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# St Olave's Grammar School

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

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### 1. Aims

- St. Olave's aims to create an inclusive, nurturing and welcoming ethos in which pupils are stimulated, grow in self-esteem and experience success.
- We aim to encourage the educational development of all pupils by promoting the importance of school attendance.
- All staff aim to give attendance a high profile with clear procedures and expectations.
- We aim to work in partnership with governors, parents and carers, the Education Welfare Service and other professionals to support pupils in achieving optimum attendance at school.

### 2. Objectives

- To make sure that pupils know that their presence is important.
- To inform parents promptly over concerns about pupil absence and give them an opportunity to discuss difficulties with a member of the pastoral team.
- To employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and promptly investigate all absences, liaising closely with parents or carers.

### 3. Registration

- Registers will be taken punctually each day at 8.40 am and 1.45 pm (1.40 pm on Friday).
  - If a pupil in Years 7-11 arrives after the registers close at 8.40 am (on a Tues/Wed/Fri) then he should report to the Small Hall if it is before the start of period 1 and to the school reception thereafter. The late book should be filled in and a note to explain his lateness given to the form tutor the next day.
  - If a Sixth Form student arrives after the registers close at 8.40 am, and the student is missing a School Assembly, he/she must sign in with the Sixth Form Administrator in the Sixth Form Library and then remain in the Sixth Form Library.
  - If a Sixth Form student is missing a Sixth Form Assembly or Year Group Assembly, he/she must sign in with the Sixth Form Administrator in the Sixth Form Library and then join the Sixth Form Assembly.
  - Tutors should record reasons for lateness in the register.
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- Pupils may receive a Late Detention if they are late four times in a term, (6 times for Yr 7 in the Autumn Term) or may be seen by the Head of Year. They will receive a school detention if they are

late 8 times in a term (in the Sixth Form this will be another late detention) and then a Saturday detention if they are late on 12 occasions. In all cases parents will be notified.

#### **4. Authorised Absences**

The School must be informed on the first day of absence, by telephone or email before 9.30 am, even though the absence may continue.

- All routine absence must be explained by a written letter and signed by the parent/guardian. This should be shown to the Form Tutor who will amend the electronic register and pass the letter to the Attendance Officer.
- The attendance officer will inform parents/carers of their child's absence if the school has not received any notification.
- If, after ten school days since a pupil has returned, there has been no letter to explain the absence, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and further sanctions by the school may be applied.
- Punctuality and attendance is reported on School IPM reports.
- In the Sixth Form, for routine reasons (e.g. university open days, interviews, medical appointments, funerals and religious festivals) students should complete an authorised absence slip. This needs to be signed by subject teachers and handed in to the form tutor/Attendance officer before the proposed absence.

The following absences will be treated as unauthorised by the school.

- Holidays
- Part-time work
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Shopping
- Driving lessons
- Routine check-ups at dentist/doctor
- Exclusion from a lesson or school
- Persistent lateness

### **Other absence that may be authorised**

The school may authorise other absence providing the school office is notified by 12noon on the first day of the absence. These absences include:

- Emergency situation of a family member e.g. sudden illness
- Transport problems where these are not known in advance
- Emergency dental/doctor's appointments

Tutors should record the reason for absence in the register.

### **5. Requests for Leave of Absence**

The pupil or parent should obtain an **Absence Request Form** from the Attendance Officer or from the school website. When the completed form is returned, the HoY, in consultation with the Assistant **Head** (Sixth Form) or **Assistant Head** ~~Senior Teacher~~ (Years 7-11), will decide whether to authorise or not, and send the appropriate letter.

The School disapproves strongly of term time absences for reasons other than illness except in specific circumstances. DfE guidelines are quite clear.

Discretionary authorised absence may be granted for family reasons such as attendance at a funeral, for approved educational activities or exceptional experience for example a Bromley Youth Music Orchestra Tour, and in exceptional circumstances for a family holiday.

It should be noted that no parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right. In general it is only given where parents have no choice over the timing of a holiday owing to their employment circumstances.

Authorised absence will only be granted where proper procedures have been followed and the permission given. Leave of absence will not be granted retrospectively.

Where the School and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school the absence must be marked as unauthorised and notified to the Educational Welfare Officer in the Borough where the parents live.

Where parents keep a child away for longer than agreed then the extra time should also be marked as unauthorised. Leave will not be granted for long weekend package tours nor for days immediately

before end of term or at the start of a new term where this is not justified on any of the grounds outlined above.

## 6. Unauthorised Absences

Absences will not be authorised for:

- Truancy
- Any work undertaken during school hours
- Family holidays during term time (unless agreed by following an application procedure)
- Driving lessons

If a pupil truants from a lesson they may receive a Saturday detention. If a pupil truants for a day they may be internally suspended.

When considering whether to authorise individual cases of absence, the school will consider:

- The nature of the event
- Frequency of absence
- Whether advance notification was given
- The overall attendance record of the pupil

## 7. Persistent Absence

Attendance (either on a lesson or daily basis) falling below our school average of 95% or persistent lateness, without a medical or other satisfactory explanation will be considered to be a serious concern and remedial action will be initiated by the student's tutor and Head of Year. In the Sixth Form, sanctions will include signing in/out at the school office, or with the tutor, or Head of Year, or the withdrawal of the study afternoons concession.

Parents will be alerted to the school's concerns and asked to discuss the situation with their son/daughter and take action to improve their son/daughter's attendance or persistent lateness.

***If your child's attendance falls below 90% the school will require a Medical Certificate or Doctor/Consultant's letter confirming dates of absence and medical conditions (the school will accept appointment cards, photocopy of prescription or photocopy of medicine labels as proof of absence). The school will not authorise any absence unless this information is received, and only at the discretion of the Assistant Head (Sixth Form) or Assistant Head Senior Teacher (Years 7-11).***

If a pupil is persistently absent and the School's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and other relevant agencies by the Head of Year. In such cases the Local Authority may choose to issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

#### **8. Long-term absence due to illness**

The person with overall responsibility for pupils who cannot come to school because of medical needs is the Assistant Head (Sixth Form) or Assistant Head Senior Teacher (Years 7-11). Contact with parents and monitoring of school work rest with the Head of Year (HoY). If a pupil is, or is likely to be, absent due to medical needs for more than 15 school days, the School will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

The HoY, in consultation with the parents and, if necessary, the Education Welfare Officer, will assess the pupil's capabilities, educational progress and programmes of work. The HoY or tutor should make arrangements for work and materials to be delivered to and collected from the pupil and ensure that the pupil is informed about school events. The HoY must liaise with the Examinations Officer to make arrangements for public exams. The tutor should encourage and facilitate contact with peers through visits, e-mails and text messages.

The HoY will monitor the process of reintegration after a long absence.

#### **9. UCAS Testimonials and References**

We have a policy of writing positive UCAS testimonials and references giving full recognition of student's achievements.

However, universities and colleges are now insisting that a 90% attendance is the minimum requirement for continuing with any course and we adopt the same attitude. We therefore have a duty to refer to any attendance or lateness problems, as this is important background information for any educational institution or employer. This may involve using percentage statistics of lateness and attendance for the candidate.

#### **10. Sixth Form Only**

School is different from Further Education College in that students are expected to play a full part in school life and attend all timetabled lessons, Form periods, Assemblies, other timetabled meetings

and games afternoons, as required. Punctual attendance at both daily registrations is compulsory. Those arriving late to school after Period 1 has started must report to the Sixth Form Administrator. Anyone arriving to school after 9.30 am must provide a note explaining the reason for arriving late. Failure to follow these procedures for registering will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded and an additional sanction may be administered also.

Attendance (either on a lesson or daily basis) falling below our school average of 95% or persistent lateness, without a medical or other satisfactory explanation will be considered to be a serious concern and remedial action will be initiated by the student's tutor and Head of Year. Sanctions may include:

- Signing in/out at the Sixth Form Library, or with the tutor, or Head of Year
- Withdrawal of the study afternoons concession

Parents/carers will be alerted to the School's concerns and asked to discuss the situation with their son or daughter and take action to improve their son's or daughter's attendance or persistent lateness. If attendance (whether on a lesson or daily basis), despite support, continues to cause concern or falls below 90%, or lateness persists, the school reserves the right to remove the student from the school roll as they are not taking advantage of the educational provision made in the Sixth Form at St. Olave's Grammar School.

During timetable hours the following rules apply:

- All students must be on the premises between 8.35 am and 12.40 pm, and (with the exception of on study leave afternoons or days when students have an unsupervised study period in period 6) between 1.35 pm and 3.30 pm. Students may apply for up to two study leave afternoons per fortnight with their Form Tutor, subject to their timetable, using the study leave request form, which must be signed by parents/carers. Study leave is at the discretion of the tutor and Head of Year and may be removed for the following reasons:
  - Non-attendance at lessons, registration, assemblies or other times
  - Concerns regarding work (standard of work or meeting deadlines)
  - Lateness to registration or lessons
  - Failure to sign out when leaving early
- In Year 13 all of the above applies except that students have a greater degree of freedom to determine use of Private Study periods. When a student is not working satisfactorily, directed study time may be required.

# ST. OLAVE'S SCHOOL



## APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FOR PARENTAL HOLIDAY OR DISCRETIONARY FAMILY REASONS

Full name of child(ren)	Form
Address	
Reason for application and dates	
Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) I/we have read the guidance leaflet issued with this form.	
Date	

Office use only
Seen by Assistant Head <input type="checkbox"/> / Head of Year <input type="checkbox"/> / Attendance Officer <input type="checkbox"/>
Agreement reached
Other outcome <span style="float: right;">Date / /</span>

- The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave
1. The child's previous attendance history.
  2. The age of the child(ren).
  3. The child's stage of education.
  4. The time of year (exams).
  5. The nature of the trip (an exceptional experience).
  6. Whether the parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer.

## **St. Olave's School**

### **AUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

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Discretionary authorised absence may be granted for family reasons such as attendance at a funeral, for approved educational activities or exceptional experience for example a Bromley Youth Music Orchestra Tour, and in exceptional circumstances for a family holiday.

It should be noted that no parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as of right. In general it is only given where parents have no choice over the timing of a holiday owing to their employment circumstances.

Authorised absence will only be granted where proper procedures have been followed and the permission given. Leave of absence will not be granted retrospectively.

Where the School and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school the absence must be marked as unauthorised and notified to the Educational Welfare Officer in the Borough where the parents live.

Where parents keep a child away for longer than agreed then the extra time should also be marked as unauthorised. Leave will not be granted for long weekend package tours nor for days immediately before the end of term or at the start of a new term where this is not justified on any of the grounds outlined above.

Parents are asked to complete the application form for discretionary leave (overleaf)