

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

### Introduction and aims

The school policy for attendance was developed and agreed by the whole staff and in consultation with parents and students. This policy sets out the rationale, our aims and the strategies that will be used to ensure all students achieve maximum attendance.

The IST is a school where students of different abilities from a wide range of cultures and educational backgrounds work and learn co-operatively and effectively in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. During their stay at the IST our concern is with their well-being, their academic, aesthetic, social and moral growth. We value all members of our community and believe that all our students should realise their full potential. We believe that cultural diversity is a positive strength and actively promote international awareness, including an understanding of home and host culture. We are therefore committed to creating challenging, stimulating and enjoyable learning opportunities within a safe, welcoming environment.

We recognise that all students have the right to education. A good education helps to give students the best possible start in life. Therefore regular attendance and punctuality is important for all students whatever their age and is essential for every student's academic, social and personal development. Students who do not attend school regularly miss out educationally and socially, making it harder to succeed and harder to make friends.

All parents are responsible for their child's punctuality and attendance at school. Here at IST we are committed to working in partnership with parents, seeking to identify, understand and overcome any issues or problems that are contributing to absence.

We also realise that the community, community groups and local businesses have a role to play in creating a community that will not tolerate unauthorised absences. Therefore we will work in partnership with the community to achieve our aims.

Our aim is for all students to achieve 100% attendance. We are committed to putting systems in place that will result in the majority of students achieving that.

### How will we encourage good attendance?

The International School of Toulouse will provide teaching and learning environments that are welcoming, secure and stimulating, where students are respected and valued as individuals, expected to attend and therefore able to succeed. Further to this, wherever possible additional support will be provided for more vulnerable students.

We will raise awareness of the importance of attendance by:

- making students aware of their attendance record so that they can take pride in improvement;
- referring to good attendance in assemblies
- promoting the importance of good attendance in contacts with parents and carers.

Students who achieve 100% attendance each term will be praised. Primary students will be rewarded with a school certificate. All students achieving 100% attendance for a school year will be awarded a prize.

### Partnership between schools and parents

Supporting good attendance is a part of an effective home school partnership and most parents ensure good attendance by their child.

The role of the student is to:

- Attend school every day ensuring that they have all necessary equipment and resources for their day.

The role of the parent is to:

- Ensure that students go to school regularly, arrive and are collected on time and do not miss school for unacceptable reasons
- Help students to understand the importance of going to school and make it clear that absences from school for no good reason will not be supported.
- Praise students for good or improved attendance
- Ensure that the school is aware of any issues or problems that are affecting attendance and work with the school to resolve these
- Contact the school to explain any illness on the first day of absence and provide reasons for any lateness
- Make all appointments outside school time. In the event that this is not possible, parents are asked to inform the school prior to the date of the appointment
- Assist students at home in catching up on missed work
- Take holidays during school holidays.

The role of the School is to:

- Implement the Attendance Policy.
- Monitor the attendance of students.
- Work in partnership with parents to deal with any problems that are affecting good attendance, including the provision of support as appropriate.
- Inform the appropriate authorities of any families causing persistent concerns regarding a student's attendance at school.

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Only overall attendance figures are taken into account for calculating attendance rates. However it is the aim of this policy to make perfectly clear to parents/carers what absences the school will or will not authorise.

Absences that **may** be authorised providing the school is satisfied with the reason given, include

- Illness
- Medical, doctor, dentist, optician, psychologist, hospital appointment
- Excluded by school
- Religious observance
- Compassionate absence - for school authorised absence agreed with family in exceptional circumstances of need (i.e. bereavement or wedding)
- University interviews

Reasons for absence that will **not** be authorised include:

- Caring for younger siblings
- Parents' or carers' illness
- Activities such as shopping, visits to relatives, birthday celebrations or anniversaries
- Family holidays (these should be organised during school holiday times)

- University visits (these should be organised during school holiday times)
- Oversleeping

You may be required to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, if your child is absent frequently or for a prolonged period due to illness.

Truancy and parentally condoned absence will not be tolerated and will, without exception be recorded as unauthorised absence.

### **Lateness**

Persistent lateness disadvantages students as they miss out on important information and work and because it is also disruptive to students and teachers already involved in the lesson. Registers are taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions in Primary and at the start of the morning and every lesson thereafter in Secondary.

All lateness and the accompanying reasons are recorded. Repeated or frequent lateness to school is unacceptable and will result in the school contacting parents. In the Secondary school lateness to lessons will be dealt with in the first instance by the teacher concerned; however, tutors and Grade Coordinators will also monitor this and deal with any causes for concern appropriately, this may include sanctions and contacting home.

### **Procedures and actions that will be taken**

A consistent approach to managing attendance throughout the school will be applied and all absences will be challenged in a positive and supportive manner.

- If a student is absent the School must be informed by the student's parents either in writing, by phone, email or in person before 8:30am on the first day of absence. In the first instance parents should inform the receptionist at either EC1 for Secondary or EC2 for Primary.
- Teachers will accurately complete registers.
- Where no explanation is given for a student's absence, a telephone call will be made to find out the reason. If no answer is received to the telephone call then, when possible, a message will be left and an email sent to the parent(s).
- Attendance will be monitored regularly by a senior member of staff in Primary and Grade Coordinators in Secondary; all recorded absences will be verified. These staff will keep their Head of School informed of any concerns and actions taken.

Where attendance is consistently below 90% but above 80% the following actions will take place;

- Class teacher in Primary, or Tutor in Secondary, to speak to the student and/or the parent(s) about attendance.
- Following this, a senior member of staff in Primary, or the appropriate Grade Coordinator in Secondary, to monitor the attendance of the student causing concern. If the concern continues they will inform parents in writing of their child's current level of attendance and request a meeting to discuss the causes of this poor attendance and to find ways support the family in raising it above 90%.
- Students who have frequent odd days off from school may be included in this action even if their attendance is not below 90%.

Students whose attendance falls below 85% in any one term, and when in-school strategies have already been implemented, will be referred to the School Doctor for investigation and support in reducing the level

of absence. Following this any persistent absence may be referred on to the appropriate authorities within the French state. Efforts will continue to build a positive partnership with parents.

Students whose attendance falls below 90% over the year may not be permitted to move up to the next year group in the following September.

#### **Policy monitoring and evaluation**

The school will collect, analyse and report on attendance data internally on a termly basis to the School Leadership Group. A target for improving attendance rates and evaluation of the success of the policy will be carried out annually within both the Primary and Secondary Schools. This will be addressed in the appropriate school development plans for Primary and Secondary.

**Responsibility:** School Leadership Group

**Audience:** Staff, students, parents

**Issue date:** April 2013

**Last updated:** July 2019

## Appendix 1

### Secondary School procedures for recording student attendance and punctuality

*This document should be read in conjunction with the Whole School Attendance and Punctuality Policy.*

#### Register format:

All registers must be taken in iSAMS

#### Morning registration:

All students should be in school by 8:30am.

Students who arrive in School after 8:30 are required to sign in as late at the front desk in the main Secondary School building (EC1).

Morning registration takes place between 8:30am and 8:40am therefore morning registers are open between these times.

#### Registers in lessons:

A register should be taken in all lessons. If a teacher considers that a student is late then this should be registered as such.

During the first lesson of the afternoon (period 5) it is imperative that the register be taken within 5 minutes of the lesson starting.

*(Please note it is the responsibility of teachers to ensure their attendance records are always accurate and up to date).*

#### Follow up of lateness and absence:

Parents should inform the front desk of student absence by 8:30am on the first day of any absence. Front desk will ensure all authorised absences are logged in iSAMS with an appropriate code. Front desk will also inform the appropriate Grade Coordinator and tutor of the reason for absence. Non-authorised absence should be followed up by the front desk, who will contact parents to request a reason for absence. Repeated absence or lateness for an inappropriate reason should be monitored by tutors and GCs and procedures should be followed as set out in the Whole School Attendance and Punctuality Policy.