

**POLICY  
ON  
Pupil Attendance**



**CONSULTATION**

The College has consulted with:

- Staff
- parents/guardians
- pupils
- partner schools, businesses, organisations and suppliers

In the formulation of this plan.

**ADOPTION**

- The Board of Governors formally adopted the policy in November 2013.

**DISSEMINATION**

**The following channels are used to ensure that this policy is known by the college community:**

- Prospectus
- Homework Diary
- Website
- College Notice Boards
- AGM / Parents' Evenings/Leaflets
- Assemblies

The College offers to parents and pupils a safe, secure environment where attendance is monitored effectively and support is provided where necessary.

**Pupil Attendance Target is 95%**

**Parents have a statutory obligation, (The Children {N.I.} Order 1995) to ensure their child attends college regularly.**

**Rewarding good attendance**

Good attendance is recognised at classroom level, assemblies and the College Prize-giving event.

## INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

St Pius X College will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

## COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

*To promote partnership, develop talents and encourage participation.*

## COLLEGE AIMS

- 1 To enable all pupils to discover and develop their talents in relation to knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes in an environment where learning is an enjoyable experience by:**
  - (i) providing all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
  - (ii) employing a range of teaching methods and learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom;
  - (iii) striving to ensure that the most appropriate facilities/resources/ equipment/materials are available.
  - (iv) using appropriate assessment procedures to motivate pupils and encourage success;
  - (v) keeping pupils and parents informed of progress and achievement;
  - (vi) making provision for pupils with special needs;
  - (vii) encouraging good relationships within the classroom and College in general.
  
- 2 To give all pupils the experience of a Catholic education by:**
  - (i) fostering their growth in and understanding of the Faith
  - (ii) promoting an appreciation of fairness, tolerance and forgiveness by word and example;
  - (iii) helping to achieve high standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and generosity.
  
- 3 To further the working partnership between the college and the community by:**
  - (i) involving parents in all aspects of their children's education;
  - (ii) developing closer links with 'feeder' primary schools;
  - (iii) fostering co-operation and communication with other colleges/schools;
  - (iv) providing opportunities for pupils to be involved in various forms of community service;
  - (v) involving community groups and representatives in the life of the college;
  - (vi) expanding the network of college/industry links.
  
- 4 To enable pupils to realise the importance of active participation in all relevant aspects of life and to encourage them to become responsible adults by:**
  - (i) encouraging pupils to act as responsible members of their families and communities;
  - (ii) preparing pupils for their future roles;
  - (iii) promoting a responsible lifestyle in relation to health, fitness and leisure;
  - (iv) raising awareness of environmental issues and individual/community responsibilities;
  - (v) promoting understanding of and respect for the culture, faith and tradition of others.

## Aims of Attendance Policy

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at St Pius X College school.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with Education Welfare Service.

## **Role of the School**

The Principal at St Pius X College has overall responsibility for school attendance; key stage co-ordinators should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his/her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at meetings on a regular basis.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration.

To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2013/13.

## **Role of Parent/Guardian**

St Pius X College is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

**Parents have a legal duty to ensure:**

*Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.*

**(Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)**

Pupils are expected to be in school at **8.55am** for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and recorded on your child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

## **FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME**

St Pius X College discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

## **MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

Such appointments must be made outside College hours. Leave of absence will only be granted for Consultant and/or Orthodontist appointments. The appointment card should accompany the request for permission.

## **VISITING A PATIENT IN HOSPITAL**

Permission to visit a patient in hospital will **ONLY** be given if the patient is of the immediate family and where it is not possible to visit at any other time.

## **ALL OTHER REQUESTS must be made to the Principal.**

Procedures for parents in case of absence:

It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence.

**First Day:** Parent to ring College with reason for absence if possible. Office staff to record details on 'Telephone Messages' sheet and update Parent Call System with this information.

**Return to college:** Parent to complete absentee card if a message is not left on Parent Call System.; Present a Medical Certificate if required.

## **Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at St Pius X College has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly.

## Role of Form Teacher

Please remember that as a form teacher you are relying on first and fifth period teachers taking your class registration.

A previous week's registration and an absence report which is a record of all students who have no reason for their absence are printed on Mondays and are available in your folder for PSHE class on Tuesdays.

Please remember when filling in the reasons for absence on your absence report use a large dark mark, made with a pencil or black pen. This enables the scanner to read all the appropriate marks. If the scanner misses a mark then it will reappear on your following week's report.

### When a pupil is absent from college the procedure is as follows:

- (a) The college **Parent Call System** will automatically make contact to ensure a reason for absence and this information is then automatically updated in the Attendance Module.
- (b) If the **Parent Call System does not make contact** the Form Teachers should give the pupil on return, an **Absentee Card**. This must be signed and completed by the parent indicating a reason for absence. Using this information the form teacher must complete, by Friday, the weekly absence reports which they receive on Tuesday mornings. Remember to monitor all codes used and their statistical meaning. Any code which generates an "unauthorised absence or authorised absence" will reflect on your class attendance percentage. Please take note that "I" illness and "M" appointments, part sessions will affect your percentage. All unauthorised absences will have to be dealt with and appropriate codes allocated.
- (c) All cases of suspicious/unauthorised absenteeism should be investigated by the Form Teacher and reported to Head of Year. This may then be referred to the appropriate Key Stage Co-ordinator if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved.
- (d) Pupils should record and reflect on their monthly individual attendance. These must be recorded in their Homework Diary.
- (e) Monthly and accumulative percentage attendance reports are printed early each month for you to monitor. Attendance letters can be sent to students who are falling below the recommended targets.
- (f) Where a pupil is absent for more than 5 days through illness a Medical Certificate may be required. Bring to the attention of the Head of Year any pupils who are absent more than 3 consecutive days.
- (g) **ABSENCE REPORTS are SCANNED on FRIDAYS**. Please ensure your folder is left in reception before 9.30 am.

A list of all attendance codes and their statistical meanings are attached. If in doubt about using certain codes please do not hesitate to contact Head of Year for advice.

### Procedures for Managing Attendance - Pastoral Teams

<b>Daily:</b>	<b>Form Teacher:</b>	Monitor punctuality and attendance within form class. Contact parents with any concerns.
	<b>Head of Year:</b>	Monitor absences within year group using Sims.net daily <b>Absences</b> and <b>Parent Call printouts</b> . Parent Call System will be activated using this information.
<b>Weekly:</b>	<b>Form Teacher:</b>	Review <b>Lesson Monitor printouts</b> and contact parents with any concerns. Request absentee cards from pupils with N-codes. Complete <b>Absence report printout</b> (Print outs in folders on Tuesday)
<b>Monthly:</b>	<b>Form Teacher:</b>	Issue pupils with monthly attendance targets using <b>Percentage Attendance printout and contact parents with any concerns</b> . Each pupil to record % in the Homework Diary and use this information to self-evaluate.
	<b>Head of Year:</b>	Check cumulative % rate using Percentage Attendance cumulative printout. Investigate pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. Discuss with Form Teacher. Form Teacher to issue <b>Pre-AL1</b> letter if necessary. Review Progress Issue <b>Letter AL1</b> if problem persists Review For (KS3/KS4) Issue <b>Letter AL2</b> if % attendance falls below 85% and make referral to EWO For Post-16 Meet with Parent/Guardian and Pupil

## Education Welfare Service

Education and Library Boards through the Education Welfare Service have a legal responsibility to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

Regular attendance is an essential requirement for educational results and where attendance difficulties exist or a pupil's attendance falls below 85%, Education Welfare Service (EWS) will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

## PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING ATTENDANCE

### Registration with Lesson Monitor/Sims.Net

**To maintain our College safety requirements and our legally required official register it is essential that daily monitoring of absent students is recorded accurately and promptly on Sims.net or via Lesson Monitor.**

**A REGISTRATION FOR EVERY PERIOD SHOULD BE TAKEN.** If for any reason you cannot record this information on your computer, **PLEASE** contact reception at extension 100 or send the information manually, remembering to document your name, class and teaching period on all notes.

Periods " 1 " and " 5 " transfer the registration data to the Attendance Module and any student marked absence in first period (N Code) will receive a Parent/Truancy Call.

**Parent/Truancy Calls will be sent at 11.00 AM.** Please ensure that any changes to first period registration are forwarded to reception before this time. For example, if you notice a student marked absent first period and they are now in your teaching class please check with them they have signed in at reception. It is vital that all reliable information for a reason for absence be passed to reception or the Head of Year. **Good communication between Teachers, Form Teachers, Head of Years and Office Staff will ensure errors are not made.**

Please remember that after saving the data you can overwrite the information saved in Sims.net/Lesson Register but unfortunately this **does not** update on the Attendance Module. Please contact reception to amend the attendance module. For example, if you have marked a student present who is really absent then make sure to contact reception. This can be done over the telephone or manually via a messenger. Please remember to record your name and teaching period on any notes sent.

**Parent/Truancy Call updates Sims.net and the Attendance Module.** For example, a parent might leave a message to say that their son or daughter has a bad flu and will most likely be absent from school for the rest of the week. Then an "I" code for illness is entered until the return date. Therefore, if a student is marked "I" or any other code already for the day (and the student in question is absent from your teaching class) please use the code already in place. Especially for first period, this would ensure that the parent does not get another Parent/Truancy Call. **This is very important especially in the case of a family bereavement ("B" Code).** If the student has returned before the expected date then please ensure to mark them present.

**Please remember to leave saving your registration until end of class.** This allows for "latercomers". Only students who come in after 10.00 AM should use the "signing in book" in reception. All latecomers in first period should be recorded with the "L" code.

A list of all attendance codes and their statistical meanings are attached. If in doubt about using certain codes please do not hesitate to contact reception, form teacher or Head of Year for advice.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF PARENT/TRUANCY CALL THAT ALL REGISTRATION ARE COMPLETED FOR 10.00 AM PROMPTLY.**

Signature  
(Principal)

Signature  
(Chair, Board of Governors)