



# **Attendance Policy**

## **January 2020**

Reviewed (date).....

Signed (Chair of Governors).....

## **Saint John Bosco College Attendance Policy**

### **Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of St John Bosco College are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

Regular attendance keeps children safe and supported. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

### **Parent Responsibility and The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive sufficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that pertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

### **Registers**

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### **Categorisation of Absence**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

## **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence.
- Holidays during term time

## **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

## **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

*Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.*

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education offsite
- Most types of dual registration

## **Registration & Lateness**

The school day begins at 8.40am with lesson 1. Morning registration will take place at the start of lesson 1 and is done by the class teacher.

Students arriving after 8.40am must report to the student services office where they will be booked in and marked as late to school on the AM register. Students who arrive late to school in the morning without an acceptable explanation e.g. school transport was delayed; will automatically be placed in a 30-minute detention that afternoon.

In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorized absence code will be entered.

In cases where unexplained absences are recorded that affect the overall

attendance of a student, the parents can be **fined** by the Local Authority, or referred to the educational welfare service resulting in possible court action being taken.

### **CME – Children Missing Education**

If a child is absent for any reason, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school. However, if the child is absent and no reason has been provided the following procedure will apply:

#### **First Day Absence**

The school will telephone, or text the parent to request reason for absence. The School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised. A message will be left where no contact can be made.

#### **Second Day Absence**

The school will telephone the parent to request reason for absence. School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised. A message will be left where no contact can be made.

#### **Third Day Absence**

The school will telephone the parent to request reason for absence. School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised. If no response is received the school will send a letter and the attendance lead will be informed.

#### **Ten Days Absence**

If a student is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days this will be notified to the Local Authority. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

#### **Return to School**

Where a child is absent from school the following procedure will be followed for welcoming them back. If they've been off for one day, the tutor welcomes them back and checks they are ok. If they are off for a few days, further communication from the tutor will be made and provision made for the student catching up with work. For longer term absences a meeting with the Head of House will take place and a more formal reintegration be implemented with a plan to catch up, some sessions may be provided where the student is given support by the Pastoral team.

#### **Frequent Absence**

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted

out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Education Welfare meets with school staff on a weekly basis to discuss attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s by:

93-96% attendance:

1. Phone call to parent by tutor or HOH and issues discussed with student within school.

90- 93% attendance:

2. Letter sent to parents stating concerns.

Under 90 % Attendance

3. Meeting at school with the Pastoral team and Educational Welfare office (EWO) called a **School attendance panel meeting** where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.

### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is considerably damaging a child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment, on reaching PA status, the college based interventions have not worked, when absence is unexplained leading to PA could lead to a **Fixed Penalty Notice** being issued by the Local Authority. A referral to the EWS will be made.

### **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

Education Welfare may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent / carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty Notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

## **Exceptional Leave of Absence**

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

1. It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Graduates earn an average of £15.01 per hour; young people who leave school with no qualifications earn an average of £7.44 per hour.

School will only authorise leave of absence in term time in exceptional circumstances and **never for holidays**.

Where a parent wishes to request a leave of absence, a formal request must be made, in writing, to the Head Teacher who will consider the application on behalf of the Governors. Consideration will then be given to the student's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed 10 school days in any one academic year.

If a holiday is taken without prior authorization by the school it will not be authorised and will result in a referral to Educational Welfare

## **Penalty Notices for Holidays:**

- In line with the guidance from the DfES, holidays during GCSE, SATS, Mocks and other external exam periods will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued.
- The Head teacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when students are taken out of school for 5 or more day's holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120, per parent, if paid after 21 days but within 42 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.

## **Truancy Patrol**

When a student comes to the notice of a Truancy Patrol, the student's pattern of school attendance is investigated. If there are unauthorised absences in the preceding 4 months, a warning letter may be sent to the parent / carers. If there are further unauthorised absences during the subsequent 15 schooldays, a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent / carer.

If there is no significant improvement in attendance in the 3 subsequent weeks, a Penalty Notice will be issued. Again, the Penalty Notice fines are as follows:

- £60 per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120, per parent, if paid after 21 days but within 42 days
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the local authority is then obliged

to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.

### **The Education Welfare Officer**

Education Welfare monitors the attendance of all children on a weekly basis. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school, then the school will make a referral to Education Welfare. The EWO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the EWO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

#### **All staff are expected to:**

- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.

#### **Subject teachers are responsible for:**

- Keeping a register of attendance for each lesson and raise attendance concerns with their Head of Department.

#### **Form tutors:**

- Provide pastoral support to address attendance issues and their impact on attainment

#### **Heads of House:**

- Regularly meet with the education welfare officer through Inclusion meetings to identify and action any attendance concerns.
- Work with families to resolve attendance issues.

#### **Attendance Officer:**

- Will ensure morning and afternoon registers are taken and are up to date during periods 1 and 5.
- Contacts parents and requests reasons for absence.
- Collates daily attendance records and, together with the attendance lead, puts in place agreed procedures to monitor and respond to poor attendance and punctuality.

#### **Pastoral Lead:**

- Monitors and reviews the attendance policy on an annual basis.
- Monitors and reviews the attendance procedures and works with the attendance office and Education Welfare to ensure reasons for absence are identified and interventions are put in place.
- Identifies and monitors attendance of PA students.

**Headteacher:**

- Promotes the attendance policy within the school and ensures that it is implemented effectively.

**The Governing Body:**

- Agrees appropriate absence targets on an annual basis. (See appendix 1)
- Plays an active role in ensuring targets are met.

## Appendix 1 – Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and the school attendance lead will be responsible for overseeing this work.

**Our schools target 2019/20 is: 97% attendance**

## Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes

All students must be given a registration mark each day. There are two sessions that require a registration mark. Registration will be taken by subject teachers during period 1 (am registration) and period 5 (pm registration).

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

### **Appendix 3 – Attendance Standard Letters**

For attendance between 90 – 95%

Re: «Fname» «Sname»  
Current attendance .... %

#### **School Attendance and Punctuality**

I am writing to you as we are committed to ensuring that every child achieves the best they can in their learning and in their holistic development.

Research shows there is a clear correlation between good school attendance, final exam results and then income levels of school leavers in the first few years of employment. It is important that your child attends school every day and that you consistently support them with this.

Students whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored and addressed via communication with parents. If the attendance does not improve then the school will refer to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service

- A written note explaining the nature of illness or family reason is required the day after the absence (medical evidence is required for absences of more than 5 days)
- A written request /completion of the school's Leave of Absence Form for absence during the term time can be completed by a parent (please note that the Headteacher will refuse all out of school holiday requests; individual circumstances in *exceptional cases* will be reviewed).

When school-based interventions do not improve a student's attendance the case will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. It is important that parents are proactive and supportive in ensuring good school attendance as failure to do so is neglectful of ensuring the best outcomes for your child.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Blackman the Pastoral Lead for Attendance on **0207 924 8310**

Your co-operation is kindly appreciated,

Yours sincerely

Ms Stefarnie Blackman  
Pastoral Lead- Attendance

*For invitation to SAP meeting*

«Fname» «Sname»  
Current attendance\_\_\_\_\_ %

### **School Attendance and Punctuality**

I am writing to you as your child's poor level of attendance to school is a cause for concern. A child's attendance should not fall below 95%.

As a school we are committed to ensuring that every child achieves the best they can in their learning and in their holistic development. Research shows there is a clear correlation between good school attendance, final exam results and then income levels of school leavers in the first few years of employment. It is important that your child attends school every day and that you consistently support them with this.

We expect 100% attendance from all students but understand that unavoidable illness and in some cases family emergencies prevent students from attending on rare occasions. The purpose of the meeting will be to highlight the key points of our attendance and punctuality policy and the legal expectations around school attendance. We will also discuss what practical support can be put into place to improve your child's attendance.

**Please attend a school attendance and punctuality meeting on .....**

If you have any questions regarding this information, or if you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me on **0207 924 8310**

Your co-operation is kindly appreciated,  
Yours sincerely,

Ms Stefarnie Blackman  
**Pastoral Lead- Attendance**