



Shebbear College

Attendance Policy

Whole School Policy from EYFS to Sixth Form

Reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body – 15th November 2018

Next Review Date by Governing Body – November 2019

Policy Review at Shebbear College

The Governors acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective and follows regulatory requirements. Governors undertake a regular review (at least annually) to satisfy themselves that the implementation of this policy is effective.

Introduction

Shebbear College prides itself on the relatively low incidence of pupil absence. It is the policy of the school that pupils should attend all academic lessons during the course of the school year. A register is taken by the form tutor at 0835hrs and at 1340hrs each day. Registration for day pupils takes place in accordance with The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991 and the supplementary provisions of the Education Act (1996).

Regular attendance at school is vital if the student is to make satisfactory progress and is to achieve the academic grades required. Parents are required by law to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Pupils who miss lessons unnecessarily can cause a great deal of disruption for staff and fellow pupils.

1. Legal responsibility of Shebbear College

The school has a legal safeguarding duty to report students to their local authority if they fail to attend school regularly or are absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more. If the school has reason to believe a child may be at risk it may report a student before the 10 day threshold is reached. With this in mind, the level and pattern of absence of students is also monitored by the School.

Government figures have shown that 90% of persistent non-attendees fail to achieve 5 or more good grades of GCSE and around one third achieve no GCSEs at all. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable and have attended school regularly. Every day that a child misses school is a missed opportunity. For this reason, the school takes the non-attendance of children very seriously.

School Target – 100%
Cause for concern – below 90%
Home visit – below 85%

2. Reasons for Absence

On occasions pupils may not be present for one of the following reasons;

a. Sickness/injury: if a pupil is to be absent from lessons as a result of sickness or injury, the following policy pertains:-

If a boarder is sick or ill, the School Nurse will inform School Reception of that pupil's absence. If the pupil is suffering from an ailment which does not prevent him/her from continuing some form of academic study, work will be completed in the Medical Centre in liaison with the pupil's tutor.

If a day pupil is going to be absent from school, then parents telephone School Reception with this information by 0915hrs or as soon as possible thereafter, on the day in question. Parents are also asked to indicate the anticipated length of absence at that time, if known. If a pupil is absent for more than three days, the school is informed of the reason.

When the pupil does return to school, s/he brings a letter of explanation from his/her parents which is given to the Tutor; these details are then officially recorded. The form tutor investigates any case in which a letter is not forthcoming.

If a child is absent for a fortnight or more, or has an infectious disease, a doctor's certificate is brought to the school on his/her return.

Routine doctor and dental appointments should be made out of school hours except in emergency cases.

b. Educational Activity or Visits

Shebbear College accepts that much of educational value can occur beyond the confines of the classroom and school campus. Class and year group visits are an integral part of many academic departments' Schemes of Work. Sporting fixtures, musical concerts, theatre trips, lectures etc. are also an important part of the all-round education provided by Shebbear College. Staff responsible for trips and out-of-school events endeavour to arrange such activity outside of time-tabled academic lessons. When this is not possible (e.g. afternoon theatre performance or lecture) pupils ask permission from subject staff to themselves from lessons. The level and extent of such activity is closely monitored by the Deputy Head and other members of SMT, and in most cases recorded a term in advance on the school's Calendar.

A separate Shebbear College Educational Visits Policy provides further information pertaining to the organisation of such trips.

c. Family Occasions

If a pupil needs to be absent for a day or part of a day for a special, non-school organised event, parents request permission in writing from the appropriate Head of School as far in advance as possible. The school expects such requests to be kept to a minimum and reserves the right to refuse permission in certain cases.

d. Unauthorised Absences

If a pupil is absent from a lesson and none of the above reasons pertain, the Tutor, in conjunction with the Head of School, will investigate the matter. An unauthorised absence will be identified either by that pupil failing to register, or by the pupil's absence from an academic lesson.

3. Listing of Absent Pupils

Pupils in the Medical Centre at any time throughout the day will be recorded by the School Nurse on the administration system. Pupils who arrive late to school sign in at the School Reception on arrival. Pupils who have to leave the campus during the school day also have to sign the relevant form, adding the initials of the member of staff who has given them permission.

4. Notification to Parents

Parents/Carers will always be informed by telephone on the first day of an unauthorised absence. This applies to all pupils within the school from Reception to Upper Sixth.

If a pupil is marked "N" in the morning, in the first instance the school receptionist will check with the administration team, School Nurse, Boarding Houses, and Heads of School to see if there has been any reason given for absence. If none has been received from a legitimate source then parents or carers will be contacted by telephone.

If there is any doubt about the authorship of the message the parent or carer will be phoned as a precautionary measure.

In the Prep School the procedure is the same although it is very rare for there to be no contact from the parents or carers.

The school receptionist liaises with the Prep school administrator to compile the daily absence list by break time and a copy is also displayed in the staff room.

If a pupil is marked with an N in the afternoon having been present in the morning then the school receptionist will work with various parties (School Nurse, Boarding Houses, Tutor Team, Heads of School etc) to establish their whereabouts. If the pupil cannot be found then the Missing Pupil policy will be followed.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against those who absent themselves from lessons without permission.

Disciplinary action will also be taken against those Sixth Formers who leave school without following the necessary signing out procedures.

5. Start / End of Term

Pupils must not start the term late nor leave school before the end of term. Term dates are published at least a year in advance and parents of those pupils requiring flights to travel between home and school, ensure that such journeys take place before and after the published term dates. The school provides a service for this where flights can be booked at considerable discount.

6. Study Leave

For pupils in Years 11, 12 and 13, Study Leave takes place during the period of external summer examinations and for the 'Mock' examination periods as appropriate. When not sitting an examination during the school day, boarding pupils on study leave revise under House or school arrangements. Day pupils are welcome to revise either in designated areas of the school or at home.

7. Tutor's Role and Records

The Form Tutor oversees his/her group's attendance and reports to the Year Head in the case of any particular trends in absence.

Attendance registers are kept for at least three years after their last date of use