



**ST PETER'S**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**  
**PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE**

## Purpose

St Peter's School requires that all enrolled students regularly attend school in accordance with UK national laws and guidelines. The educational programme at St Peter's is based on the presence of the student and works effectively when students participate fully, both in regular attendance and classroom participation. Therefore, it is vital that student attends class each day and interacts with their peers and teachers to acquire a thorough and efficient education.

The School's Attendance Policy Brochure is sent to all new Reception and Year 7 Parents/Carers in a joining pack before students start at St. Peter's. It outlines Parents/Carers responsibilities and information regarding the School's expectations.

## Aim(s)

Regular attendance at School is essential if Students are to gain the fullest benefit from their education. Although the legal responsibility for ensuring regular attendance lies with Parent/Carers, the school works with Parent/Carers and Students to maximise attendance. The Head of Primary Phase, Year Leaders at the Secondary Phase and the Education Social Worker (ESW) regularly check attendance data and reasons for absence.

## Objectives

### Absence through illness

Parent/Carers are required to telephone the School on the first day of a student's absence, before 9.00 am on the following direct dial numbers and leave an answerphone message:

Primary Phase	01202 421141 Option 1 then Option 1
Secondary Phase 10 option 6, Yr 11 option 7	01202 421141 Yr7 option 3, Yr 8 option 4, Yr 9 option 5, Yr 10 option 6, Yr 11 option 7
Sixth Form Phase	01202 421141 Option 1 then Option 8

The school requests that whenever possible medical and dental appointments are made outside school hours or during the holidays. If appointments occur during school hours, the Attendance Officer will ask to see an appointment card or if Parent/Carers know in advance a student will be absent during school hours, we request that a letter or copy of the appointment is sent in. We take each case of regular and prolonged absence on an individual basis and will signpost families and seek support from other services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to decide on the best route for their education if required.

### Holidays

There are clear and proven links between absences from school and poor academic progress, contrary to popular belief, there is no automatic 'right' for Parent/Carers to take a student out of school during term time for holidays.

Absence known in advance, (other than medical appointments) requires the authorisation of the Headteacher. The Headteacher will not authorise absence from school unless the circumstances are exceptional, such as a family funeral. Where Parent/Carers take a student out of school without the Head Teacher's approval the absence will be recorded as "unauthorised" and they may be subject to a Penalty Notice which will be issued by the Local Authority.

### Persistent Absence

The Government has requested Persistent Absence data to allow schools to identify areas for developments and supportive evidence for School Self-evaluation. A student becomes a persistent absentee when they fall below 85% attendance at any time in the school year for whatever reason.

### Concerns

St Peter's have the benefit of a full-time Education Social Worker and any Parent/Carers who have concerns about any aspect of the attendance of a student can contact her directly.

The ESW can support the Students on many issues and make referrals to outside agencies such as Children's Social Care, CAMHS, SMO and many other areas of support including Parenting classes if there is a complex issue.

### Controlling and Monitoring Attendance

The school operates a registration system called "SIMs" which involves Teaching Staff taking registers using teacher laptops for each period, with the first and fifth periods being the designated registration times. When a Student is absent and the School has not been notified by a Parent/Carer, this prompts first day calling which is administered by the Attendance Officer.

Authorised absence is granted in relation to illness, medical treatment, emergencies and some lateness. Where the absence could have been reasonably avoided, it is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Tutors report on punctuality and attendance in reports, references and the current Progress Files, this is undertaken by the classroom teacher for the Primary Phase.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Governors

The Governors receive an annual report on attendance from the Headteacher. Details of authorised and unauthorised absence are provided for the DfE and published in the School Prospectus. The Link Governor has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and reporting back to Student Welfare and Catholicity committee.

### Educational Social Worker

The main responsibility of the ESW is to ensure that Students receive a proper education. Whilst legal proceedings may be initiated, the intention of the ESW is always to act in the student's best interest. He or she may liaise with a number of other agencies also working with the Student, family or School. Advice can also be given to Parent/Carers on entitlements as well as state benefits. The ESW also acts as Deputy Safeguarding Lead for the Southbourne and Iford sites and acts as Lead Practitioner in Early Help Assessments (EHA).

### Member of SLT with responsibility for oversight of School Attendance Policy

A member of the School SLT has responsibility for the oversight of School Attendance.

### Monitoring and review

Monitoring via termly meetings between the Link Governor and the SLT link.

Review via termly updates to the SWC.

## ST PETER'S SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at school is a key determining factor in your academic and personal success. If you are not in school, we cannot teach you.

As a member of the Sixth Form community, there is a basic expectation to attend school all the time. Occasionally illness or medical appointments may take you away from school, but this should be at a minimum. Across an academic year, attendance below 95% can have a serious negative effect on student outcomes. Your attendance, therefore, should not fall below this measure and that includes lessons, study periods and tutorials (unless a formal agreement is in place, via the Head of Sixth Form).

When absent from school it is important that we receive a written (letter or email) account for your absence, from parents. Authorised absences include illness, medical appointments, funerals or other compassionate reasons given at the discretion of the Headteacher and/or the Head of Sixth Form. If students develop a long-term medical condition that requires regular time off school we will work closely with the student to reduce the impact on his or her progress as far as possible.

Unauthorised absence, can be defined as any absence which has not been sanctioned by the Headteacher and/or the Head of Sixth Form. Please note that we do not sanction absence for holidays in term time.

Being a member of the St Peter's Sixth Form community is a privilege and we are proud to teach you. With this in mind, students who make an **active decision** to attend less than the minimum time (95%) will be placed on a monitoring and intervention process, which could result in the removal from specific courses or ultimately removal from the Sixth Form.

The stages of the monitoring and intervention process are outlined below.

<b>Above 98% from half term 1</b>	Rewarded
<b>&gt;95%</b>	Praise and celebrate
<b>90-94.9% Stage 1</b>	Tutor level intervention, letter home from Head of Sixth Form. Monitored by Senior Leader depending on Year group.
<b>85-89.9% Stage 2</b>	Letter home from Head of Sixth Form explaining that this has escalated. Reminded of the process. Sixth Form Leader to meet with student and call home. Bursary/Student Finance students will have funding frozen for a month (bus passes, books etc.) One-off detention set.
<b>80-84.9% Stage 3</b>	Parental meeting with Head of Sixth Form. Student placed on a 3-week trial period. Failure (less than 100% attendance) on this trial will result in a stage 4 process. Weekly detentions for these students to catch up on missed work until above 85%. Formal written warning issued.
<b>&lt;80% Stage 4</b>	Final written warning issued to parents and student; meeting required with parents. 3-week trial set for student to have full attendance at all sessions. Failure will result in <b>student being removed</b> from roll. Headteacher involved at this stage and the SLT made aware.

*NB: When a student improves their attendance, they will move back to the next stage, for example: a stage 4 student passes their trial weeks, they will now have 3 weeks on Stage 3. Whole cohort reviews will take place every half term.*

If at end of Year 13, a student's attendance is below 85%, they will have their deposit kept to pay for examination fees. We reserve the right to remove students from exam entries in such cases.

**Lateness** will continue to be monitored and sanctioned. If punctuality remains poor then students will be called to meetings with parents present. If sanctions are missed, then a formal behaviour strategy will be implemented which could result in exclusion from school.

**Subject specific attendance:** issues will also be monitored in line with the attendance process outlined. Head of Department will inform parents if there is a cause for concern. Students will be removed from a course if required which may consequently put the student's place in the Sixth Form at risk.

Ultimately, all decisions regarding sanctions and interventions are at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form and Headteacher.

*Reviewed May 2021*