

# SAVIO SALESIAN COLLEGE



*“Educating in Friendship and Peace”*

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**November 2016**

**Reviewed by the Governing Body**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

This is a successful College and your children play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For the students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the College is open. This Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

## **WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at College is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from College without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

## **PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, students and all members of College staff.

### **To help us all to focus on this we will: -**

- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in College, what their attendance and punctuality level is and how this relates to their attainment;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and trips/events.

## **UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE**

Every half-day absence from College has to be classified by the College (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks. Registers are legal documents so the College staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Attendance marks are also recorded at every lesson to monitor student punctuality and attendance.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from College for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which **unavoidably** fall in College time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the College does not consider reasonable and for which no "consent" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off College unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at College too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

Whilst any student may be off College because they are ill, sometimes they may be reluctant to attend College. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the College, the parents/carers and the student. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better 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 make things worse.

### **PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the College year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have become persistent 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, CAF referrals etc.

All PA cases with 10% unauthorised absence are also automatically made known to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer who may follow up any referrals with home visits. They remain involved with the student and families until their attendance improves.

### **ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

#### **If your child is absent you must**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and each and every day your child is absent from College thereafter.
- We require information regarding the absence via phone, text or letter. (Telephone 0151 521 3088)

- Or, you can call into College and report to Reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.
- Please note that if your child has 14 sessions or more of medical illness during the academic year you will be required to provide formal medical evidence before any further medical evidence will be authorised. This can take the form of either a dated GP/Nurse appointment card, a dated note from the GP/Nurse written in the student's planner, a compliment slip signed and dated by the GP/Nurse, a prescription or proof of prescribed medication relating to the current illness.
- If students do have on-going medical issues, the College will of course offer any support necessary.

### **If your child is absent we will**

- Text or telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- A home visit will take place on the second day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Pastoral Leaders. If absences persist you may be required to attend an Attendance Panel to discuss how the College can help with improving your child's attendance.

### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your son/daughter by making sure we always have an up to date contact number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

Parents/carers are expected to contact College at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any attendance problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the College may refer the student to the Pupil Attendance & Education Welfare Officer (PAEWO) from the Local Authority. This will take place when unauthorised absence reaches 10%. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the student's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Education Supervision Orders, Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at College are available from the College or the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents/carers or students may wish to contact the PAEWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the College and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the College Office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

### **PENALTY NOTICE PROCEEDINGS**

Penalty Notices for absence from College will be issued by the Attendance and Welfare Service based on requests from schools and Colleges.

The following circumstances are considered appropriate as reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Unauthorised absences
- Parent-condoned absences.
- Unauthorised leave of absence in term time (unless in Exceptional Circumstances).
- Unwarranted delayed return from leave of absence (without College agreement).
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed.

A student has to be absent from College in one of these circumstances - for at least a minimum evidential requirement of ten (10) College sessions lost to unauthorised absence in the current term **and / or** twenty (20) sessions lost to unauthorised absence over two consecutive terms will be required to trigger the process. (Please note one session is a half day of College time so that an absence of 10 sessions is the equivalent of 5 days).

Payment of a penalty within 21 days of receipt of the notice is £60. Payment after this time, but within 28 days of receipt of the notice is £120, **[The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013]**.

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice a check is made by the Attendance and Welfare Service to ensure that the request meets the terms of the 'Code of Conduct' which is to be found on page five of Sefton's 'Procedures for Issuing Education-related Penalty Notices'.

### **CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION**

No student will be removed from roll without consultation between the Head teacher or Deputy Headteacher and the Attendance & Welfare Service. Where a student is missing from education with prolonged absences that are unexplained or if a family move away from the area but do not register with another School/College will alert the Local Authority who will then take action according to the Child Missing in Education Policy and Procedures. Movement of children between Local Authorities and Schools/Colleges is tracked nationally.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing for the student.

### **How we manage lateness**

We expect students to be on site by **8.20am** ready for the start of the school day at **8.30am**.

Registers are marked at **8.30am** and a student will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **8.50am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, students who arrive after that time will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that parents/carers could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Deputy Headteacher/Pastoral leader and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to College on time.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE – EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking students away in College time.

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

Leave of absence in term time – amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Headteachers / Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are Exceptional Circumstances. Headteachers / Principals should determine the number of school/college days a student can be away from School/College should the leave be granted. Parents/Carers should be aware that applications for "Exceptional Circumstance Leave of Absence" that are refused may result in a Penalty Notice being issued for 5 or more days of absence.

## **COLLEGE TARGETS, PROJECTS AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES**

The College has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Throughout the College year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

As mentioned earlier, College work closely with the Local Authority regarding *unauthorised* absences and Penalty Notices may be issued where attendance and punctuality is persistently poor.

## **PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE**

If you need to contact us about attendance the following people can be of help: -

Mrs Chandler – Assistant Headteacher  
Mrs Jones – Attendance Officer  
Ms L Howe - Pastoral Care & Standards Leader  
Mr Dennis – Head of Year 7  
Mr Collins – Head of Year 8  
Mrs Stephenson – Head of Year 9  
Mr Lyons – Head of Year 10  
Mrs Butler – Head of Year 11

## **SUMMARY**

The College has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their children attend College regularly.

All College staff are committed to working with parents/carers and students to promote high levels of attendance that will maximise the qualifications students can gain, and allow them opportunities to make appropriate choices in life and embrace success in the future.

**November 2016**

This policy was reviewed and approved by the  
Governing Body of Savio Salesian College

November 2016



This policy is due for renewal in three years