

## **ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**THIS POLICY LINKS WITH:**

- **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY**
- **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME & ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**
- **EXCLUSION POLICY**
- **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**
- **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

<b>Date of Latest Review:</b>	November 2019
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	November 2021
<b>Policy Available for Staff at:</b>	Website
<b>Policy Available for Parents at:</b>	Website
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Ms M Roberts

## **St Joseph's College**

### **Whole School Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

St Joseph's College works in partnership with parents/carers in promoting and encouraging 100 percent attendance and punctuality for all our students. We ensure that staff receive professional development to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures as well as school attendance and punctuality levels.

We expect that parents/carers will ensure that their child arrives to school on time and support the schools policies and procedures regarding attendance and punctuality.

We expect that students will attend school regularly and arrive to registration and lessons on time. We will ensure that all students feel supported and valued through sending a clear message that if a student is absent or late they will be missed.

The school aims to:

- Maintain high level of attendance.
- Reduce to a minimum the number of authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Reduce to a minimum the number of students who are persistently absent.
- Ensure attendance procedures are effective and applied.
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are effective and consistently applied.

### **Rationale**

Good attendance is essential to success in school

90% attendance = ½ day missed every week

1 school year at 90% attendance = 4 whole weeks of lessons missed

90% attendance over 5 years of secondary school = ½ a school year missed

It is suggested that 17 missed school days a year = one GCSE grade drop in achievement. This can be applied A Level

### **Principles**

**The school will ensure:**

- Students with poor attendance and/or punctuality are challenged and students with good attendance and/or punctuality are rewarded.

- All staff understand their role in ensuring good attendance and punctuality for a successful education.
- Regular liaison will take place between the Head of Year, Inclusion Manager and Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Pastoral care regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Students and their parents/carers are made aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality through positive reinforcement and working in partnership with us.
- Clear channels of communication are established to inform students, parents/ carers and staff of any issues with attendance and/or punctuality.
- Targets for whole school and individual attendance and punctuality are set.
- Regular evaluation of attendance and punctuality procedures, systems and interventions.
- Where appropriate effective reintegration programmes are implemented following a sustained period of absence from school due to illness or injury, alternative education off site or fixed term exclusion and that they promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after such absences.

**Parents/carers will:**

- Contact the school on their child's first day of absence.
- Ensure that their children arrive on time and attend regularly.
- Inform the school of any issues that may affect their child's attendance.
- Endeavour to make medical appointments outside of school hours or in the school holidays.
- Only book holidays outside of term time.

**Attendance procedures**

On the first day of absence, parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence by contacting the school. Parents/carers must contact the school for each day of absence. When the student returns to school after absence parents/carers must provide a signed, written reason for their child's absence either in the student planner or as a separate letter.

First day absence procedures will be implemented if we do not receive contact regarding a child's absence.

If an acceptable reason for absence is given and accepted by the school the absence may be marked as 'authorised'. The school are under no obligation to accept the reason given for absence when there is doubt of its validity.

Where appropriate, students regularly identifying poor health as a reason for absence will be asked to produce a medical certificate from their GP.

### **Action**

Upon return to school following an absence, form tutors are to check the student planner for an absence note.

The Inclusion Manager will review and monitor all students whose attendance falls below 90%. Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be spoken to in the first instance by their form tutor, followed by a letter of concern sent by the HOY should the concern continue. Students whose attendance falls below 95% will be closely monitored and intervention will take place should concerns continue.

If absence persists without response, improvement or if there are other issues with persistent patterns of poor attendance (e.g. attendance percentage is below 90%) in line with government recommendations, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer. The EWO will contact the parents/carers directly making them aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance and that penalty notices may be issued and / or court proceedings pursued. Attendance at compulsory parent/student workshops and / or panel meetings will be expected.

If absence deteriorates to 90% in respect of any student this will be reviewed along with the EWO who will advise as to whether the school should continue to authorise the absence. Contact will be made with parents/carers. The Inclusion Manager, HOY and DHT will be involved at this stage.

If after a period of 5 school days, continuous absence with no reason and no contact from parents/carers the EWO will be informed and an informal visit may take place.

If after a period of 10 school days where no reason has been provided for absence, this will be recorded as code O 'unauthorised absence' in the school register. The EWO will be informed and will conduct a formal visit.

If a student does not attend school for a period of 20 consecutive days or more and the school and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child your child risks being taken off roll and therefore losing their place at St Joseph's College.

Guidelines in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019' places high emphasis on schools being vigilant to 'children missing in education'. A child's continued absence from school, without notification, is a safeguarding concern. The school will initiate safeguarding procedures in this instance.

No student in year 7-11 is permitted to leave the school site during the school day including break times and lunch times without prior permission.

### **Punctuality Procedures**

Students should arrive to school by 8.45am ready to start morning registration at 8.50 am.

If a student is going to be late to school parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's lateness by telephone.

If a student arrives after 8.50 am but before 9.15 am (Wednesday 8:55), they should go to their form room to be registered. Students will be marked as late.

When a student arrives after 9.15 am they should go to the Pupil Information Point where they will be signed in and receive a late mark in their student planner. After 9.15 am they will be marked as 'U' = late after the register has closed. This is an unauthorised absence.

### **Action**

Students who are late to school 3 times during a half term will be given a lunchtime pastoral detention, a letter will be sent home by the HOY.

Students who have 3 pastoral detentions during a term will be required to attend a Friday night detention (according to the behaviour policy); a letter will be sent home by the DHT.

Persistent issues with poor punctuality (arriving after the register has closed) will be referred to the EWO by the Inclusion Manager. The EWO will contact the parents/carers directly making them aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance and that penalty notices may be issued and / or court proceedings pursued. Attendance at compulsory parent/student workshops and / or panel meetings will be expected.

### **Leave of Absence**

It is the parent's obligation to apply to the Headteacher for Leave of Absence by completing a 'Leave of Absence request'; this should take place 4 weeks prior to the known absence.

Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday in term time. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If a student has time out of school, during term time, unless in exceptional circumstances granted by the headteacher, this will count on their record as an unauthorised absence.

Any request will be judged on an individual basis taking into account individual circumstances.

### **In school Attendance and Punctuality**

Staff must ensure that they arrive to lessons on time to meet and greet their students. Sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) should be issued to any student who arrives late to the lesson. If the poor punctuality is across subject areas, the HOY will raise concerns at the inclusion meeting for strategies to be agreed to aid improvement.

If the problem persists, it will be referred to the DHT with responsibility for pastoral care.

Staff should take an accurate register of their students every lesson and follow up absences to verify they are genuine. The HOY should be notified in the event of any truancy and will contact the parents / carers and apply a sanction (according to the behaviour policy).

### **Procedures:**

#### **Attendance officer:**

- The Attendance Officer will make first day contact with the parent or carer of absent students.

#### **Form tutors will:**

- Register their students electronically at the start of each morning, or on a paper register during assembly, in accordance with school procedure and follow up any initial issues with attendance and punctuality to registration; Afternoon registration will take place at the beginning of period 7.
- Ensure students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school. They will reinforce that poor attendance and punctuality has a detrimental effect on the learning of all students.
- Refer students to their HOY if a problem with attendance and/or poor punctuality persists.
- Ensure that all absences are covered by an appropriate note from home.
- Remember that the register is a legal document and the Education (pupil registration) Regulations 2016 apply.

- Record carefully, all telephone messages and other communication with parents/carers.
- Have dialogue with students whose attendance falls below 90% based on information received from the HOY and Inclusion Manager.

**Subject teachers will:**

Arrive at their lessons on time to meet and greet their students.

- Take an accurate register and follow up on absences via the Pupil Information Point to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Apply sanctions (according to the behaviour policy) to any student who arrives late without a note of explanation.
- Refer students to their HOY if a problem with attendance and/or punctuality persists.

**Head of Year will:**

- Reinforce the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school. They will reinforce that poor attendance and punctuality have a detrimental effect on the learning of all students. Students' average yearly attendance should not fall below **97%**.
- Reinforce with staff the importance of ensuring that all students feel supported and valued.
- Work with the Inclusion Manager to monitor the attendance and punctuality of the students in their year group and improve the attendance and / or punctuality of identified students.
- Record carefully, all telephone messages and other communication with parents/carers.

**Inclusion Manager will:**

- Regularly analyse attendance and punctuality data and discuss individual concerns at Inclusion meetings.
- Liaise closely with the HOY, DHT and EWO on matters regarding the attendance and punctuality of identified students for whom there are concerns and organise necessary action promptly.
- Ensure prompt follow up action is taken regarding students identified as persistent absentees and maintain rigorous monitoring of the situation.

- Record carefully, all telephone messages and other communication with parents/carers.
- Provide details of students on reduced timetables, excluded, secluded or attending an alternative education provider to staff concerned.
- Liaise with administration staff to ensure that the registers are updated on a weekly basis.

**EWO will:**

- Work with the Inclusion Manager, HOY and the DHT with responsibility for pastoral care to improve the attendance and/or punctuality of identified students.
- Provide school attendance clinics for parents/carers and students to discuss strategies for improving the attendance and/or punctuality of identified students.
- Write letters to the parents/carers of students who are persistently absent and/or late (after the register has closed) informing them of their legal requirements.
- Arrange to meet parents/carers of students who remain persistently absent.
- Issue Fixed Penalty Notices and / or prosecute parents/carers who do not fulfil their legal requirements regarding attendance and/or punctuality.

**DHT member with responsibility for Pastoral care will:**

- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the school attendance and punctuality policy.
- Provide reports for the Senior Leaders and Governors on whole school attendance and punctuality.
- Meet with the parents/carers, student, HOY and Inclusion Manager regarding issues with persistent poor attendance and punctuality.
- Provide opportunities for staff to maintain knowledge of registration, attendance and punctuality procedures.
- Oversee the rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality.

**Rewards**

- Students will be awarded with 100% attendance certificates in assembly at the end of the academic year.

- Tutor groups who achieve the highest attendance in a half term will be awarded the attendance shield.
- 100% termly achievement award.