

Holy Cross College Student Attendance Policy

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. Holy Cross College will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each student will feel valued and secure.

Aims:

- To improve/maintain the overall attendance of students at Holy Cross College.
- To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/Person with Parental Responsibility and students.
- To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School:

The Principal at Holy Cross College has overall responsibility for school attendance; (teachers/designated staff) should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of students by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions. To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department.

Holy Cross College is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/ Person with Parental Responsibility:

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full-time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

If a child is registered in school, their parent has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school. It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a student's absence on the first day of absence. This should be confirmed with a written note when the student returns to school or a phone call to the school on the first day of the absence. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Students are expected to be in school at **8.50am** for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on student's attendance record.

If a student appears reluctant to attend school parents should discuss the matter promptly with the form teacher or Year Head to ensure that both the parent and student receive maximum support.

Role of Student:

Each student at Holy Cross College must attend school punctually and regularly. If a student has been absent from school, a written note from a parent/Person with Parental Responsibility must be provided to the student's form teacher when they return, or the parent may respond to the 'Truancy Call' system via phone call to provide a reason for absence.

Absence Procedures:

All Parents/Person with Parental Responsibility are required to complete the absence notification form in the student planner which provides a clear reason for any absence or phone the school first thing on the morning of the absence.

Family holidays during Term Time:

Holy Cross College discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on students' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

Registration:

All registration should be carried out electronically in the ATTENDANCE module of SIMS.net.

Procedures for Registration:

- At 8.50am each day, all staff and students should arrive in school.
- At 8.55am, classes will be sent to the Form Teacher's room by senior staff, except on the day of an assembly. Form Teachers should complete morning registration every morning before 9.05am. This is vitally important for the 'Truancy Call' system, which will notify parents/Person with Parental Responsibility of student absence each morning.
- Afternoon registration should be completed during period 10 (2:30 – 3pm) by the class teacher.

It is vital that all absences are accounted for. If a parent has not informed the College via telephone, Form Teachers should insist on written explanatory notes from parents so that periods marked as "Unexplained Absence" may be removed from records and replaced by the appropriate code. Lists of "Unexplained Absences" will be issued to Form Teachers for reconciliation monthly and the required adjustments should be made as soon as possible thereafter.

Latecomers, before 9:05am will be instructed to report immediately to the Form Teacher so that their late arrival may be recorded. Latecomers, after 9:05am, will be required to sign in at reception and admin staff will update the register accordingly.

Signing-out Procedure:

A student who wishes to leave the school for a medical/dental appointment etc. must have a signed explanatory from a parent or person with parental responsibility. The note must be counter-signed by a Vice Principal or the Principal and the student must sign the "Signing-out Book" at reception before leaving the school. The student should be collected by their parent from reception.

Procedures for Managing Non-Attendance:

-ATTENDANCE-

Attendance	Absences	Comment
100%	None	Excellent
95%	9 days - 1 week and 4 days of learning missed	Satisfactory
90%	19 days - 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor
85%	28 days - 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very Poor

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way, we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2024/13, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202413-attendance-guidance-absence-recording-by-schools>

TRUANCY CALL SYSTEM

TRUANCY CALL is a system linked to C2k MIS which automatically contacts the parents of absent children, who have not phoned in a reason for their child's absence, by the time registration has closed. It automatically asks the parent if they are aware that their child is absent and asks the parent to provide a reason. The absence code in the system is then changed.

As the system is dependent on the registration process being completed by the form teacher, during the morning registration session, 8.55am - 9.05am, it is vital that this responsibility is carried out diligently.

After registration, MIS attendance is accessed and all students marked as 'N -Unexplained absence' -are highlighted. After adjustments e.g. for latecomers who have signed in at the door, the push of a button begins the process of parents being contacted.

The parents of each student have been sent information on the system and asked to forward their contact details.

We have invested considerable resources in the Truancy Call system to support the pastoral care of our students but it will only be a success if the form teacher/class teacher carries out the basic requirement of taking the 'roll' each morning/last period.

Parents/Person with Parental Responsibility will also receive a weekly notification identifying the number of occasions their child has been late to school that week.

Year Heads monitor attendance and support students and parents to improve attendance when necessary. Phone calls, letters and meetings are utilised to promote a collective response to supporting good attendance.

Education Authority: Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority (EA) has a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a student's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85%, they will be referred to the EWO (Education and Welfare Officer), if appropriate. The EWO will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

The following promoting good attendance campaigns provide further information:

- Give your child a helping hand: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/give-your-child-helping-hand>
- Miss School Miss Out: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/miss-school-miss-out>
- Try and Stop Me: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/try-and-stop-me>

Signatures:

Principal: _____ Date:

Chair of BoG: _____ Date: