

Learner Attendance Policy

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1. Scope and purpose

- i. This policy has been developed as part of St David's College's commitment to realise the potential of all in our community as encompassed in our mission:

'A Catholic College for the community seeking to discover and realise the full potential of all, in an atmosphere of love, service and respect inspired by Christ.'

- ii. This policy seeks to support learners to achieve their full potential by encouraging their full participation in college life so they can progress successfully, both academically and spiritually in their lives.
- iii. As a college we are committed to removing barriers to learning and will work with learners promote their inclusion in all that the college has to offer.
- iv. We recognise the profound impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on individuals' wellbeing and development. We are committed to adopting a trauma-informed approach in our policies and practices to create a safe, supportive, and healing environment for all.
- v. The college follows the All-Wales Child Safeguarding procedures in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent and learners from accessing their education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.
- vi. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - Studentship Policy
 - Fitness to Study Policy
 - All Wales Safeguarding Procedures
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

2. General principles

- i. All learners are provided with a nurturing, caring and safe environment by all college staff in line with St. David's College's Catholic ethos. College staff ensure learners and themselves are **ready, respectful, and safe**.
- ii. All learners should take responsibility for their individual absence reporting and punctuality. All learners should understand the expectation that they should continually work towards a goal of 100% attendance and punctuality and be respectful to staff and the college environment. All learners should understand the studentship support process and the

impact of non-attendance and poor punctuality through Induction sessions and as part of the Pastoral Reflection programme.

- iii. All learners are provided with a timetable of schedules of teaching and learning sessions via Student Advantage. All learners can access their attendance through Student Advantage.
- iv. Learners who do not contact the college prior to their absence will receive an automated email sent by the subject teacher of the lesson that is missed.
- v. The following attendance marks must be used:

SA Mark	Mark	When to use this mark	Effect on Attendance
/	Present	The learner is physically on site	Positive
E	Educated Elsewhere	The learner is working outside of class i.e. library, online, offsite course or educational trip.	Positive
L	Late	Arrive after the start of the lesson	Positive
O	Absent	Learner is not in class with no reason given.	Negative
P	Parent Advantage Authorise	Parent or guardian has authorised absence. This has not been approved by the Pastoral Tutor.	Negative
A	Authorised by Pastoral Tutor	<p>Pastoral tutor approved absence having sight of appropriate evidence.</p> <p>The reasons for authorised absences are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness • GP/Dentist appointments • Hospital appointments • Religious festivals or holidays • Job/University Interviews • Driving test • Funerals or weddings of close family members • Attendance at court or probation meeting • Attending a counselling session • Close family bereavements • Significant travel disruption • Any other reason deemed appropriate by the Pastoral Manager / Director of Wellbeing and Pastoral Care / Director of Studentship & Safeguarding 	Negative
C	Cancelled	The college cancels the class	Neutral
U	Unauthorised Absence but with	<p>Absences which are taken but are not in line with this policy but are known to Pastoral Tutor.</p> <p>For example:</p>	Negative

	reasons known	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor transport difficulties • Driving lessons • Studying for examinations • Family Emergency without evidence • Holidays • Undertaking paid work 	
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3. Promoting excellent attendance

- i. All learners are expected to attend all teaching and learning sessions with 100% attendance and punctuality. Learners are expected to arrive to lessons on time, stay for the duration and not leave during or before the end of the lesson.
- ii. All learners sign a student charter to commit to our standards and attendance expectations during induction. All subject hours are made clear to students at enrolment and induction. This includes an expectation of 100% attendance at ASBW, Pastoral and Spiritual Reflection lessons.
- iii. All learners, parents, and carers have access to attendance data on Student Advantage and Parent Advantage respectively. Attendance data is live and can be monitored by parents and carers. All queries regarding attendance should be raised with the Pastoral Tutor at the earliest opportunity.
- iv. All absences are to be reported through Parent Advantage or through contact with the learner's pastoral tutor. In the instance of being over 18, self-reporting is acceptable through Parent Advantage. Evidence of reasons for absence needs to be provided where possible (e.g, hospital letter). Reasons for absence should be reported by 11 am on the first day of absence, where possible.
- v. Learners in receipt of EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) will need to adhere to the expectations in this policy as well as their learner agreement. To receive EMA all learners must have their absences authorised with evidence and passed to the Student Services Manager.

4. Absence management

- i. All staff monitor attendance of students and will take reasonable steps to seek to improve absence and lateness. Learners are automatically emailed by subject staff if their respective

lesson is missed. Subject staff will contact the parent or guardian of a learner after **three consecutive lessons** have been missed, without reason or if there is a pattern of absences.

- ii. Absences due to sickness of more than **five continuous days** or **three or more instances** in any **six-week period** will require evidence of medical support or seeking medical guidance. If absences continue due to sickness, pastoral tutors will meet with the learner and their parent or guardian, where appropriate to find avenues of support.
- iii. Continued unauthorised absence or lateness after staff communicate a concern will result in the initiation of the studentship support process as outlined in the Studentship policy.
- iv. Where sickness absence is having a demonstrable impact on a learner's engagement, pastoral tutors will invite the learner and their parent or guardian to a fitness to study meeting as outlined in the Fitness to Study policy, with the aim to provide appropriate support to improve attendance.
- v. If a learner is known to children's services, or the child protection register, is looked after (LAC) or if the college is aware of any safeguarding issues, the College's Safeguarding & Welfare Manager may take the appropriate action to determine the safety of the learner.

5. Supporting learners with low attendance

- i. Where attendance issues are due to mitigating circumstances, learners are expected to communicate this with their pastoral tutors. Tutors can offer pastoral support through one-to-one sessions, wellbeing support and financial support through student services.
- ii. Learners identified as having well-being or mental health barriers by a subject teacher or pastoral tutor will be supported via a Health and Additional Support Plan by the tutor after communication with guardian.
- iii. The college may invoke All Wales Safeguarding Procedures where there is continuous, unexplained absence or limited communication with the learner or parents or where the college is concerned the absence suggests the learner is not safe and at risk of harm.

6. Punctuality

- i. 'Late' is defined as any duration of time after the indicated start time. All learners are expected to arrive before the indicated start time and sustain 100% punctuality.
- ii. **Three or more instances of lateness in any 6-week period** without legitimate reason will result in initiation of the college's Studentship policy to explore reasons for lateness with the aim of improving punctuality.
- iii. All staff will record poor punctuality on Staff Advantage.
- iv. Learners who are late are expected to join their lessons at the earliest opportunity, avoiding disruption of their teacher or other learners. They should discuss their lateness with their teacher at the appropriate time.
- v. Learners should inform their teachers if they know they will be late in advance of their lesson.

7. Roles and responsibilities

- i. Learners

Are responsible for ensuring they attend all their timetabled lessons punctually and that they communicate effectively with the college any absence or lateness. They should monitor their own attendance through Student Advantage.

- ii. Parents / Guardians

Are responsible for ensuring their child attends college punctually and communicates with college on matters relating to their absence. They are responsible for monitoring their child's attendance through Parent Advantage.

- iii. Subject teachers

Are responsible for completing lesson registers fully and accurately at the beginning of the lesson. They should encourage and support learners to maintain high standards of attendance. Subject teachers are expected to review the attendance for their subject and make judgements on trends in data and undertake appropriate actions with learners, colleagues and parents where required.

- iv. Pastoral tutors

Are responsible for completing lesson registers fully and accurately at the beginning of the lesson. Pastoral tutors are expected to review the attendance for their learners across all of their subjects and make judgements on trends in data and undertake appropriate actions with learners, colleagues and parents where required.

- v. Director of Wellbeing and Pastoral Care

Is responsible for the strategic management of attendance across the college. They will scrutinise the data on a weekly basis, monitor trends and patterns across cohort of learners, and evaluate interventions for their impact and effectiveness and direct resources for the best possible outcome.

vi. Student services manager

Is responsible for administration of attendance data, as well as authorising any absence for any learner in receipt of Education Maintenance Allowance.

8. Attendance initiatives

- i. The college will work to raise the awareness of college attendance, promote good attendance and tackle unauthorised absence.
- ii. The college will undertake initiatives at the direction of the senior leadership team to promote good attendance and tackle poor punctuality.