

Attendance and Punctuality

Reviewer	Mr Mark Gosling <i>Assistant Head Pastoral</i>
Review date	25/10/18
Next review	31/10/19

Relevant SoJ Education documentation: [School Attendance Policy](#)
[Children Missing in Education](#)

VCJ monitoring attendance policy continues to be developed. On a half termly basis the School attendance officer will provide the Inclusion Co-ordinator and Assistant Headmaster Pastoral with data identifying any student whose attendance has dropped below 85%. This data is then disseminated to Housemasters who will then liaise with the relevant tutors to identify the reasons why the attendance has fallen below 85%. This information will then be collated and Mr Gosling will be informed. The School Attendance Officer will also monitor any student who falls below 85% as from September of the current academic year.

It will then be decided whether to:

1. Take no action as the attendance has been fully explained
2. Housemaster / Tutor to contact parents to raise concerns
3. Inclusion Co-ordinator / Housemaster / Assistant Headmaster Pastoral to arrange a meeting in school with parents
4. Liaise with the Head and inform / seek further advice from the School Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

In addition to the above contact to be maintained with the EWO to discuss any concerns related to attendance. The School Attendance Officer will also provide figures to the Inclusion Co-ordinator regarding lates to Period 1. Please refer to the 'Monitoring Lates to Period 1' policy for further details. In addition the Music Department operates a system to monitor students who attend music lessons during lesson time. Please refer to the 'Instrumental Music Lesson' policy for further details.

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Any student who is marked as an 'N' for the Period 1 lesson and which has not been amended by the relevant staff by 9.30am will initiate the School Attendance Officer contacting the appropriate parents to inform them of this fact. If the parent cannot account for their child's whereabouts the Inclusion Co-ordinator and Assistant Headmaster Pastoral will be informed and further action will be taken.

Tutors will inform the school office, Housemasters and / or Mr Gosling regarding concerns over attendance. Additionally any information received from parents by Tutors regarding student absence will also be sent to the school office.

Monitoring attendance to Instrumental Music lessons

Registration/Roll Call of Students

The Music Department has put in place a system for monitoring students who attend Instrumental lessons during the College day.

The system consists of the following:

- All students concerned will be issued with an Instrumental music lesson 'Record Card' for the relevant term (see below)
- It will be the student's responsibility to fill in the date and time of their weekly lesson and to show it to their subject teacher before and/or after their music lesson
- Students who have lessons at or before 08.30 **MUST** register in the College Office prior to attending their music lesson

Victoria College Music Department/Jersey Instrumental Music Service

Lesson record card.

Student name:

JIS Music Teacher:

Date of lesson												
Time of lesson												

Class teacher: please amend your register as appropriate. Any concerns, please contact SLH

The role of the class teacher is to ask to see the card and adjust your registration if necessary.

The cards will be given out when the boys attend their first Instrumental lesson.

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Monitoring Lates to Period 1

The school monitors 'lates' to Period 1 lessons closely. The Period 1 lesson is very important as it acts as roll call for students. The school office will contact parents if students are marked as absent 'N' during Period 1. If a student arrives late after you have taken the register please check to see if the student has signed in at the school office and if they have not please send them to the school office either immediately or at the end of the lesson to sign in. If possible please amend your register to an 'L' if they are less than 30 minutes late or a 'U' if they arrive after 30 minutes have elapsed.

The school attendance officer will review the lates and attendance figures with the Inclusion Co-ordinator and Assistant Headmaster Pastoral on a weekly and half termly basis. This will focus on lates to Period 1 only and will result in the following action:

1. Any student who accumulates more than 5 lates to their P1 lesson during any half term period will be spoken to by their Housemaster / Inclusion Co-ordinator and parents will be contacted. The Assistant Headmaster Pastoral & Deputy Headmaster to be updated by the school attendance officer and Housemaster
2. A letter will also be sent home to parents at the end of every half term period for any student who has accumulated more 5 lates to their Period 1 lesson during any half term.
3. Any student who accumulates more than 10 lates during a school term will result in a parental meeting in school with the Assistant Headmaster / Housemaster

Dear Sir / Madam

During the previous half term from _____ to _____ your son has been registered as being late to their Period 1 lesson on more than 5 occasions. Arriving late to the Period 1 lesson disrupts the beginning of a lesson and can have a detrimental impact on the learning of others within the class and upon your son. We would be grateful if you could ensure that your son arrives in time for the 8.30am lesson. If you have any concerns please contact the relevant Housemaster as listed below:

Bruce: Mr Crill / Email j.crill@vcj.sch.je

Braithwaite: Mr Smith / Email t.smith@vcj.sch.je

Sartorius: / Email k.akers@vcj.sch.je

Diarmid: Mr Cox / Email d.cox@vcj.sch.je

Dunlop: Mr Coe / Email s.coe@vcj.sch.je

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VCJ / Education Department and Monitoring School Attendance

VCJ abides by the Education Department Policy updated in May 2016 which can be located on www.gov.je. The following are some of the key elements of the policy and their links to VCJ:

- **Education Welfare Service (EWS) and VCJ**

The school Inclusion Co-ordinator works closely with the School Education Welfare Officer (Ali Moffat). Meetings are organised on a half termly basis where attendance figures and individual student concerns are reviewed. The following outlines some of the key roles of the EWO:

1. Work in partnership with schools, pupils, parents/carers and communities to
2. Ensure educational entitlement and regular attendance
3. Link with services and agencies providing education, health and social care services for individuals with additional or specific needs.
4. Promoting and supporting whole school attendance policies
5. Attendance and Punctuality target setting for schools (outlined in the Education Welfare Service's annual Attendance Strategy with effect from September 2016
6. Providing advice on evidence based good practice;
7. Advice and support on initiatives and strategies to improve 'whole school'
8. attendance;
9. Contribution to the school's annual self-evaluation in the area of attendance and punctuality concerns;
10. Work with parents/carers and pupils to promote, raise and maintain individual pupil attendance/punctuality and prevent absence from school
11. Compiling termly data checks and informing schools of any trends or areas that require improvements as well as carrying out monitoring checks on school registers throughout the year;
12. Targeted monitoring of the attendance of highly vulnerable learners e.g. LAC/NEET/EBNA/CP/at risk of CSE
13. Consultative support on matters of attendance and welfare. This would include phone and email advice;
14. Direct support for families requiring early help with identified attendance, punctuality and/or welfare concerns;
15. Undertaking individual work with pupils
16. Undertaking family centred work
17. Liaison between primary and secondary schools and other services during the year 6 to year 7 transition phases (refer to ED Transition Policy);
18. The delivery of Child Protection Training (SPB Foundation Level);
19. An 'oversight' of the statutory and legal components relating to non-attendance. This would include (for e.g.) warnings for non-attendance, initiating Parish Hall enquiries, legal processes and attending court;
20. Recognising and working within the requirements of both the legislation and underlying principles relating to information sharing

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VCJ Responsibilities:

The school will:

- Encourage, promote and maintain positive individual pupil attendance and punctuality
- Implement strategies and initiatives to improve 'whole school' attendance
- Ensure that registers are accurate and up to date
- The school attendance officer will regularly audit school registers to identify any pupils with attendance and/or punctuality concerns. This will also be reviewed in half termly meetings between the EWO and Inclusion Co-ordinator / Assistant Headmaster Pastoral
- Monitor and promote the welfare of every child and young person
- Ensure that all appropriate information and records are available to the EWO as part of a schools' request for EWS involvement.

VCJ has developed our attendance policy in line with the States of Jersey School Attendance Policy which is reviewed annually. VCJ attendance policy will help ensure:

- A high priority is given to attendance and punctuality
- There is a named senior member of staff as part of the Senior Leadership Team with overall responsibility for attendance, punctuality and welfare
- Clear guidance for all staff on the process of registration, including the appropriate categorisation of absence
- Compliance with statutory requirements
- Information is regularly communicated to parents/carers and pupils
- Clear procedures to identify and follow up all absences and lateness
- Schools collate and utilise attendance data effectively
- Recognition of the importance of early intervention, including first day response in contacting parents/carers;
- Monitoring of post registration truancy
- That children and young people with chronic/long term illness are supported in accessing their learning needs.
- Consideration is given to critical times (for e.g.) Key Stage 2-3 transition
- A range of strategies are in place to deal with absenteeism, lateness
- The provision of a clear hierarchy of sanctions
- The use of attendance incentive strategies
- Procedures are in place for identifying and reintegrating longer term absentees
- Regular structured meetings between the schools and the EWO
- Reasonable steps are taken by the school before requesting the involvement of the EWO
- Regular communication with parents/carers to highlight the importance of continuity of learning, particularly in relation to family holidays during term time
- The use of parent/carer evenings and other opportunities to remind parents of the school policy on attendance;
- The involvement of Governors (where applicable).

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Response to Absences, Lateness and Welfare Concerns

- VCJ has developed its own strategies to deal with absences such as first day response when responding to absences and lateness.
- Early intervention can have positive effects on poor attendance and punctuality therefore, when concerns begin to emerge VCJ will react as quickly as feasible following the guidelines outlined by the School and States attendance policy. **(Appendix 1)**
- VCJ will make every effort to engage with parents/carers and in doing so, where appropriate, introduce an Attendance Plan. **(Appendix 2)**
- Review dates should be agreed with a view to improvements being made. Where there are no significant improvements, the school has exhausted various strategies and absence and/or punctuality continues to deteriorate the school will liaise with parents/carers to agree to the support of the Education Welfare. A Request for Involvement (RFI) form will then be completed **(Appendix 3)**.
- RFI forms must be completed by the school with an opportunity provided to parents/carers to also sign their agreement to the involvement of the EWS. Should a parent/carer not wish to sign the RFI form, the reason will be recorded on the form. A RFI form is the mechanism that confirms that a case will be opened to the EWS and that an EWO will actively become involved in some capacity. In addition it is the RFI form which provides the EWS with a mandate to keep records and information such as chronologies on pupils and families.

Welfare Concerns

In such cases where the welfare of the child is of a concern, schools should make every effort to engage with the parents/carers with a view to the situation improving. If this is not the case, schools should consider an 'Early Help' assessment. The outcomes of this assessment will determine the needs of the family, which will in turn dictate the need of internal/external and third sector services. The EWO may or may not be required to be part of the assessment and/or outcomes.

Emotionally Based Non Attendance (EBNA)

It is important to distinguish between non-school attendance, truancy and emotionally based non-school attendance, the latter being considered an emotional need. There could be a number of contributing factors to EBNA. Schools should refer to the EBNA

Assessment Tool to establish the route of the problem (refer to EBNA Policy). Once this process has been completed schools, along with parents/cares, should request the appropriate involvement of services such as Education Psychologists, in order that the appropriate support can be put in place to support the pupil.

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Looked After Children (LAC)

Each school is responsible for supporting, monitoring and raising concerns in relation to attendance and/or punctuality and welfare for Looked after Children. The EWS are tasked with supporting schools by consistently raising LAC children during EWO / school consultation meetings. Attendance and punctuality data will be collated at the end of each academic year.

General Guidelines:

Attendance Procedures and Recording Attendance and Punctuality

The following procedures underpin the principles in this Policy and generate good practice in matters concerning attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Registers

Attendance registers are legal documents and particular attention should be paid to accuracy. Incomplete registers are not acceptable.

Registration

Staff and pupils are aware that registration is a key part of the school day. **Attendance registers are called twice daily**, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.

Pupils must be marked as:

- Present,
- Engaged in approved educational activity off site,
- Absent.

In the case of an emergency evacuation, processes are in place to enable staff to account for all students on the premises. Head teachers are responsible for ensuring that all staff, including supply staff, have up-to-date knowledge of this process.

Absences are authorised by way of written or verbal communication with the parent / carer. The appropriate code will then be entered into the register and a reason for absence will be entered into the school's electronic data base. In the event of any absences school should

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make first day contact with parents / carers and make every effort to ascertain the reason for any absences / lateness, where parents / carers have not made contact.

Punctuality

VCJ discourages late arrivals due to the disruption this causes not only to the individual but also to the remainder of the class. Patterns of lateness can develop into non-school attendance if left unchallenged. VCJ is flexible where local conditions such as weather or local transport have an adverse effect on pupils arriving on time. Schools should have a consistent approach to lateness so as not to differentiate between classes/form groups and siblings.

Pupils who arrive

- Up to 30 minutes after the registration has closed should be marked as late **(L)**
- More than 30 minutes after the registration has closed will be marked as a **(U)**. This will be counted as an unauthorised absence.

Pupils who arrive up to half an hour late as a result of a medical appointment can be marked as present. The school must have prior notification of such appointment and this will be recorded in the Sims data base. Pupils arriving late must sign in at the school office, recording the reason and time of arrival. Schools are not obliged to accept reasons for absences or late arrivals to school. Should any doubts remain after investigations have been made the absence could then be recorded as unauthorised and in the cases of late arrivals the appropriate code will be applied.

Alternative Educational Provisions

A pupil who is receiving part time/temporary education or training away from the school site but is retained on the register of the school should be marked as **(B)** in the register. This also applies to pupils on work experience who will be marked as **(W)** in the register.

The supervising member of staff responsible for these students must check that the student is at the appropriate place of instruction prior to completing the register.

Modified time tables and reintegration in to school must be planned and agreed by all parties and the register completed appropriately. Pupils who are receiving all of their education in a separate provision to that of an education setting must be marked as 'left' on the register. In the case where a student is attending an alternative school setting for an agreed period of time, the receiving school should register that student and they should be registered as **(B)**

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(educated off site) by the school of origin. Should the student return or not return to the school of origin they should be marked as on roll or left.

Transfer

Where pupils transfer to another school, the receiving school must notify the relinquishing school that the pupil has been admitted on the first day in the new school. The relinquishing school can then mark the pupil as left.

Study Leave

Study leave should be closely monitored and only used for pupils in Year 11 during mock and public exams. Study leave should not normally exceed 15 days prior to the exam period. Regard should be paid to the individual pupil's ability to manage study leave and benefit from it.

Unsupervised study leave is not an 'approved educational activity' and must be counted as authorised absence. The code **(S)** should be applied for study leave.

Children Missing

Please refer to the Education Department's Policy for CME, Children Missing from Education

Parents/carers Responsibilities:

Parents/carers are required by law to ensure that all children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 16) receive a full time education either by registering a child at a school or be arranging an alternative to school in line with the Education Departments' Policy. These responsibilities extend beyond ensuring regular attendance and punctuality, it requires parents/carers to make certain that each child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed with the correct equipment and prepared for learning.

Parents/carers can support their child/ren by keeping requests for absence to a minimum. It should not be automatically assumed that schools will agree to absence requests. Nor should unjustified absences from school be condoned. If a student is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents/carers are responsible for notifying the school on the first day of absence and to keep the school updated on subsequent days. Parents/carers should work in

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partnership with schools in all matters concerning their child/ren's education by actively supporting school policies on attendance, punctuality, behaviour and homework.

Parents/carers should avoid taking their child/ren out of school during term time. Such absences can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is at the discretion of the Head teacher to grant leave, only in exceptional cases.

Leave during Term Time

The Education Department does not, at any time, support leave during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances Headteachers have the discretionary power to grant leave in accordance with States Policy.

Each case should be considered carefully taking into account:

- The age of the child;
- The time of year;
- The nature and purpose of the trip;
- Family circumstances;
- Attendance pattern of the pupil;
- Previous requests.

Headteachers can refer to the guidance for exceptional circumstances (**Appendix 4**)

Whilst each case is unique, the Education Department guidance strives for consistency across all schools.

Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw their child/ren from school and must request permission in advance from the Headteacher. Furthermore, parents must make a strong case to justify taking pupils out of school during term time as the absence can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is expected that parents will support their child's education by arranging all leave to coincide with school holidays. Where a pupil is absent for longer than the agreed time, s/he should be marked as taking unauthorised leave. The same applies to those parents/carers who remove their child/ren from school without permission.

Parents/carers who wish to take their child/ren out of school for longer than **four weeks** will have to re-apply for their school placement. It should not therefore be considered that a pupil has the automatic right to return to their departing school. Should the departing school be full upon the student's return to the island, the Education Department will support parents/carers to enrol their child/ren in an alternative school setting.

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Note: Refer to Appendices 1-5 (Electronic copies kept by Inclusion Co-ordinator and Assistant Headmaster Pastoral.) Education Department monitoring school attendance policy can be located on www.gov.je

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