

## **Absence, Attendance and Missing Pupil Policies and Procedures**

Pupils are expected to return from exeats, half-terms and holidays at the times stated in the School Diary unless prior arrangements have been made with their Senior Housemistress/master. Suitable travel arrangements must be made for the end of term to accommodate timely departures and arrivals. If an early departure is required then a request must be made in writing to the Principal. If a pupil is unable to travel home at the end of term then a suitable guardian must be in place to care for your son or daughter. We always send parents the term dates well in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disrupting their child's education. It is the School's policy not to allow holiday to be taken during the school term unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been approved by the Principal.

### **Absence**

If your son or daughter is unwell and will be absent from school, or if he or she is going to be late for any reason, please ring Debbie Hill, our Attendance Officer and Day Housemistress, on 07719 089433. Alternatively, please inform the School Office as soon as possible on 01442 824255. If your child's illness lasts for more than one day, please contact the Attendance Officer on every consecutive day that your child is unwell.

If you wish to request an absence from school for any other reason and this involves missing academic or vocational lessons, please email your request directly to [principal@tringpark.com](mailto:principal@tringpark.com). The Principal will then consider your request. Please note that no other member of staff is able to give permission for absence from lessons.

If you wish to request a weekend or evening absence (boarding pupils only), then please contact your child's Senior Housemistress/master. We would ask that you give at least five days' notice so that any necessary arrangements can be made and relevant staff notified.

It is the School's policy that permission is not given for pupils to be absent from lessons in order to attend social events. It is expected that such events are planned for chosen weekends, exeats, half-terms and holidays. Such requests will not be approved but if you do decide to remove your son or daughter in order to attend such an event please inform the Principal as the School has a duty of care to know the whereabouts of all pupils at all times. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and will appear as such on school reports. There are some extraordinary circumstances or occasions for which permission would be given but these would be individually addressed. Please note that an accumulation of unauthorised absences may be taken into account when casting for shows.

The school has a legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the local authority in which the child is resident as well as the local authority where the child is currently attending school:

- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days (the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.)
- Failure to attend regularly and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known. In this last case, the school is required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority in which the pupil lives.

The school must also inform the local authority in which the child is resident as well as the local authority where the child is currently attending school where a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the admissions register for the following reasons: when the child has been taken out of the school to be home educated, when the family has apparently moved away, when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend, when the child is in custody for more than four months, or has been permanently excluded. This duty arises as soon as the grounds for deletion are met and in any event before deleting the child's name. This is in keeping with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and KCSIE.

KCSIE states that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. The school is alert to the fact that persistently absent pupils and children missing education are possible indicators of such abuse and identifying persistently absent pupils can help prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. The Principal, in conjunction with the DSL and the Attendance Officer, will monitor unauthorised absence, particularly where children are persistently absent or go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day to help identify such abuse and also prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. The school is mindful of the DfE guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' in working with the local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

### **Reporting Attendance during a school closure**

In the event of a pandemic-related school closure such as COVID-19, the School's Attendance Officer will complete the DfE daily online attendance form for the children of any critical workers and vulnerable children attending the school. Although it is not a DfE requirement for schools to report attendance under these circumstances, if pupils are being educated remotely, staff will continue to report attendance internally. Pastoral staff will contact any pupils who are not engaging as expected to ensure that there are no safeguarding concerns.

An increase in a pupil's absence from school is a possible indicator of a number of safeguarding concerns. These include bullying, involvement in serious violent crime, gang involvement, county lines, or being drawn into radicalisation. Staff are made aware of the indicators and associated risks and are trained to report this. Schools also have a duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained absences.

## Registration times

All day pupils are required to register with the day Senior Housemistress between 07.45-08.00am. The school day ends for day pupils once their school commitments are over. If a day pupil is ill, parents should e-mail or telephone the day housemistress or the School Office by 8.00am.

All boarding pupils are registered by their housemistress/master every morning and any absences are logged on the School's electronic registration system **by 8.30am**.

All boarding and day pupils are registered at lunchtime. Any absence during the normal school day is entered onto the School's electronic registration system with the relevant details.

All boarders are also registered at 7.00pm and again at bedtime.

## Missing Pupils

Any pupil who is not present for registration, or who is absent from a lesson or boarding house in a manner which is not appropriately recorded on the School's electronic registration system, is deemed to be a missing pupil. All staff are aware that they have a responsibility for helping to keep all of the pupils safe at all times. Staff are instructed to report a missing pupil via our internal Pupil Tracking System. Out of school hours, pastoral staff report any missing pupil to the Deputy Principal. When a pupil has been reported as missing, the following procedure is undertaken as appropriate (with a record kept of each action):

- Where possible, the pupil's mobile is phoned;
- The Medical Centre is contacted to see if the pupil has reported sick;
- The house staff are contacted to see if there is an explanation;
- The pupil's friends are asked if they know where he or she is;
- The staff who taught that pupil earlier in the day and other pupils are questioned in order to ascertain at what time the pupil went missing;
- A thorough search of key areas is undertaken including, if appropriate, areas in the local vicinity;
- The Principal and Deputy Principal (DSL) are informed;
- A fire drill is considered in order to ensure that the pupil is not on the site;
- CCTV is checked for evidence of the pupil leaving;
- All staff are informed by telephone or email to look out for the pupil (once the pupil is found, this is again communicated to all staff).
- After 45 minutes, the School contacts the pupil's parents or guardian explaining what has happened, describing the steps that have been set in motion and inviting them to come to the school at once;
- After 45 minutes, the Principal or Deputy Principal contacts the police and their advice is followed;
- The DSL informs the LADO;
- The Chairman of the Governors is informed;
- A report is made under RIDDOR to the HSE;
- The School's insurers are informed;
- A full investigation into the circumstances is carried out. Witnesses are interviewed and asked to provide written statements.

## Consequences

If a pupil has been reported missing and then found:

- There is a careful assessment of the reason why the pupil went missing. If the pupil is very distressed about something, it may be appropriate for him or her to see the school counsellor, or for the pupil to remain at home and have a medical or psychiatric assessment before returning to school.
- All circumstances will be taken into account before deciding any appropriate action and parents will be involved in discussions as appropriate.