



# Whole School Attendance Policy

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## Revision History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for most Recent Revision</b>
v1.0	March 2015	Reviewed and reissued as per guidelines in WS-PRO-001. Minor changes.
v2.0	March 2019	New sub-section added "Siblings attending events in School time".
v2.1	October 2021	Minor changes to reflect change in school MIS system
v2.2	September 2022	Changes to start times in Infants
v2.3	February 2024	Minor change to Infant collection time (addition of 12:25pm)
v2.4	December 2024	Minor changes to Infant and Junior registration times and procedures
v2.5	February 2025	New sub-sections added "Absence from School and Attendance at SPARTA or ECAs" and "Supervision After School"
v2.6	March 2025	Minor changes to "Siblings attending events in School time"
v2.7	April 2025	Appendix C Updated to reflect new procedures



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## 1. Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure all staff are aware of expectations regarding attendance and punctuality of students
- To ensure that any issues arising regarding attendance and punctuality are dealt with in a transparent and consistent manner

## 2. Introduction

At St Christopher's, we know that in order for a student to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential. Absence from school can be distressing for a student and disrupts their learning. Any student arriving late to school or late to a lesson disrupts the flow of the lesson and the learning of their peers. Lateness can also be distressing for the student concerned if it is beyond their control. We will ensure that all opportunities to promote the importance of regular and punctual attendance are taken and that when attendance and punctuality are a cause for concern it is brought to the attention of parents and students and targets for improvement are set. We aim for 100% attendance for all students but accept that in an international context this aspirational target may not be achieved.

## 3. Registration

### 3.1 Attendance at School

- Registers are maintained online using the School's central database (iSams)
- The registration period:

Infants	07:45
Juniors	07:40
Seniors	07:50
- Parents are considered late for collection if they are not present by:

Infants	12:25 / 14:35
Juniors	14:35
Seniors	14:50
- Symbols are used to indicate reasons for absence. See **Appendix A**
- The attendance register is taken each morning on arrival to school
- If a student is absent at registration and there is no known reason for the absence, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised
- Unauthorised absence is then amended appropriately following communication from parent

#### 3.1.1 Late Arrival

Infants:

- Registration begins at 07:45. Children arriving after 08:00 will be marked as late
- Teachers register in iSams.
- Reception Staff to print off daily report of absent children and phone parent

Juniors:



- Registration begins at 07:40. Children arriving after 07:45 will be marked as late
- Teachers to register in iSams.
- Reception Staff to print off daily report of absent children and phone parent

Seniors:

- Registration begins at 07:50. Children arriving after 07:45 will be marked as late
- Teachers to register in iSams.
- Reception Staff to print off daily report of absent children and phone parent

## 3.2 Attendance in Lessons

Registers maintained by individual teachers, but which are available to SLT on request, are taken as follows:

- In the Primary School, a register is taken during each lesson where students are taught by specialist teachers
- In the Senior School, a register is taken during each lesson

## 3.3 Absence from School

- All absence is recorded in the registration database using the agreed codes detailed in Appendix A
- Parents should contact the school via telephone to report absence. Relaying a verbal message through another student is not acceptable
- All absence must be confirmed in writing by parents and it is the responsibility of the class or form teacher to follow up with parents on the student's return if a reason for absence is unforthcoming
- If a student is absent from School without notice from parents then admin staff will telephone parents to ascertain the reason for absence and request confirmation of absence in writing. Calls will be made after 10.30 and staff will ensure that they are sensitive when calling in case there have been extenuating circumstances.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher and form tutor to track the persistent absence of students. The teacher will make Year Leaders and Heads of Year aware and parents will be contacted where absence falls below an acceptable standard. See appendix for suggested letter templates. Individual records of attendance can be obtained from the School database

## 3.4 Absence from School and Attendance at SPARTA or ECAs

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, or if they are sent home early by the school nurse, they will not be able to take part in any after-school activities or clubs on that day, including SPARTA. This is to ensure the health and safety of other participants.

As per the [SPARTA Refund Policy](#), refunds in this instance will not apply.

## 3.5 Non participation in curriculum swimming due to illness

Swimming is an essential area of the curriculum, as well as being an extremely valuable and vital life skill especially when living on an island with swimming pools being commonplace on compounds. All children are



expected to participate in their swimming sessions unless they have a medical reason not to do so, in which case a medical note or email must be presented or sent to the child's swimming teacher.

Please note the following:

- If a child is deemed not well enough to swim, they will be reviewed by the school nurses and we may contact you to collect them if we feel they are not well enough to participate in their other areas of learning
- If a child was unable to participate in their curriculum swimming lesson due to medical reasons / illness, they may not be able to take part in any after-school activities or clubs on that day, including SPARTA, unless the medical note allows them to do so

As per the [SPARTA Refund Policy](#), refunds in this instance will not apply.

### 3.6 Supervision After School (For SPARTA sessions starting after 14:30)

For their own safety, students are not allowed to remain in school without parental supervision whilst waiting for their SPARTA / ECA to commence.. Café 61 is open at this time and you are more than welcome to wait with your child until the start of their session. Please note that Café 61 staff are not able to supervise children.

### 3.7 Absence taken at Parental Request

- Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school during term time. This is emphasised in relevant communication to parents
- The parents of any student taking leave in term time must inform the school in writing prior to leave being taken: it is acknowledged, however, that in cases of compassionate leave, this may not be possible as a student may have to leave with little notice
- A standard letter is issued to parents from the Head of School (see Appendix B) which reinforces the School position that term time absence should be avoided wherever possible and leave must be closely monitored

#### 3.7.1 Siblings attending events in School time

In the Infant and Junior School we get regular requests from parents for siblings to attend events that their brother or sister are taking part in, for example Sports Days and Class Assemblies. We invite parents to come and watch their children, however we don't facilitate siblings attending due to the following reasons:

- Children will miss learning time if they are out of class to watch a sibling's performance
- There is often not room for siblings to attend, due to the number of parents and carers attending the event
- Siblings often get opportunities to watch dress rehearsals of shows etc.

## 4. Punctuality

Any student arriving after the beginning of the registration period or who is collected late, is recorded as being late. This procedure is for when a student is consistently arriving to school late (after the registration period), and / or consistently late to be collected at the end of the school day.



## 4.1 Students arriving after the Registration Period

### 4.1.1 In the Infant School

- The parent or carer must enter school via Gate A and bring the child firstly to reception and administration staff will update the relevant class register
- The parent / carer must then accompany the child to their class

### 4.1.2 In the Junior School

- The child must enter school via Gate A and firstly go to reception and administration staff will update the relevant class register
- The child must then go to their class

### 4.1.3 In the case of persistent lateness

That has not been addressed following contact with parents by the class teacher

- A series of meetings and standard emails are issued: class teacher, Year Leader, SLT.
- If standard letters have not produced the desired result, parents will meet with the Head of School to address the issue

### 4.1.4 In the Senior School

- Students arriving after the 07:50 bell, but before 08:05, must go straight to their form group, form room or assembly to get their late mark in the register
- Students arriving after 08:05 must report to Senior School Reception and sign the late book. Office staff will then mark them present, but late. Students must then go straight to whichever lesson they should be in and apologise to the teacher for being late and inform their teacher that they have signed in late at the Senior School Office
- Any student who is late and is on the school site must have followed the two points above. If students fail to follow this procedure, they will not be marked in school and will be classed as absent.
- Monitoring the punctuality of students is the responsibility of the class/form teacher
- If a student has three lates in a half term, then the class/teacher will contact the parents to establish why the student is late
- If lateness persists then a standard letter (see Appendix C) will be issued to parents from the Head of School reinforcing the School position that lateness disrupts the class and impacts adversely on the student's learning

## 4.2 Students collected late at the end of the day

Any student who is not collected on time from School is also dealt with in the same way as a student who is persistently late. The situation is closely monitored, the parents are contacted and the standard process shall be followed (see Appendix F for letter / email templates):

- Verbal conversation by Class Teacher / Form Tutor



- Year Leader / Head of Year level: Phone call, followed up by email
- SLT level: Email requesting phone call, followed up by email
- Meeting with HT
- Email from HT

#### **4.2.1 Step 1: Class Teacher / Form Tutor : Verbal conversation**

- Please bear in mind that the parent may not even be aware that their child is late, as they may be brought to school by a driver/nanny.
- When you first become aware of a persistent punctuality issue, please address it immediately. This is a gentle and supportive conversation with the parent, in the first instance, where you are trying to gauge why there is an issue and offer guidance.
  - Be factual: Please speak directly to the parent/s, either in person or on the phone. Please note the date/time that the conversation took place. Be clear with the parent about start/end of day times are, and how this differs from their child's punctuality.
  - Listen: Listen to the parents ie, *there may be a short term issue with the travel to/from/school, new to Bahrain etc.*
  - Inform: Late arrival / collection has a negative impact on their child's wellbeing and they may be missing out on vital curriculum time.
  - Solution: Ask parents to find a solution as soon as possible, and make the parents aware that both you and the Year Leader / Head of Year are monitoring their child's punctuality.

#### **4.2.2 Step 2: Year Leader / Head of Year: Second verbal conversation, followed by an email**

If punctuality continues to be an issue, the Year Leader / Head of Year should speak to the parent/s. Please note the date/time that the conversation took place.

- Remind them of the previous conversation and listen to their reasoning for not addressing the issue. Respond accordingly.
- Remind the parents that we have an attendance and punctuality policy and we expect all students to arrive and be collected on time for their own wellbeing i.e. *so that their child is safe, has established routines, and feels a sense of belonging. We want all children to be in school at the correct time.*
- Remind parents about start/end of day times are, and how this differs from their child's punctuality.
- Inform them that our procedure is that you will need to inform the Assistant Head if the issue continues.

#### **4.2.3 Step 3: SLT Member: Third verbal conversation, followed by an email**

#### **4.2.4 Step 4: Head of School: Meeting Request**

#### **4.2.5 Step 5: Head of School: Follow - up email, after meeting**



## 5. Monitoring

- Teachers can access information on attendance and punctuality on the School's central database. In cases where absence or punctuality is causing concern, data will be obtained to present to the student and to parents
- Reports on absence and punctuality can be obtained from the School's central database from the admin team
- Senior Managers and the Leadership and Management Team will from time to time (at least termly) review the attendance across the School. This will inform future planning regarding the School calendar
- Attendance rates are also reviewed after an extraordinary national event e.g. the Bahrain Grand Prix

## 6. Promoting Attendance & Punctuality

- Parent Handbooks stress the importance of attendance and punctuality and outline school policy
- 'Meet the Teacher' afternoons at the beginning of the academic year also reinforce this message
- Certificates are awarded to children who have 100% attendance at the end of each term and at the end of the school year
- Exemplary attendance is celebrated in assemblies

## 7. Reporting

- Attendance and punctuality data are reported on end of year reports to parents



## 8. Appendix A: Absence Codes

Description	Codes	Absence	Authorised
Unknown	K	☒	
Remote Attendance	R	☒	☒
Authorised Absence	A	☒	☒
Excluded	E	☒	☒
Interview	I		☒
Medical/Dental	M	☒	
Illness	N	☒	
Holiday/Parent Request	P	☒	
Study Support	S		☒
Temporarily not on roll	T	☒	☒
Unauthorised Absence	U	☒	
Educational Visit or Trip	V		☒
Technical Absence	Z	☒	☒

### 8.1 Clarification

If a student is absent at time of registration and there is no communication from parents then they are marked in the register as 'U' – unauthorised absence. This should be amended following written communication.

Leave at parental request includes holiday, compassionate leave and leave due to religious reasons.

It is the class / form teacher's responsibility to monitor attendance using iSams:

- Attendance under 94% - the class/form teacher monitors closely. If a child has been off for periods of notified sickness or family holiday at parent request, then monitor attendance to ensure it is not impacting on progress.
- Attendance 90% and under (where absence has not been for a family holiday or notified sickness) – the class teacher talks to parents and raises this as a concern which may impact on progress. The class teacher should inform the Year Leader and SLT link. The concern should be entered in the Daybook.
- Attendance 85% and under – the class teacher informs the Headteacher who sends a letter to parents. The class teacher enters the letter issued in the Daybook.



## 9. Appendix B: Absence Taken at Parental Request in Term Time Letter

[date]

Mr and Mrs  
c/o Child's Name / Class

Dear Mr and Mrs

Thank you for the email informing us that [child's name] will be away from school from [day date month ] until [day date month], missing [no] school days.

We obviously prefer, if possible, that children do not miss any days of schooling. However, we are pragmatic enough to note that sometimes this is unavoidable in an international school. We ask that parents monitor this through the school year so that it does not happen frequently. Please note [his/her] absence will be noted on [his/her] end-of-year report as an absence taken at parent's request.

However, [add personalised note if required, alternatively leave this line out].

Yours sincerely

[Heads Name]

**Head of** [Infant/Junior/Senior] **School**

## 10. Appendix C: Attendance and Punctuality Concerns: Procedures & Communication

**Punctuality concerns:** this procedure is for when a student is consistently arriving to school late (after the registration period), and / or consistently late to be collected at the end of the school day.

Step 1: Verbal conversation by Class Teacher / Form Tutor

Step 2: Year Leader: Phone call, followed up by email

Step 3: Assistant Head / Head of Key Stage level: Email requesting phone call, followed up by email

Step 4: Meeting with HT

Step 5: Email from HT

### **Step 1: Class Teacher / Form Tutor: Verbal conversation**

Please bear in mind that the parent may not even be aware that their child is late, as they may be brought to school by a driver / nanny.

When you first become aware of a persistent punctuality issue, please address it immediately. This is a gentle and supportive conversation with the parent, in the first instance, where you are trying to gauge why there is an issue and offer guidance.



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- **Be factual:** Please speak directly to the parent/s, either in person or on the phone. Please log on iSAMS the date that the conversation took place. Be clear with the parent about what the start / end of day times are, and how this differs from their child's punctuality.
- **Listen:** Listen to the parents ie, *there may be a short term issue with the travel to / from school, new to Bahrain etc.*
- **Inform:** Late arrival / collection has a negative impact on their child's wellbeing and they may be missing out on vital curriculum time.
- **Solution:** Ask parents to find a solution as soon as possible, and make the parents aware that both you and the Year Leader / Head of Year are monitoring their child's punctuality.

## Step 2 : Year Leader / Head of Year: Verbal conversation, followed by an email

If punctuality continues to be an issue, the Year Leader / Head of Year should speak to the parent/s. Please log on iSAMS the date that the conversation took place.

- Remind them of the previous conversation and listen to their reasoning as to why the issue persists. Respond accordingly.
- Show the parents the attendance and punctuality policy and explain why we expect all students to arrive and be collected on time for their own wellbeing i.e. *so that their child is safe, has established routines, and feels a sense of belonging. We want all children to be in school at the correct time so no learning is missed etc*
- Remind parents about start/end of day times are, and how this differs from their child's punctuality.
- Inform them that you will need to inform the Assistant Head / Head of Key Stage, if the issue continues, as is our procedure.

### Step 2.1: Email from Year Leader

Dear <<names of parents>>,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today.

I hope that our discussion clarified why it is so important for <<name of student>> to be present at school / arrive at school on time and/or be collected from school on time, and we are grateful for your support.

<<Assistant Head / Head of Key Stage>> is aware that we have discussed ways in which to improve <<name of student>>'s attendance/punctuality.

Kindest regards,

<<Year Leaders / Head of Year>>

### Step 3 Assistant Head: Email requesting phone call, followed up by email

Dear <<names of parents>>,

I understand that you have been contacted by both <<class teacher's name>> and <<Year Leader's name>> with regard to <<name of student>>'s attendance / punctuality. There are still concerns surrounding this issue and I would like to discuss this matter further with you. Would <<time and date>> be a convenient time for us to speak, so that we can explore ways in which we can support <<student's name>> and ensure that he/she attends school regularly / on time.



## Step 3.1 Phone call with Assistant Head

### Step 3.2 Follow up email

Dear <<names of parents>>

Thank you for speaking with me today, following our conversation I would just like to confirm that (what was agreed during the call)

<<Head of School>> is aware that we have discussed ways in which we can improve <<name of student>>'s attendance/punctuality.

Kindest regards,

Assistant Head

### Step 4: Meeting with HT

Dear <<names of parents>>,

I believe you have been in correspondence with <<AHT>>, <<Year Leader>> and <<class teacher>> regarding punctuality issues surrounding <<name of student>>'s attendance at school.

Please can I request a meeting with you to discuss the matter further and how we may ensure together that the issue is resolved immediately.

My PA will be in contact with you to arrange the meeting.

Kindest regards,

<<Head of School>>

### Step 4.1: Email following meeting with HT

Dear XX,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me regarding the punctuality issues surrounding <<name of student>>'s attendance / punctuality at school.

I am delighted that we could come to an agreement on how the matter will be resolved and look forward to <<detail agreed solution>>.

Kindest regards

<<Head of School>>



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## Step 5: Email from Head of School

Dear XX,

We met recently to discuss the punctuality issues surrounding <<name of student>>'s attendance at school. I am concerned to note that there are still incidents of <<arriving late / being picked up late>>.

Here is a copy of our policy <<insert policy>> for your reference. Please see section <<insert section>> for clarity.

Numerous correspondences have already taken place between School and home without the matter being rectified and, as discussed in our meeting, <<name of student>>'s place is at risk should this matter not be resolved immediately.

As a large community, all members of staff, students and parents / carers must adhere to our policies. This creates an important culture of equality, trust and respect. Punctuality is particularly important as it sets an excellent example for your child's future in the world of further study and work. <<name of student>>'s punctuality / attendance will be monitored for 1 week from the date of this letter where I feel assured that from that date onwards no other instances of lateness / absence will be seen. In the spirit of transparency and honesty, we must see an immediate improvement if <<name of student>> is to remain at our School.

I look forward to your support on this matter.

Kindest regards,

<<Head of School>>