



Attendance Policy (Pupils)

St. Francis' College

September 2025

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Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

Day Pupils

At St. Francis' College, education is seen as a partnership between the family and the College. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your child, and we look to you to support this objective. All pupils are required to be in school before 8.30am. The school day ends at 3.30pm for pupils in Prep, 4.00pm for Senior School although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities or study under the supervision of a member of staff. Pupils are normally expected to leave by 6.00pm.

With the exception of pupils in Years 12 and 13, pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to the parents in advance.

Requests for absence must be made at least 7 days in advance, except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.00am. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Head or Head of Prep at least two weeks in advance. Family holidays in term time will not be authorised.

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the College before 8.30am on each day of absence. They should bring a letter signed by a parent or guardian on their return to school giving a reason for the absence, if the contact was made by phone. Parents who have emailed from their registered email address can give the reason as part of the daily notification. Unless notified of an absence we will always contact parents or guardians on the first day and subsequent days of an unexplained absence to make sure that your child is safe.

We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disrupting your child's education. These dates are also available on the College website. Please note that it is the ILG policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term.

Boarding Pupils

The Boarding House is the centre of a student's life at St. Francis' College. Students are cared for by a Head of Boarding and a team of House staff. Together, they will be responsible for students during term time, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal school hours. For detailed information regarding Boarders' absence please see the Boarders' Attendance & Absence Policy.

Nursery

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and that there is no cause for concern. Parents should please inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be reported to the nursery on the day, so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence. This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children but enables children's attendance to be

logged so we know the child is safe. If a child has not arrived at nursery within two hours of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family. It is a parent's responsibility to keep their emergency contact details updated.

Parents can log their child as being sick or on holiday via the online Family app that the nursery use. Alternatively, they can call the Nursery on 01462670511 and press option 6 and a member of staff will log this. If contact cannot be established, then we would assess if a home visit is required to establish if all parties are safe. If contact is still not established, we would assess if it would be appropriate to contact relevant authorities in order for them to investigate further. Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's services to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance - Teaching Staff:

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

It is every teacher's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Good attendance is also reliant on administrative systems that accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate.

Teachers' Responsibilities:

- It is the College's legal duty to register students in the morning and afternoon. Registers must be taken on time, 8.30 a.m. and 12:55pm (Prep) 2pm (Senior). Registers should also be taken at the start of every lesson and during the PM registration for students in the Senior School.
- Only pupils in the room are to be marked present - no blanks are to be left.
- In The Prep School, the registration period is 8:30am to 8:40am. If a pupil arrives after 8:30am and before 8:40am then the L code must be used with a reason as to why they were late added in the notes on iSAMS.
- Frequent absences must be monitored and discouraged. Initially an informal comment from Form Teachers, this should be positive and encouraging, followed by a phone call from the Head of Year.
- Form Teachers should keep a check on the number of absences, over 5% per term should automatically initiate a response from the College, in consultation with the Head of Year and Administration staff.
- On return from an extended absence, Form Teachers should monitor easing back into school and ensure the workload is balanced.

Form Teachers must make their Form aware of the following procedures:

- Pupils arriving after close of register (8.40 a.m. (Prep) and 2 p.m. (Senior)) must register at the main Reception in the Broadway building.

- Pupils in College but not attending registration for a valid reason, e.g. music lesson, must go to reception to be entered in the register – Form Tutors should emphasise the importance of this for safety reasons.

Monitoring

- Heads of Year will monitor the attendance registers with the assistance of the Medical and Attendance Officer on a weekly basis.
- Initial concerns about attendance will be expressed, in writing, by the Form Tutor. Continuing concerns initiate a letter of concern by the Head of Year. In cases where improvement is not noticed, a final letter of concern will be initiated by the Deputy Head (Pastoral). At this point, a referral to Hertfordshire Children’s Services will be considered.

The Deputy Head Pastoral is the Senior Attendance Champion at the College and will oversee the accurate completion of registers. The compilation of attendance statistics and daily monitoring using iSAMS is overseen by the Medical and Attendance Officer with the support of the Deputy Head and Heads of Year.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance – Administrative Staff

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

Good attendance is reliant on administrative systems which accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate. It is everyone’s professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Every entry in the attendance register should be preserved for six years.

Administration Staff Responsibilities:

- Reception will log calls, including time, reason and identification of caller.
- Details of calls will be placed in registers/register folders.
- Administration staff will make contact after 8.40am on the first day of absence and subsequent days if no message is received.
- Absence notes are to be taken from the register folder for filing in pupil files at least half-termly.
- If a pupil arrives after 8:40am then their attendance will be recorded with a U code or a more appropriate absence code. For example, if a pupil had to attend an emergency doctor’s appointment then the M code should be applied once the reason for late arrival is confirmed with the parent or guardian. Please note however that the College should be notified in advance of all medical appointments and these should take place out of school hours, wherever possible.
- Any absence of more than 3 days will automatically involve contact with home by admin staff or Head of Year and negotiation about work to be sent and how it will be delivered. This should be initiated by the College rather than parents or pupils.
- Manual register information will be entered on to the Admin System immediately registration closes.
- Attendance statistics will be generated for inclusion in Reports and for the Deputy Head, Pastoral/Head of Prep.

- Provide local authorities with the name and address of pupils who miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness.

Attendance at lessons (Senior):

Absence from lessons should be checked against the attendance register or with the Form Teacher. All teachers are responsible, as part of their pastoral duties, for monitoring attendance and should pass concerns to Form Teachers or Heads of Year. Persistent or serious pastoral concerns should be passed to the Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL) who oversees pastoral care.

Attendance in lessons (Prep):

Absence from lessons should be monitored by all subject teachers. Where there is any doubt or concerns the teachers should double check with the Prep administration team or with the Form Teacher. Any serious concerns should be reported to the Head of Prep and/or the Deputy Head, Pastoral (DSL).

Sixth Form – Leaving the College premises during the day

Sixth Form students are permitted to leave the College premises during lunch time and when they have study periods. This privilege will be revoked if aspects of College life fall below the required standard, for example if a student falls behind on work or if they do not role model the behaviour that is in line with our College policies and ethos. All students are expected to continue to attend lessons on time and follow the correct signing in and out procedures. Students must attend all lessons including Personal Development, PE and DREAMS. If a student is free for lesson one, they will still be expected to attend registration. If a student has study periods at the end of the afternoon they can study from home and not return to the College, unless their presence is requested for an evening event.

This privilege will start in January each academic year for the Year 12 for students who have demonstrated that they are showing a professional attitude to learning. Students will sign in and out from main reception.

To allow students to leave the College premises during the school day, each parent must give written consent that they take responsibility for their child while they are off the premises.

Reviewed By	Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Prep
Authorised By	Head
Effective From	September 2025
Next Review Due	September 2026