

St. Joseph's Grammar School

Scoil Iósaeaf



Attendance Policy and Procedures (Student Copy) 2023-2024

Policy Author	Mrs A McGleenan
Frequency of Review	Every 2 years
Date of Last Review	June 2023
Date Approved by Governors	
Proposed by	
Seconded by	
Date of Next Review	June 2025

Context

St Joseph's Grammar School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all students. Full attendance is vital to:

- Ensure success in all aspects of school life, including public examinations
- Ensure that each student is within the care of the school
- Secure a positive reference which will assist in gaining a place in further education and/or employment

It is a legal requirement that registered students of compulsory school age attend regularly and punctually. An explanation for every absence is required. If such explanation is not forthcoming from the student's parent/guardian, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence is an absence without permission from a Head of Year or member of Senior Management and includes all unexplained or unjustified absence. Minding the house, looking after family members, shopping or going on a holiday in term time will not normally be acceptable reasons for absence.

Role of the School

Our school will:

- Encourage 100% attendance
- Give a high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance
- Establish strong home school links to be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance
- Investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and students to resolve problems as quickly as possible.

Every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the students its importance for their education. This requires all teaching staff to attend regularly, arrive on time for lessons, be well prepared and maximize the use of class time.

Role of Parents

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children attend school and arrive in good time for class each morning.

- A student should only be absent for an unavoidable reason which would usually mean ill-health or family bereavement.
- **Leaving school early** - except in exceptional circumstances, medical and dental appointments etc. should not be made during school hours. **If a pupil is leaving school early the parent/guardian should email the form teacher.**
 - (i) The **form teacher will note on SIMS and inform the office staff.**
 - (ii) Pupils in year 13 & 14 will be given a **Permission Slip** by their **form teacher** which then has to be **countersigned** by the **Head of Sixth Form or Assistant Head of Sixth Form**. This must be presented to office staff before leaving school.
In line with school safeguarding policy, pupils will not be permitted to leave school without proper permission.
- **Absence procedure** - If a student is unfit to attend, parents should contact the school office before 9.30am on the first day of absence. An absence note **will not** be required if explanation for absence is given.
- If parents/guardians do not contact the school office to provide a reason for absence they should **provide a reason for absence by email to the form teacher** on return of their son/daughter to

school. This should be sent **within 5 days** otherwise the pupil will be placed **on detention** for non-submission of reason for absence. **Pupils should also explain the reason for their absence to their subject teachers at the start of their next lesson and make arrangements to catch up on missed work.**

- The practice of parents withdrawing students during term time to go on holidays is very strongly discouraged. Unless the principal has given permission, such absences will be recorded as “Unauthorised” and will impact on a pupil’s attendance record.

For child protection reasons, pupils in Years 8-12 should not be signed out by anyone other than a parent/guardian. Where this is not possible, written permission from parents /guardians should be presented to office staff, indicating the reason for leaving school early and the name, address and relationship of the person collecting the pupil. Proof of identity may be required.

Role of students

Registration

- To value education and attend all classes required by his/her timetable.
- To be punctual for school. Students must be in by 8.50am at the latest, to ensure that they are in their registration rooms/year assembly by 8.55am. Students who arrive **after this time** must report to reception in the school office, where the time and reason for lateness will be recorded in the *Latecomers Book*. And on SIMS. **They then proceed immediately to class.** Any student who is late for a valid reason must provide the office staff with a note from a parent/guardian.
- **A student who is late without a valid reason in writing from parent/guardian on three occasions in any given half-term will be required to do an after school detention.**
- Morning Registration closes at 10.35 am Students who arrive after this time should report to reception as above but will be **marked absent** for the **morning session**.
- Students must remain on the school premises at all times throughout the school day. The exceptions to this rule are as follows:

Leaving school early

- In the case of an unavoidable medical or dental appointment where a pupil has to leave school early **the parent/guardian of students in year 8-14 should email the form teacher who will note on SIMS and inform the office staff.** The student should go to the office at the time they are to leave school.

Pupils in year 13 & 14 will obtain a **Permission Slip** from their **form teacher** which then has to be **countersigned** by the **Head of Sixth Form or Assistant Head of Sixth Form**. This must be presented to office staff before leaving school.

In line with school safeguarding policy, pupils will not be permitted to leave school without proper permission.

All students leaving early must **inform the Office staff** when they are leaving school and inform the office **on return** to school. This is to ensure that, as is our legal obligation, we have an up-to-date and accurate record at all times of those who are (and are not) on the school premise.

Absence procedure

- If parents/guardians do not contact the school office to provide a reason for absence they should provide a reason for absence by email to the form teacher on return of their son/daughter to school. This should be sent within 5 days otherwise the pupil will be placed on detention for non-submission of reason for absence **Pupils should also explain the reason for their absence to their subject teachers at the start of their next lesson and make arrangements to catch up on missed work.**

- It is the student's responsibility to catch up on any work missed. They should liaise with the teacher to find out what they have missed.
- If a student truant from class/school he/she should also catch up on any work missed.
- The student will be sanctioned in line with the school discipline policy.
- Students in Years 8-14 whose attendance falls between **95% and 85%** will be interviewed by Form Teacher/Year Head and the Form Teacher and HoY will contact parent/carer to discuss concerns.
- Students in Years 8-12 whose attendance falls below **85%** will be interviewed by Mrs McGleenan and if absence persists will be referred to the EWS. Parents/Guardians will be informed of student referral.
- Students in Year 13 and 14 whose attendance falls below **85%** parents/guardian will be invited to attend an interview with Ms Dolan/Mr A Gallagher where the decision may be taken not to enter the student for external exams.

Students eligible for EMA payment will not receive their payment unless they have full attendance in all classes except in exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement, family wedding, and attendance at interviews.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy and the procedures outlined within will be the subject of ongoing review within the Form Teacher and Year Head meetings. The Heads of Year and Form Teachers will review termly the targets for improvement and the success of the strategies for profiling high attendance. Feedback will also be encouraged from students and parents. Parents are invited to share their observations with either the Form Teacher, Year Head, Vice Principal or Principal. This policy will be reviewed every two years in consultation with students, parents/carers and staff.