



Attendance Policy (Pupils)

St. Francis' College

September 2024

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Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

Day Pupils

At St. Francis' College, education is seen as a partnership between the family and the College. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your child, and we look to you to support this objective. All pupils are required to be in school before 8.30am. The school day ends at 3.15pm (KS1)/3.30pm (KS2), 4.00pm for Senior School although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities or study under the supervision of a member of staff. Pupils are normally expected to leave by 6.00pm.

On Tuesday's and Thursday's, a free supper is available for those students staying behind after extra-curricular clubs. This is served at 5.45pm.

With the exception of pupils in Years 12 and 13, pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to the parents in advance.

Requests for absence must be made at least 7 days in advance, except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.00am. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Head or Head of Prep at least two weeks in advance.

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the College before 8.30am on each day of absence. They should bring a letter signed by a parent or guardian on their return to school giving a reason for the absence, if the contact was made by phone. Parents who have emailed from their registered email address can give the reason as part of the daily notification. Unless notified of an absence we will always contact parents or guardians on the first day and subsequent days of an unexplained absence to make sure that your child is safe.

We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disrupting your child's education. These dates are also available on the College website. Please note that it is the ILG policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term.

Boarding Pupils

The Boarding House is the centre of a student's life at St. Francis' College. Students are cared for by a Head of Boarding and a team of House staff. Together, they will be responsible for students during term time, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal school hours. For detailed information regarding Boarders' absence please see the Boarders' Attendance & Absence Policy.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance - Teaching Staff:

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

It is every teacher's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Good attendance is also reliant on administrative systems that accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate.

Teachers' Responsibilities:

- It is the College's legal duty to register students in the morning and afternoon. Registers must be taken on time, 8.30 a.m. and 1.05pm (Prep) 2pm (Senior). Registers should also be taken at the start of every lesson.
- Only pupils in the room are to be marked present - no blanks are to be left.
- Form Teachers must fill in codes to indicate the reason for absence.
- Form Teachers must chase absence notes. An explanation is required, by law, on pupils' return – notes should be kept in the register folder.
- Frequent absences must be monitored and discouraged. Initially an informal comment from Form Teachers, this should be positive and encouraging, followed by a phone call from the Head of Year.
- Form Teachers should keep a check on the number of absences, over 5% per term should automatically initiate a response from the College, in consultation with the Head of Year and Administration staff.
- On return from an extended absence, Form Teachers should monitor easing back into school and ensure the workload is balanced.

Form Teachers must make their Form aware of the following procedures:

- Pupils arriving after close of register (8.40 a.m. or 1.05p.m. (Prep) and 2 p.m. (Senior)) must register at Reception.
- Pupils in College but not attending registration for a valid reason, e.g. Music lesson, must go to reception to be entered in the register – Form Teachers should emphasise the importance of this for safety reasons.

Monitoring

- Heads of Year will monitor the attendance registers with the assistance of admin staff on a weekly basis.
- Initial concerns about attendance will be expressed, in writing, by the Form Tutor. Continuing concerns initiate a letter of concern by the Head of Year. In cases where improvement is not noticed, a final letter of concern will be initiated by the Assistant Head (Pastoral). At this point, a referral to Hertfordshire Children's Services will be considered.

The Assistant Head Pastoral is the Senior Attendance Champion at the College and will oversee the accurate completion of registers and compilation of attendance statistics with the support of the Deputy Head, Heads of Year and administration staff.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance – Administrative Staff

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

Good attendance is reliant on administrative systems which accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate. It is everyone's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Every entry in the attendance register should be preserved for six years.

Administration Staff Responsibilities:

- Reception will log calls, including time, reason and identification of caller.
- Details of calls will be placed in registers/register folders.
- Administration staff will make contact after 8.40am on the first day of absence and subsequent days if no message is received.
- Absence notes are to be taken from the register folder for filing in pupil files at least half-termly.
- Administration staff will chase absence notes by: 1 week after return - issue note to students for signing by parent / guardian, 2 weeks - letter sent home by post or email.
- Any absence of more than 3 days will automatically involve contact with home by admin staff or Head of Year and negotiation about work to be sent and how it will be delivered. This should be initiated by the College rather than parents or pupils.
- Manual register information will be entered on to the Admin System immediately registration closes.
- Attendance statistics will be generated for inclusion in Reports and for the Assistant Head Pastoral/Head of Prep.
- Provide local authorities with the name and address of pupils who miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness.

Attendance at lessons (Senior):

Absence from lessons should be checked against the attendance register or with the Form Teacher. All teachers are responsible, as part of their pastoral duties, for monitoring attendance and should pass concerns to Form Teachers or Heads of Year. Persistent or serious pastoral concerns should be passed to the Assistant Head Pastoral (DSL) who oversees pastoral care.

Attendance in lessons (Prep):

Absence from lessons should be monitored by all subject teachers. Where there is any doubt or concerns the teachers should double check with the Prep administration team or with the Form Teacher. Any serious concerns should be reported to the Head of Prep and/or the Assistant Head Pastoral (DSL).

Sixth Form – Leaving the College premises during the day

Sixth Form students are permitted to leave the College premises during lunch time and when they have study periods. This privilege will be revoked if aspects of College life fall below the required standard, for example if a student falls behind on work or if they do not role model the behaviour that is in line with our College policies and ethos. All students are expected to continue to attend lessons on time and follow the correct signing in and out procedures. Students must attend all lessons including Personal Development, PE and DREAMS. If a student is free for lesson one, they will still be expected to attend registration. If a student has study periods at the end of the afternoon

they can study from home and not return to the College, unless their presence is requested for an evening event.

This privilege will start in January each academic year for the Year 12 for students who have demonstrated that they are showing a professional attitude to learning. Students will sign in and out from main reception.

To allow students to leave the College premises during the school day, each parent must give written consent that they take responsibility for their child while they are off the premises.

Reviewed By	Assistant Head (Pastoral)
Authorised By	Head
Effective From	September 2024
Next Review Due	September 2025