

## Attendance Policy

St George's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at St George's

*School contract 'Terms and Conditions'*

*9.10 You must notify us of your child's absence from School. The School must be informed as soon as possible in writing of any reason for your child's absence from School. You can do this by contacting the School Office [office@stgeorges-ascot.org.uk](mailto:office@stgeorges-ascot.org.uk) or by calling on 01344 629900.*

*Wherever possible the School's prior consent should be sought for absence from the School.*

*9.11 Parents must notify us if they will be absent for a period of time. If at any time during your child's time at the School you (or either of you) will not be in the United Kingdom at any time or will otherwise be absent from your main residential address for a period of longer than three (3) consecutive school days then you must inform the School immediately in writing and provide the details required by the School as a result, including the name and contact details for a 'responsible adult' for the period of your absence.*

### **Contents**

Introduction

Registration

Signing Out

Absence

First day of absence notification

Consecutive days' absence

Medical/Dental appointments

Emergency occasions

Types of absence

Responding to unauthorised absence

Persistent absence

Lateness

Procedure to be followed by staff when a pupil is not collected on time

Tier 4 sponsored pupils

Unauthorised pupil absence of 8 days

Unauthorised pupil absence of 10 days

Attendance and punctuality to lessons

## Introduction

As a community we believe that we should ensure good attendance, discourage lateness, ensure that a full record is kept of all absences and for the school to be aware of all persons present on the school site at any point in time. This will also ensure that registers are correctly kept and available for inspection by any appropriate body at any given time.

## Registration

The School is legally required to register pupils. It is therefore essential that all pupils are registered at morning and afternoon registration and for every lesson using Schoolbase.

School starts at 8.15am. All pupils should go straight to their tutor rooms for registration, which is then followed by either assembly, a chapel service or tutor time until 8.40am. Lessons start at 8.45am. Items for lessons 1 and 2 of the day should be collected at 8.40am. Pupils need to check their emails before school in case of any changes to the daily plans.

## Signing Out

The **Signing In and Out Book** at Main Reception asks for a destination and reason for leaving. Pupils need to specify their reason for leaving e.g. illness, appointment, study leave etc. If a student is leaving due to illness, they must be seen by the health centre first, and then sign out via reception.

Up to and including Year 11, a parent must confirm a reason for a pupil to sign out of school. Pupils in the Sixth Form may sign out with written parental permission.

Pupils must sign back in on their return.

## Absence

First day of absence notification

If a pupil is unable to attend school through illness parents/guardians should inform the school by telephone or email [office@stgeorges-ascot.org.uk](mailto:office@stgeorges-ascot.org.uk) on the first day of absence **by 8.15am**.

If no contact is made then reception will attempt to contact parents via a phone call and/or email.

If no contact is made with the school by 8am the following morning then the school may be concerned enough to contact the police and/or social services.

Consecutive day's absence

If a pupil is absent for more than one day parents must contact the school in the same way, on a daily basis, so that we may be sure of the child's whereabouts.

### **Medical/Dental Appointments**

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where pupils need to attend such appointments during the school day parents must have requested permission from the HoY with 48 hours notice and the pupil **MUST** sign out at reception. Please indicate in advance whether she will be returning and ensure that they sign back in at reception.

### **Emergency Occasions**

There are some occasions e.g. bereavements, family problems, etc. where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school; we will be sympathetic to such needs.

### **Types of Absence**

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

### **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be away or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory explanation for absence.

Parents may not authorise absence; only schools can do this. Should school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about an absence is not genuine; the absence should be treated as unauthorised. Pupils are not allowed, without permission from the Head, to leave early or to be absent for any cause other than illness, medical appointments or emergencies.

Parents are required to telephone or email Reception prior to 08.15am on the first morning of a pupil's absence as above. If no message is received, we will assume that your child is absent without your permission. We will then make every effort to contact you. In the case of an extended period of absence through illness, parents are asked to update the school of the pupil's progress.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments;
- Days of religious observance;
- Exclusion;
- Family bereavement;
- Involvement in a public performance;
- Off-site examination;
- Special occasions - the nature of such special occasions will be determined by the school on an individual basis;
- Lateness (when the student arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation).

Excessive amounts of authorised absence may often be as damaging to continuity of learning as unauthorised absence. The School will therefore only authorise absence sparingly and only after careful consideration, particularly where pupils have a history of irregular attendance.

**The following codes are to be used for authorised absences on the register:**

**I: Illness**

Schools can request medical evidence from parents if they feel the authenticity of an illness is in doubt

**M: Medical or dental appointments**

Parents are encouraged to arrange appointments out of school hours but the school will authorise if confirmation of the appointment is provided.

**OI: Other circumstances**

This code will be used for any authorised non-medical reasons for a child's absence from school, i.e. family funeral.

**P: Approved sporting activity**

This code will be used in times of approved sporting activities in school times, i.e. training sessions, trials and sporting events.

**V: Educational visits and trips**

This code will be used in times of approved educational visits or events in school times, i.e. revision days, subject trips.

**S: Study leave (Years 11 and Upper 6th only)**

This code will be used during mock and external examinations for pupils that have been given parental permission to work from home.

**E: Exclusion**

This code will be used when a student has been suspended.

**Approved Educational Activity**

Pupils who are registered off-site or dual registered, or who are engaged in supervised educational activities away from school premises, need not be marked as authorised absence, provided that such activities are:

- of an educational nature;
- approved by the school;
- supervised.

These pupils may be recorded as on an approved educational activity. This means that for statistical purposes, for particular activities, such as field trips, educational visits and approved sporting activities they can be counted as 'present'. The nature of the activity must, however, be

recorded in the class register by use of the appropriate code. This is important to ensure that an accurate record of those pupils physically present on site at any given time is instantly available.

### **Leave of Absence**

When leave of absence is required for some special reason, an application in writing must be received by the Head at least one week in advance of the day for which absence is requested. This request and any subsequent correspondence about this will be kept in the pupil's file, stored securely in the school office. Requests will only be granted if it is felt that the pupil's education is unlikely to suffer. **It is not our policy to authorise holidays in term time.**

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the pupil's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:

- No explanation is offered by the parent;
- The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (shopping, pop concerts);
- Family holidays (which are taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed with the school);
- Lateness when the student arrives after 8.15am and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation;
- Signing out without parental permission;
- Special occasions (when the school does not agree that these should be given).

**The code 0 unauthorised absence and G holiday unauthorised is to be used for unauthorised absences on the register:**

- **Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period.** If the school does not authorise a leave of absence and the parents still take the child on holiday, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised.
- **The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval.** If the parents did not apply for the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
- **Reason for absence not yet provided.** The School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence.
- **Absent from school without authorisation.** If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence it will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Responding to Unauthorised Absence**

The school will make all efforts to contact parents of an unauthorised absentee. If this is not possible, and parents cannot be contacted, Children's Services or the police may be contacted.

If a pupil is absent without parental permission, the Missing Child Policy will be followed. (Please see Safeguarding policy)

If a parent removes a child without permission, the Head of School will arrange a meeting with parents to investigate the matter further. Advice may be taken from Social Services, or the matter referred, if it is of concern to the School.

### **Persistent Absence**

The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the pupil regularly attends the school at which they are registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that their child attends that school regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence. When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Should the absence be authorised by the school, the parent cannot be convicted of any offence, although the implications for a child with regard to poor attendance may be the subject of further discussion in the context of the promotion of wellbeing.

### **Responding to Persistent Absence**

Where the school has concerns about excessive absence patterns this will have to be discussed with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support.

Persistent absence is absence of 10% or more. An individual pupil is considered to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if her attendance is less than 90%, regardless of whether or not the absence has been authorised. In such cases parents will be asked to attend an **attendance review meeting** with the Deputy Head Pastoral and Deputy Head Academic. If the justifications for absence are inadequate, or the level of absence is likely to have a significant impact on the child's education, the school will refer the matter to the Educational welfare team within Children's Services. Percentage absences will be calculated each term and any child reaching the 90% list will be monitored to ensure that the attendance improves.

### **Lateness**

Please try to ensure that your child arrives at school so that they are present each day for registration. Time spent in registration, tutor time, assemblies and chapel with peers and with their tutor is important. The time is valuable, notices are given, prep plans confirmed, uniform is checked and general well being 'check ins' take place. Being late for the start of lesson 1 (at 8:45am) will impact on your child's learning.

Pupils who arrive after 8:15am will be recorded as 'late for school' and must be signed into the 'Signing In and Out Book' specifying a reason for lateness. This is held at the Main Reception and will be recorded on the Schoolbase pupil register.

As per the Behaviour Policy, pupils will receive a sanction for persistent lateness.

Where a genuine reason for lateness exists, this will be an authorised absence but where explanations are inadequate, or the lateness becomes frequent, in the first instance the Head of Year will need to discuss this with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support.

### **Responding to Persistent Lateness**

Repeated lateness at the beginning of a school session can amount to a failure to attend regularly for the purpose of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Persistent lateness is lateness of 10% or more. Tutors will monitor lateness and will contact parents if it occurs. If a pupil's punctuality falls below 90% parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with the Head of Year.

### **Procedure to be Followed by Staff when a pupil is not Collected on Time**

If a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a day, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an adult who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents of our procedures so that if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

The following procedure will be adopted: -

- If a pupil is not collected by 7pm, the School will call the contact numbers for the parent. During this time, the pupil will be safely looked after by the School.
- After 30 minutes, the SLT duty staff will be informed.
- If there is no response from the parent's contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a three-hour period, the SLT duty staff will contact the Social Care Duty Officer. The School may be able to offer emergency accommodation for the pupil, but if it is more appropriate Social Care will make emergency arrangements. Social Care will arrange for a visit to be made to the pupil's house and will check with the Police.
- The School will keep a record of the incident.

### **Sponsored pupils (Child Student/Student/Tier 4)**

Sponsored pupils (Child Student/Student/Tier 4) must immediately be reported to UKVI via the Sponsorship Management System (SMS) if they miss 10 consecutive expected contact points.

St George's considers a contact point to be 1 school day (Monday-Friday during term time). Tier 4 pupils can be identified on Schoolbase.

**Unauthorised pupil absence of 8 days**

Head to call parents to advise Visa will be revoked if they do not contact the school regarding the unauthorised absence.

The Head will inform the Director of Admissions to prepare to report to UKVI.

**Unauthorised pupil absence of 10 days**

Principal to call parents to advise sponsorship is being withdrawn.

The Head will inform the Director of Admissions to undertake immediate action to report withdrawal of sponsorship.

**Attendance and punctuality to lessons**

Pupils must attend all lessons when in School unless their absence has been agreed to by a member of teaching or pastoral staff. Pupils must ensure that they arrive punctually at each of their lessons and other commitments such as registration, tutor time, assembly, chapel and club time. Time is built into the timetable in order to ensure that pupils have time to get to each of their lessons on time. Pupils must not go to the locker room between lessons 1 and 2, 3 and 4 or 5 and 6. They must go straight to their next lesson.

Pupils who are absent without permission or are persistently late will be issued with an appropriate sanction.

**Appendix ~ Register codes used on Schoolbase**

/	Present
N	No reason provided yet
L	Late
A	Other lesson
P	Sports fixture
T	Meeting in school
B	Internal suspension
V	School trip
Z	In the medical centre



C	Discretion of Head
E	Excluded
F	Fees not paid
G	Holiday (unauthorised)
H	Holiday (authorised)
I	Illness
J	Interview
M	Medical appointment
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
W	Work experience
Y	Enforced school closure
O	Unauthorised absence
AB	Absent - prep
Pm	Permission - prep
OS	Onsite activity - prep
#	School closed to pupils
Tr	Travel
AA	Authorised absence - whereabouts known
OI	Other issues
RW	Remote school
Es	External suspension