

**MIHSG**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**  
**REVIEWED OCTOBER 2017**

*The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 74*

*The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "One who treads a path in search of knowledge has his path to Paradise made easy by God..." - Riyadh us-Saleheen, 245*

*The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "A servant of God will remain standing on the Day of Judgment until he is questioned about his (time on earth) and how he used it; about his knowledge and how he utilized it; about his wealth and from where he acquired it and in what (activities) he spent it; and about his body and how he used it." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 148*

The School follows the Department for Education, Schools and Families (DfE) regulations and guidance.

Regular school attendance is a legal responsibility on parents. The School is required by law to record absences and late arrivals on a pupil's annual report.

We expect our pupils to have an attendance percentage record of over 95% is the norm. Independent schools must notify the Local Education Authority if a pupil does not attend regularly. The School will notify the appropriate local authority if a pupil has a low attendance of 85% or below, or if she is absent continuously without the School's authorisation for ten or more school days.

**Non-emergency medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours.** Appointment letters for specialist or hospital treatment should be shown to the Form Tutor in advance of the appointment.

All pupils are expected to stay on the school premises during break and lunchtimes.

#### **Authorised absence procedures**

Authorised absence is where the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards by parents as satisfactory justification. All other absences will be classified as unauthorised.

Acceptable reasons for absence would normally be only illness or bereavement. Absences for interviews are authorised by the School only if advance notice is given and a letter of invitation shown.

Parents are asked to **telephone the School Office on every morning of absence**, between 8am and 9am. A member of the Administrative Staff will try to contact you if we have not received a reason for the absence from you. If the Administrative Staff are unable to contact you by telephone, a text message will be sent. Absence will remain unauthorised until contact has been made.

Absences must be explained by a parent in a letter to the Form Tutor on the day the pupil returns to school. This must be signed by a parent and dated.

If a pupil is absent for ten days or more, the parent must provide the form tutor with a medical certificate from the GP, or from the practitioner who is providing medical treatment. A risk assessment will be carried out for any pupil who returns after a prolonged period of absence.

If a pupil has been absent with an infectious illness that has to be notified to public health authorities, a parent should send in a medical certificate on her return. This should state the nature of the illness and certify freedom from infection. All cases of infectious illness in the home should be reported to the School immediately by telephone to allow school to make a decision on whether to inform other parents of the risk, should there be more than three cases in school.

If a pupil arrives in school after 9:15am, she must bring a letter of explanation from a parent. (The only exception is a delay in the arrival of the Metrolink which can be confirmed on line).

### **Leave of absence for holidays**

The School does not normally authorise absence in term-time and strongly discourages parents from making such requests. Each request for term-time absence will be considered on an individual basis, and will normally only be granted if exceptional circumstances apply. Parents should be aware of the following possible restrictions:

- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised if the pupil's attendance is low.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised at any time for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised for any pupils during the school examination period, dates of which are shown in the school calendar issued in September.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised in Year 10 during Work Experience fortnight.

Parents must adhere to the procedure outlined below when submitting requests for leave of absence:

- Requests for leave of absence will only be considered on receipt of a completed holiday request form, which can be obtained from the school office. This must include precise details of the reason for the request, and why it would be impossible for the absence to take place during the normal school holiday periods.
- Requests must be received by the Head Teacher before any bookings are made, and at least two weeks (during term time) before the absence. Absence will always be classified as unauthorised if the holiday has not been agreed in advance. **All unauthorised absence will incur a daily fine of £50**

**per day per pupil. Pupils will not be allowed back in school until this money is paid in full.**

If a pupil fails to return to school on the agreed date following leave of absence, the school reserves the right to remove her name from the register. All absence over the number of days requested will be classed as unauthorised and the absence will be reported to the local authority.

### **Unauthorised absence**

The School is bound by DfE regulations. The DfE regards all absence which has not been authorised by the school as truancy.

Absence is classified as unauthorised in the following cases:-

- If the reason for absence is unacceptable to the School
- If the pupil does not bring a written explanation of absence from a parent
- If the pupil misses a lesson without the permission of the teacher
- If the pupil leaves the school site without the advance written permission of a parent, authorised by the relevant Head of Year or Form Tutor.
- If a pupils takes leave of absence without obtaining prior written permission
- If a pupil fails to return to school on the agreed date following an authorised leave of absence. – including unauthorised extension of authorised holidays.

Unauthorised absence is noted in a pupil's individual school record and may affect their sixth form applications.

### **PUNCTUALITY**

Punctuality is regarded by the school as an important indicator that a pupil is learning self-discipline and good time management. We are frequently asked to comment on punctuality for employment, Further Education and Higher Education references. Pupils must make every effort to avoid lateness.

#### **Morning Registration**

The first registration takes place at 8.45am. If a pupil arrives after the register has been taken, she will be marked 'late' in the register (SIMS). Once registration starts pupils are classed as late and will be given a warning in the first place followed by demerit. Late pupils are registered by Attendance Officer at the pupils entrance.

If a pupil arrives after the end of the registration period, she should sign the "Late Book" at Reception and proceed quickly to her lesson. However, arrival after the close of the register is classed as absence by the DfE, and the pupil must bring a letter of explanation from a parent. An exception to this regulation is made if the school bus arrives later than normal, delaying pupils through no fault of their own. School bus pupils are marked as present when they arrive and not late.

Pupils who are regularly late will be dealt with as follows:

On the first occasion they will be given a warning, each occasion subsequent to this they will be given a demerit which will ultimately lead to an after school detention.

Parents of pupils who are persistently late will be invited in to discuss the reasons for their daughter's punctuality.

## Register codes for SIMS

Code	Description
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
B	Educated off site
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Undefined
E	Excluded
G	Undefined
H	Annual family holiday (agreed)
I	Interview
L	Late (before reg closed)
M	Medical /Dental
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised circumstances
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after reg closed) unauthorised
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
-	All should attend/ No mark recorded
Z	Off school roll

### Please note the following code changes from paper registers to SIMS:

- Previously we have used “I” as the code for any illness using the paper registers. On SIMS the attendance code for any illness is now “C”.
- Previously we have also used “J” as the code for an interview using the paper registers. On SIMS the attendance code for an interview is now “I”.

## **PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

### **a) First day contact**

The purpose of first-contact is to:

- Provide a way in which parents can let the school know that a pupil is unable to come to school, the reasons for this and the expected date of return
- Enable the school to contact parents/ carer to notify them their daughter/ guardian has not arrived in school

A designated member of the office staff will be responsible for contacting parents on the first day of absence.

- Registers to be checked at 10.30am and pupils who are first day absent are identified.
- The office member contacting parents by phone to query the absence (ensure correct phone/ mobile number is used) If contact is not possible then a text message will be sent
- Records of all absence contacts made to parents must be kept
- A note is made for reason of absence on SIMS (denoted by a little red triangle next to the register mark for that day)
- A pupil will have their absence authorized once contact has been made with parent and suitable reason for absence has been given

#### **b) Following up absences**

- Parents must send a written note to explain their daughter's absences on the first day she returns back to school even if they phoned the school.
- If the pupil is absent for **two consecutive days** and the office failed to contact parents, then on the third day of absence the **form tutor must inform the HOY**. On the **third day** of absence HOY sends a letter to parents urging them to notify the school of the reason for their daughter' absence. This letter must be handed to YK who will ensure it is posted as recorded delivery.
- Within three school days of the date of the letter, if the parents have still not contacted the school, the HOY must inform the Headteacher who must contact the DCSF (attendance section) to seek advice. **All phone calls must be recorded.**
- Attendance Officer to check form registers on a weekly basis and act immediately upon any unjustified cause for concern absence. This information is passed to HOY who ensures that form tutors are using the correct code and that registers are fully completed.
- Attendance monitor reports directly to HOY any issues of absence that have not been corrected within 1 week of a pupil returning to school.
- Attendance monitor reports to Headteacher if the absences are still not followed up after 1 week – HOY must also be informed regularly
- Attendance monitor reports persistent punctuality to HOY so that it can be followed up

#### **c) Actions to be taken for pupils whom attendance is a cause for concern**

- Absence on a certain day on a regular basis, FT to inform HOY who will send a letter to parents to discuss their concern.
- Too many absences on a certain day due to medical appointments
- Pupils who fail to return to school at the end of an authorised leave of absence
- Pupils who go on holiday without gaining school permission:
  - recorded as 'N' in registers
  - Parents are contacted by Head of Year
- Pupils regularly attend school after registration is closed: pupils/parents should be reminded that punctuality is important and that attending once registration has been completed is marked as an unauthorised absence 'U' – pupils/parents reminded that this can affect their daughter's sixth form applications.

- If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% the parents are called in for a meeting with the Head Teacher and the Pastoral Coordinator to discuss the matter.
- If a pupil's attendance does not improve once the parents have been brought in, the parents may be asked to withdraw their daughter from the school. This is at the Head Teachers discretion.

***Policy reviewed October 2017 (MM)***