

**MIHSG**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**  
**REVIEWED JULY 2018**

*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 (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 student's annual report.

We expect our students to have an attendance percentage record of over 95% is the norm. Independent schools must notify the Local Education Authority if a student does not attend regularly. The School will notify the appropriate local authority if a student 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 students 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 student 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 student returns to school. This must be signed by a parent and dated.

If a student 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 student who returns after a prolonged period of absence.

If a student 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 student arrives in school after 8.55am, 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 student's attendance is low.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised at any time for students in Years 10 and 11.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised for any students 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 student. Students will not be allowed back in school until this money is paid in full.**

If a student 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.

### **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 student does not bring a written explanation of absence from a parent
- If the student misses a lesson without the permission of the teacher
- If the student leaves the school site without the advance written permission of a parent, authorised by the relevant Head of Year or Form Tutor.
- If a student takes leave of absence without obtaining prior written permission
- If a student 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 student's individual school record and may affect sixth form applications.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

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

### **Morning Registration**

The first registration takes place at 8.45am. Once registration starts students are classed as late and will be given a warning in the first place followed by demerit. Late students are registered by Attendance Officer at the students' entrance up to 10am. Arrival after the close of the register is classed as absence by the DfE.

If a student arrives after 10am, she should sign the "Late Book" at Reception and proceed quickly to her lesson. She must bring a letter of explanation from a parent. Students who are regularly late will be dealt with as follows:

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

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

## **Register codes for SIMS**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
/	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 student is unable to come to school, the reasons for this and the expected date of return
- Enable the school to contact parent/carer to notify them that their daughter/ward 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 students who are first day absent are identified.
- The office member will contact 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 student will have their absence authorised 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 had phoned the school.
- If the student is absent for **two consecutive days** and the office has failed to contact parents, then on the third day of absence the Attendance Officer must inform the HOY, and send a letter to parents urging them to notify the school of the reason for their daughter's absence. This letter must be handed to the school office staff 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 Attendance Officer must inform the HOY and the Headteacher, and contact the DfE (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 must be passed to HOY.
- Attendance Officer must ensure that form tutors are using the correct code and that registers are fully completed.
- Attendance Officer reports directly to HOY any issues of absence that have not been corrected within 1 week of a student returning to school.
- Attendance Officer reports to HOY and Headteacher if the absences are still not followed up after 1 week
- Attendance Officer reports persistent punctuality to HOY so that it can be followed up

### c) Actions to be taken for students whose attendance is a cause for concern

- Absence on a certain day on a regular basis, Attendance Officer or FT to inform HOY who will contact parents to discuss their concern.
- Too many absences on a certain day due to medical appointments
- Students who fail to return to school at the end of an authorised leave of absence
- Students who go on holiday without gaining school permission:
  - recorded as 'N' in registers
  - Parents are contacted by Head of Year and fine imposed
- Students who regularly attend school after registration is closed: students/parents should be reminded that punctuality is important and that attending once registration has been completed is marked as an unauthorised absence 'U' – students/parents reminded that this can affect their daughter's sixth form applications.
- If a student's attendance falls below 90% the parents are called in for a meeting with the HOY and the Pastoral Coordinator to discuss the matter.
- If a student'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 Teacher's discretion.

***Policy reviewed July 2018 (ES)***