

**St. Joseph's College**

**Attendance Policy**

2015 - 2016

To be reviewed April 2018

**Introduction**

The staff at St Joseph’s College are committed, in partnership with parents, carers, students, governors and the Local Authority (LA) to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud. We aim for an environment that enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence and achieve their goals.

For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly. All students should be at school on time, during term time, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore, that you make sure that your child attends regularly.

A good attendance record is an essential part of ensuring success at school. Students who are not present cannot learn. Irregular and/or poor attendance and punctuality undermine/s the education process. There is a direct link between good attendance and good achievement.

At St Joseph’s College we strive for maximum attendance figures. Sometimes attendance is beyond the immediate control of the College but we actively pursue the goal of 100% attendance for all students.

Individual and group absences need to be carefully monitored and investigated. Students, parents and carers need to be made aware that unjustified absences will not be tolerated.

Parents and carers are expected to support the College in ensuring that the students attend and remain on the school site each day. They should ensure that the students arrive in good time and inform the College as soon as possible of any legitimate reason for a student’s absence.

There are many occasions when we may need to contact parents/guardians/carers about many things, including absence, so we need to have your up to date contact numbers at all times.

Parents/ carers whose children are of compulsory school age and registered at school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. If they fail to do this they are guilty of an offence and may be given a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

**Policy**

1. **Attendance**
2. Students are expected to attend every day that the College is open for students. The College calendar clearly indicates the term dates.
3. Students are expected to arrive on site by 8.00am, in good time for registration at 8.15am.
4. Parents / carers should inform the College Attendance Officer by telephone **each morning that a student is absent,** (020 8761 1426 option 1) clearly advising the College of the reason for absence.
5. If no message is received from a parent/carer on each day of absence, the College will make efforts to contact the parent/carer, usually by text message, seeking an explanation for the absence.
6. The College will monitor the attendance figures for students and maysend out letters to parents/carers if attendance is becoming an issue. These may be sent out if attendance falls under 95%. This will normally equate to two or three separate periods of absence or a continuous period of 5 days (10 sessions) of absence. This will be done using a standard letter informing the parent of their child’s current attendance record.
7. If absence is related to continued periods of illness, a follow up letter or call may request that the parent provide medical evidence to support their child’s absence. This can be the doctor’s appointment card, prescription or medication labels on the bottle etc.
8. If attendance continues to fall, the parent may be invited in to a meeting at the school to discuss the issues relating to poor attendance. This will allow the parent/carer to talk to the school about the issues that are affecting their child’s attendance, and enable the school to put support in place to help the parent or child to improve their attendance.
9. If attendance does not improve, the school may refer the parent/carer to the Education Welfare Service which in turn may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice (£60 if paid within 28 days or £120 if paid within 42 days) or prosecution, dependent on the case.
10. **Punctuality**
11. Students are expected to be on site by 8.00am each morning and must be present in their form bases in time for registration at 8.15am.
12. Punctuality figures for students will be monitored and parents/carers informed of any concerns. Lateness can be a form of truancy and the College will contact home where there is a pattern of regular or frequent lateness. A student will be issued with a B9 30 minute detention if they are late to school - no parental notice is given for this sanction.
13. **Requests for leave of absence**
14. Leave of absence from school will only be granted in exceptional circumstances by the Headmaster. Government guidelines on how schools should deal with requests for absence make it clear that Headteachers “may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances” for doing so. Leave of absence from schools is not a right and each request will be viewed individually.
15. If parents/carers do take a student out of school without authorisation, there is a possibility that this may be referred to the Education Welfare Service for consideration of a fine or prosecution.
16. Parent Contracts are used by the College – these are formal contracts between the Education Welfare Service, the Parent, the Pupil and the College.

**Attendance management model at SJC**