circumstances that will be taken into account on a case by case basis.

The Principal will decide how many days of an absence will be authorised.

See Appendix 1 for the Request for Absence form.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

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 been permanently excluded.

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 10 days or more.

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. This will only take place if the school and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This happens if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

ICS must inform the local authority using the 'Starters and Leavers' form designated by Westminster Council to notify the authority of children that have not arrived as expected and children who have left. This takes place on the Friday of any week where a child has joined or left the school.

Recording Attendance

Accurate record taking is vital for monitoring student attendance, tracking patterns of absence and highlighting safeguarding concerns.

The school management system is used to take attendance for morning registration and every lesson thereafter (Secondary) and AM and PM attendance (Primary). See Appendices 2 and 3 for related procedures.

Staff are educated during induction to understand the safeguarding implications of absence, and therefore the vital role that accurate registers play in protecting children.

Overnight Trips

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 and absence from these trips must be requested in advance, like any other anticipated absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will absences from these trips be authorised.

Appendix 1: Request for Absence during Term Time

Please submit the requests to the front desk or email them to secondary.attendance@ics.uk.net

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN THE SCHOOL TERM

Please submit this request to SallyAnn Sholgami at least **2 weeks** before the absence is due to start.
Each request will be reviewed by the school principal.

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| STUDENT/PUPIL DETAILS | | |
| NAME OF STUDENT: | | YEAR LEVEL/FORM: |
| SIBLING DETAILS AT PRIMARY/SECONDARY ICS SITE: | | |
| Name: | YEAR LEVEL: | Primary/Secondary |
| Name: | YEAR LEVEL: | 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 |
| 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. | | |
| NUMBER OF DAYS PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED THIS ACADEMIC YEAR _____ | | |
| 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: |

Appendix 2: Primary Procedures regarding Lateness and Absence

Lateness:

1st instance of more than 2-3 minutes – check reason

2nd instance – student reminded of expectations

3rd instance – contact or speak with parent

Further occurrences:

The Student Welfare Coordinator will work with the student and their parents to establish the causes of lateness and develop solutions to these problems.

If none of the above make a positive impact, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Student Welfare Coordinator at which an improvement plan will be put into place.

If the improvement plan is ineffective, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Principal.

Absences:

Absences are monitored bi-weekly and a report is prepared by the Primary office administrator.

Principal reviews data with the office administrator every two weeks.

Students with less than 95% attendance:

- Check reasons given
- Monitor attendance rate for following 2 weeks

No improvement

- Parents contacted by email or by telephone
- If due to prolonged illness medical evidence may be requested

No improvement over following 2 weeks

- Letter sent home

No improvement over following 2 weeks

- Parent invited for meeting with Principal and Student Welfare Coordinator at which an improvement plan will be put into place

No improvement

- School considers reporting to the local child protection team.

Appendix 3: Secondary Procedures regarding Lateness and Absence

Lateness:

1st instance – warning

2nd instance – 15 minutes early the next day

3rd instance – 30 minutes early the next day

Students who usually have permission to go off site for lunch will lose this privilege if they are persistently late to school.

Diploma students may lose access to the Diploma Centre at break times.

The Wellbeing Team will work with the student and their parents to establish the causes of lateness and develop solutions to these problems.

If none of the above make a positive impact, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Wellbeing Coordinator at which an improvement plan will be put into place.

If the improvement plan is ineffective, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Principal.

Absence

