



St John's
School Billericay

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date:	September 2021
Those Responsible:	Mr A Angeli - Headteacher Senior Management Team Ms B Hobbs - Attendance Officer
To be reviewed:	August 2022

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY – 2021

Aim Statement

St. John's School aims to encourage all students to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality in order to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

INTRODUCTION

Full attendance is essential if our students are to maximise their full educational potential. We aim to achieve the best attendance possible for each of our students. We consider that for the pupils to benefit from the teaching offered an attendance of no less than 90% is required. If it falls below this level an 'intervention' will take place. In the senior school we reserve the right not to enter pupils for public exams if their attendance falls below the figure of 90%. Any absence gives cause for concern and speedy action is essential in order to prevent absence from becoming a persistent problem.

The purpose of the school's policy is to:

- Have clear procedures for the school to monitor the attendance of students and to enable the school to set targets for improved attendance.

Through the implementation of the Attendance Policy the school aims to achieve optimum attendance by:

Taking registers every morning and afternoon as well as in every lesson to monitor attendance and punctuality.

Monitoring and analysing cumulative attendance data.

Setting school, group and individual targets where appropriate.

Legal Framework

- Parents and guardians of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive a suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The Local Authority has a duty to enforce the requirement that registered students attend school on a regular basis.
- St. John's School has a duty to maintain an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register and to report student absence, when appropriate to the Education Welfare Service of the Local Authority.
- The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence.

Students

- All students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and on time.
- Students who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support from their form tutor.

Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents/guardians are requested to notify the school of their child's absence and the reason for it on the first day of absence.
- Parents/guardians should avoid where possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.
- Parents/guardians will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over their child's attendance.
- Parents/guardians whose first language is not English, who have learning difficulties/disabilities or who experience difficulties in communicating with school staff will be offered appropriate support.
- All parents will be notified about their child's attendance via full school reports.

School

- The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate all absenteeism promptly, liaising closely with parents/guardians.

Attendance Monitoring Systems

- St. John's School uses an electronic registration system. It has clear procedures for the accurate recording and reporting of attendance and punctuality information and training/support is available for staff. (see appendix 1 Electronic Registers – Roles and Responsibilities)
- Staff are regularly reminded about the need to record absence accurately, using the correct codes.
- A daily system for checking student attendance and notifying parents of absence is employed by the school office.

Attendance Data

- Attendance data is monitored by the Attendance Officer and reported to the Headteacher on a half termly basis.
- Data is analysed to inform the effectiveness of interventions, to help to identify patterns of absence, to correlate attendance with achievement and to monitor policy/practice.

Interventions

- First-day contact is made with parents/guardians for all students absent, without a known reason, by telephone call from the School Office.
- Individual student data is analysed to identify patterns which cause concern.
- Half termly checks will be carried out. If the attendance is a cause for concern parents will be contacted by letter and the pupil will be monitored. If the following check shows no improvement parents will receive a follow up letter. Parents will be contacted by phone if it happens on a third occasion in order to discuss causes and possible solutions.
- Further support may be sought from the EW Service or Social Services.

Rewards/celebration of good attendance

- Pupils with half termly attendance of 100% will be rewarded with a certificate. Pupils in years 7-11 will also receive an 'in house' voucher which can be used at tuck.
- Pupils with 100% attendance in an academic year will receive a special Headteachers certificate and an 'out of house' voucher to be used as the pupil wishes.

Registration

- All staff should be familiar with the guidelines for completing the register, which is a statutory document.
- All class teachers must take registers for every class and record all absence and lateness to their lessons. Teaching staff are made aware that they have a legal duty to take registers as part of their induction process.
- Failure of staff to take registers accurately and reliably will be a disciplinary matter.
- Registration takes place at 8.45 am and at the following times in the afternoon:
 - KG 1.30pm
 - Juniors 1:30pm
 - Seniors 2:30pm
- Students arriving in school after registration are expected to register at the school office.

Lateness

Punctuality and good time keeping are essential. In KG and Junior departments this will be monitored by form staff and dealt with appropriately.

In the senior department form staff will monitor lateness. If a pupil is late twice or more in a week, they shall be put in a lunchtime detention. If this happens on three or more separate occasions in a half term, pupils will be placed in an after-school detention.

Authorised and unauthorized absence

Parents seeking permission for an authorized absence need to fill in the Leave of Absence form which can be obtained from the school website or from the school office.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that work missed while absent is made up.

The decision as to how an absence is categorized rests with the school. Form tutors may authorize absence for illness or fixed appointments (e.g. Medical or dental), students who need to leave during the school day for a fixed appointment must bring a letter from home at least 24 hours in advance. Alternatively, late appointments can be authorized by phone or calling at the School Office.

Absence may be authorized for reason of:

Illness

Unavoidable medical/dental appointment

Attendance at a day of religious observance (of the religion of the parent/carer).

Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement

Interview with prospective employer or with another educational establishment.

Approved work experience

Receiving part-time and/or temporary education at an off-site unit.

Exclusion

Educational visit

Approved Study leave

Annual family holiday for which permission has been given in advance (see below)

Exceptional special occasion.

Other circumstances will be considered.

Authorised absence

- It is vital that all staff adhere to the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.
- Staff should adhere to the codes in the electronic registers.

Unauthorised absence

Absence should be unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.

HOLIDAYS

Permission may only be given for holidays in term-time where there are exceptional circumstances. This will normally be taken to mean that the holiday is the only family holiday for the year and it cannot be taken at any other time (for example, because parental work circumstances do not allow this). A leave of absence form (from the school website or the School Office), detailing the reasons, must be filled in well in advance. All leave of absence requests will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

APPENDIX 1

ELECTRONIC REGISTERS – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff taking registers.

Pupil attendance must be recorded at the start of the morning/afternoon session for KG, Juniors, and Seniors.

Pupils should be marked present by staff using the electronic registers. If a pupil is not present, they should be marked as 'Absent – no reason yet provided'. Unless advance notification has been provided.

If the electronic register is unavailable a paper register (form list) should be used and returned to the office.

Morning registers will remain 'open' until 09:00 or until the form leaves for an activity eg assembly, whichever is soonest.

If a pupil arrives between 09:00 and 09:15 (ie no activity taking place) the pupil is to be marked as 'late'. After this time pupils will be marked as absent. In exceptional circumstances and at the school's discretion, pupils can be marked late up until 09:30.

Prior notification of a future absence must be recorded at the time of receipt of the notification.

The office staff will attempt to resolve all absences marked as 'Absent –no reason yet provided' on the first day of the absence. If after this it remains unresolved the form tutor must follow up in order to record a reason for absence. To assist with this, the office will provide each form tutor with a list, on a weekly basis, of any unresolved absences.

All registers are to be backed up electronically.

