



## ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY (PUPILS)

### Statutory Duty of School

Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer. There is a clear link between attendance, punctuality and achievement and we are legally required to report on absence in a certain way.

It is our statutory duty to record students' daily attendance and as a School we are accountable to the DfE through the School Census each term. A register is a legal document, so it is important this is accurate. More importantly, in the event of a fire or other incidents we MUST be aware of which students are in school.

The whole school community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance and we aim to provide an environment that encourages students to attend regularly and punctually.

### School's responsibilities

All staff should support a whole school ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and punctuality, and set a good example by their own attendance and punctuality.

### Parent/Carer's responsibilities

Parents/Carers are responsible for notifying the school if their child is not able to attend school due to sickness or other unavoidable cause. Ideally this should be by telephone or email. Wherever possible, parents should avoid making medical / dental appointments for their child during school hours.

- An **authorised absence** may include sickness, medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours, days of religious observance.
- An **unauthorised absence** is an absence without any legitimate reason.

### Illness

We recognise that many of our students do have medical conditions and become ill on occasions and therefore some absence is unavoidable. Students may be away from school for a block of time due to a serious illness, at other times children have odd days of absence from school due to illness. Any block of absence will be agreed through our adjusted hour's agreement process.

### Medical or Dental Appointments

Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments.

### School Times

The timings of the school day are detailed below and the support of parents is sought in ensuring students are at school on time each day. Parents are asked not to drop off their child prior to our start time and if collecting their child to arrive in time for the end of our school day.

**Start of School Day**                      **08.55**

**Registration**                              **09.00 – 09.15**    **Students who arrive after this time are late.**

**End of School Day**                      **15.15**

### Punctuality

Registration is at 9-00 – 9.15am. Whilst we are aware that most of our students arrive at school on time, parents may not be aware of the difficulties experienced by their children, even if they are only a few minutes late each day. For example:

- A student is likely to miss the routine which signals the start of the school day and may miss his/her teacher's instructions for the first lesson.
- Arriving late causes disruption to the whole class, as well as to the child who is late.
- 10 minutes late a day = almost a whole hour of lessons missed each week for your child.

### **Family Holidays During Term Time**

Holidays during term time are discouraged and where possible, holidays should be taken during the school holiday periods. We do however recognise that for some families, a holiday is important for enjoying quality time together, particularly if their child has experienced prolonged illness or extended post-operative care.

Any family holiday request should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the form "Time Off in Term Time for Exceptional Circumstances", which is available from Reception.

Holiday absences will **not** usually be authorised in the following circumstances:

- The student has planned examinations.
- The student's attendance is giving cause for concern and there is no underlying medical problem affecting this.
- The holiday period exceeds 10 school days.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Local Authority guidelines are followed in relation to 'children missing education'. If we feel that one of our students is missing from education the school will make every effort to ascertain their whereabouts. This might include telephoning home, contacting the GP, friends or other relatives that are known. If we have reason to believe that a child has transferred to another school we will make every effort to contact that school to ascertain whether or not our information is true or false. If any members of the school staff have any reason to believe that there may be any child protection issues involved, then we will contact our local office straight away and if necessary notify the police.

After 4 weeks, should the school and the LA be unable to locate where the child has moved to, the school should be advised by the LA to remove the child's name from its roll. No children are removed from the school roll unless authorised to do so by the relevant LA.

### **Reporting to Parents and Carers**

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report. If requested, parents will be given an update on their children's attendance at the end of each term.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the attendance of our students and work closely with the relevant Local Authority to support children and young people whose attendance levels are causing concern.

The school will review this policy regularly and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

### **Absences**

All parents are asked to call or email the school office to report absences. This can be done by leaving a message on the answering machine if no one answers the call.

The School Receptionist will investigate all unexplained/unauthorised absences and will contact parents/carers to ask why a student is not in school and when they are expected to return. They will do this on the *first day of absence* if the child's absence is not reported. If no explanation is given this will be marked as unauthorised.

### **School Responsibilities**

Victoria school aims to promote good attendance by:

- Completing attendance registers accurately
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence
- Responding to absenteeism consistently and with care
- Contacting parents when they are concerned about a student's absences and recording the contact
- Consulting with the Education Welfare Service for the relevant Local Authority if a student's attendance continues to give cause for concern

**In the event of a fire or other incident**, whoever is on reception will ensure that the register is delivered to the appropriate assembly point.

To support the accurate attendance the school receptionist will:

- Complete registers with absence codes where required and update the school Management Information System (MIS) daily.
- Enter dates in registers for staff each half term.
- Transfer register codes to the school MIS daily.
- Enter codes in the register and our MIS for absent/late students.
- Run report(s) for missing/unauthorised absences, print letters and put in registers.
- Enter codes in the register and on our MIS for returned absence letters/calls.
- Ensure there is a relevant code for all students for relevant registration periods.
- Become familiar with attendance reports and print out any requests received.

#### Procedure for monitoring absence

Number of days off school:	Procedures to be used to inform the school:	Potential consequences if procedures not followed:	Completed/ Coordinated by:
<b>1-5 Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/Carer notifies school by telephone call or email.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text message home.</li> <li>• Phone call home at end of day</li> <li>• Relevant code in register – no code if unauthorised</li> </ul>	Class Teacher / Receptionist
<b>6+ Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from parent/carer plus medical evidence e.g. copy of prescription, medical appointment, doctors note</li> <li>• Information provided from hospital. Eg discharge summary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant code in register – no code if unauthorised</li> <li>• LA Safeguarding (CME) procedures implemented is needed.</li> <li>• Homework organised if relevant.</li> </ul>	Class teacher / Nursing Team / Relevant Therapist / AHT/ Receptionist
<b>Extended Holiday:</b>	Request by parents to Head Teacher for Authorisation. If unauthorised, meeting with parents to discuss further.		

#### Governing Body

The Governing Body has responsibility for school attendance and should be familiar with current legislation.

They are acquainted with the registration system in the school.

They will request reports on attendance and procedures as necessary.

A member of the governing body will usually be part of the Safeguarding Sub Committee.

**DATE/TIME SCALE:** To be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary.

Revised: February 2022 **Ray Lawrence**

Due for Revision: February 2024