

International School of Creative Arts

# **Attendance Policy**

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## Control Page

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## Statement of intent

**International School of Creative Arts (ISCA)** believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support etc. – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building relationships with parents and guardians to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is **Robert Hunter** and he can be contacted via [r.hunter@isca.uk.com](mailto:r.hunter@isca.uk.com). Staff, parents and pupils is expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Pupil Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

### Absence:

- Failure to report presence at the school before the school attendance register has closed
- Failure to report presence in class before the class attendance register has closed

### Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments and visits to therapists which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency
- Attendance at a funeral or wedding of a close family member
- An absence due to student visa-related matters
- Severe and unavoidable travel disruption

### Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy during the school day (e.g. leaving class and failing to return)
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Failure to register presence at the school/in class before the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, babysitting or caring for friends or family members
- Absence due to birthdays or other family celebrations
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Work that is not part of a programme of study

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the SMT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SMT to the attendance officer role.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, recording attendance at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school, including arriving on time at the start of term and not leaving before the end of term.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Remaining on site during term time unless they have been granted leave.

## 4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and will ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. The Attendance Policy is published on the [school website](#) and sent to parents as part of the pre-enrolment documentation. At enrolment, and subsequently every year at registration, parents and pupils are required to sign an attendance contract in which they agree to abide by the terms of the school's Attendance Policy.

Pupils are encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the School Office.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to, for the full day (in other words, the morning and the afternoon session).
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson and/or activity.

**08:55** Day pupils arrive on the school site

**09:00** All pupils in their studio/classroom, ready to begin lessons (Period 1)\*

**10:30** Morning break

**10:50** All pupils back in their studio/classroom, ready to begin lessons (Period 2)\*

**12:20** Lunch break

**13:30** All pupils back in their studio/classroom, ready to begin lessons (Period 3)\*

**15:30** Afternoon break

**15:45** All pupils back in their studio/classroom, ready for lessons or activities (Period 4)\*

**17:00** End of school day

*\* Pupils are expected to return from each break and be ready to recommence timetabled classes/activities by the stated times.*

## School Registers

School Registration is done biometrically, ascertains that pupils are present on campus and ensures that the school meets its statutory requirement to record attendance for both the morning and afternoon sessions on school days.

School Registration is taken as follows twice a day:

- Morning registration is taken between **8:00am** and **9:00am**.
- Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by **9:00am**.
- Morning registration will close at **9:30am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present before this time.
- Afternoon registration is taken between **12:45pm** and **1:30pm**.
- Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by **1:30pm**.
- The afternoon register will close at **2:00pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present before this time.

## Class Registers

In addition to the School Register, Class Registration is taken at the start of each lesson period to ensure that pupils are attending all timetabled lessons. For double lessons (i.e. two end-to-end periods), Class Registers will also be filled in after the return from break.

Pupils will receive a late mark in the Class Register if they arrive after the scheduled start time for any given lesson period.

Pupils who are more than 15 minutes late for any given lesson period will receive a mark of 'Unreasonably Late' in the Class Register, equivalent to an 'unauthorised absence'.

## Boarding Pupils

Boarding pupils are additionally required to register their presence on site in the evenings and at the weekend.

Evening registration is taken as follows:

- Evening registration is taken every day between **8:30pm** and **9:30pm**.



All pupils must be accounted for:

- by **10:00pm**, Sunday to Thursday
- by **10:30pm**, Friday and Saturday

On Saturdays and Sundays, pupils are not required to register in the morning. However, they must register in the afternoon between **3:00pm** and **3:30pm**. All pupils must be accounted for by **4:00pm**.

If a pupil is not accounted for, they will be considered 'off site without permission', triggering a formal search.

Pupils who return late from leave of absence without informing the school will be considered to be 'off site without permission' until they report in or contact has been made.

## 5. Absence procedures

All enquiries about attendance from parents and/or guardians must in the first instance be directed toward the school Registrar via email at [registry@isca.uk.com](mailto:registry@isca.uk.com) or by phone on +44 (0)1753 208 820.

For more detailed support on attendance parents and/or guardians should contact the Head of School at [r.hunter@isca.uk.com](mailto:r.hunter@isca.uk.com).

Parents must obtain permission for their child to be absent from the Head of School.

### Day Pupils

Parents/guardian of day pupils are required to contact the school via telephone or email before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they are expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent/guardian has not contacted the school to report the absence by **the close of the morning register**, administrative staff will contact the parent/guardian via **telephone call** as soon as is practicable on the first day that the pupil does not attend school. The phone call will be followed up by an email.

### Boarding Pupils

Boarding pupils are required to contact the school office via the School **boarding phone**, at least 15 minutes before the close of registration, whenever they are going to miss morning, afternoon or evening registration.

- In the morning, they must contact the school office by **8:45am**.
- In the afternoon, they must contact the school office by **1:15pm**.
- In the evening, they must contact the school office by **9:15pm**.

Where a pupil is absent but has not informed the school office of their absence, administrative staff will contact them to establish where they are and the reason for their absence.

## All Pupils

In all cases, for boarders and day pupils, the school will follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

## Medical Absence

The school will request medical evidence or require a pupil to see the GP where a pupil is absent due to illness for more than 3 days in a row, or in any circumstance where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

## Significant Absence

1. The Year Tutor will speak to the pupil to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain what can be done to improve attendance where, on the **Class Register**:
  - Overall attendance falls **below 95%** across a term for any reason AND/OR
  - There is 1 unauthorised absence in a fortnight
2. An email is sent to parents and guardian and the Director of Studies will meet with the pupil to put together a 2-week action plan to improve attendance where, on the **Class Register**:
  - Overall attendance falls **below 90%** across a term for any reason AND/OR
  - There are 2 unauthorised absence in a fortnight

## Persistent Absence

In case of Persistent Absence, arrangements are made for parents and the pupil to speak to the Head of School. The pupil is set attendance targets and assigned an attendance monitor to help them achieve the target.

Persistent Absence is defined as any one of the following:

- A. On the **Class Register**:
  1. Attendance drops **below 85%**, across a term, for any reason, AND/OR
  2. A pupil has 3 or more unauthorised absences in a fortnight
- B. On the **School Register**:
  1. Session attendance drops below 90%\* for any reason, AND/OR
  2. A pupil has more than 5% unauthorised absences across the year

*\* this means the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year*

Pre-A Level pupils (Year 11) who have 'unauthorised absences' or who are likely to miss more than 15 days in a year because of sickness will be referred to our 'Local Authority Attendance Team' to

agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education, in line with the statutory guidance on education for children.

### Unacceptable Absence

Pupils who are absent from school without authorisation or explanation for 10 consecutive school days, are reported to the Local Authority and removed from the roll if the school has failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries. A 'school day' is defined as a morning and an afternoon session only.

International pupils on Student or Student Child visas who have missed 10 'contact points' in a row without authorisation, or whose overall school attendance has fallen below 80% without a reasonable explanation, will be reported to UK Immigration Services as being in breach of the terms of their visa and removed from the roll. A 'contact point' is defined as morning registration on a school day.

The attendance reporting structure will be as follows:

1. Tutors
2. Director of Studies
3. Head of School (Attendance Champion)
4. LA Attendance Team

## **6. Live Register**

Live Register is the system used to:

1. ensure the school meets its statutory requirement to record attendance at school for both the morning and afternoon sessions on school days;
2. record attendance for boarding pupils in the evenings and at the weekends.

Live Register ensures attendance at school is recorded as accurately as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities. Attendance registers are kept electronically, and all entries in these registers are preserved for 6 years. Pupils register biometrically with their finger print using the biometric units around the school.

Pupils report to the designated member of staff in the school office if:

- they do not wish to share their biometric information with the school;
- the biometric units are not functioning.

Designated staff members check the attendance register at the end of the registration period for the morning, afternoon and evening sessions. This register records whether pupils are:

- Present onsite
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent (authorised / unauthorised)

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes are used:

Code	Description	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	On campus
\	Present (PM)	On campus
L	Late (before registers closed)	On campus but late to register
B	Educated off site	Off campus
K	LA arranged provision at a place other than a school	Off campus
P	Approved sporting activity	Off campus
V	Educational visit or trip	Off campus
W	Work experience	Off campus
C	Absent with leave (not covered by another appropriate code / description)	On campus but not in class OR Off campus
C1	Absent due to participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Off campus
C2	Part-time timetable	On campus when timetabled
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Off campus
I	Illness (NOT medical etc. appointments)	On campus but not in class, OR Off campus
J1	Interview	Off campus
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Off campus
R	Religious observance	Off campus
S	Study leave	Off campus
T	Traveller absence	Off campus
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> more than agreed)	Off campus
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Location unknown
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code)	On campus but not in class, OR Off campus
U	Late (after registers closed)	On campus but very late for class
D	Dual registration	Off campus
Q	Lack of transport arranged by LA	Off campus
X	Untimetabled sessions for non- compulsory school-age pupils	Off campus
Y1	Transport provided by LA or school not available	Off campus
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel due to local, national or international emergency	Off campus
Y3	School partially closed	Off campus
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Off campus
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Off campus
Y6	Travel or attendance contrary to public health guidance or law on transmission of disease	Off campus
Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Off campus
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Off campus

#### Key

Present
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Where pupils are marked 'O' (unauthorised absence) or 'C' (other authorised absence) a note is added explaining the circumstances.

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' is used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason are marked as absent in the register.

Every entry received into the attendance register is preserved for three years.

## 7. Engage

Engage is the School Information Management System (SIMS), which is used to take class registration. It is used to record and monitor pupil attendance in each lesson period of the day.

There are normally four lesson periods each school day:

- Period 1            9:00am – 10:30am
- Period 2            10:50am – 12:20pm
- Period 3            1:30pm – 3:30pm
- Period 4            3:45pm – 5:00pm

Engage allows the school to collect, analyse and share data on pupil attendance rates and patterns for each of their subjects.

Tutors take attendance using their own individual access to the school's Engage portal.

The attendance register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

In order to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way, the following codes is used:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Physical Meaning</i>
Present	Present	In for whole period
Present (self-directed study)	Present	In for whole period
Present (Approved Educational Activity)	Present	In for whole period
Late	Present	Late for period
Absent (Ill)	Authorised Absence	Authorised Absence
Absent (Agreed Holiday)	Authorised Absence	Authorised Absence
Absent (Medical/ Dental Appointment)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole period

<i>Description</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Physical Meaning</i>
Absent (Temporary Exclusion)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole period
Absent (Other Authorised Reason)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole period
Absent (Open Days, University Interviews)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole period
Absent (Holiday Not Agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole period
Absent (Unreasonably Late)	Unauthorised Absence	Very late for period
Absent (Pupil Leaves & Fails to Return)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole period
Absent (Unauthorised)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole period
No explanation YET for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Location Unknown

Where pupils are marked 'Absent (Unauthorised)' or 'Absent (Other Authorised Reason)' a note is added explaining the circumstances.

Every entry received into the attendance register is preserved for three years.

## 8. Requesting leaves of absence

Parents and pupils are required to request leave of absence in advance according to the established procedures. The decision to grant or refuse the request is at the discretion of the Head of School (or the Director of Studies in his absence), taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education and wellbeing into account. The Head of School's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school is sympathetic to requests for absence, and will not deny any request without good reason.

### Online Permission Slips (on Google Forms)

It is mandatory for any pupil wishing to go off site to complete an [Online Permission Slip](#) on Google Forms. Permission Slips are how the School keeps track of where pupils are when they are off site. Departure and return times are registered, as well as how to contact pupils while they are away.

The school will not normally refuse requests for leave of absence (exeats) to pupils to go out in the evenings after school (**5:15pm to 8:30pm**) or at the weekends (Friday after school at **5:15pm** to Sunday evening at **8:30pm**) unless:

- Pupils are on detention, have been grounded or gated or have any form of sanction during the requested leave period;
- Pupils have a tutorial, workshop or other school commitment during the requested leave period;
- The permission slip has not been submitted in time:
  - Requests to go off site after school on a weekday must be submitted before 4:30pm of the same day;
  - Requests to go off site at the weekends for the day only must be submitted with a minimum of a half-hour notice (never during mealtimes);

- Requests to go off site at the weekend overnight must be submitted by 4:00pm on Thursday afternoon;
- Requests to go off site during school hours must be submitted with a minimum of 24 hours' notice (see 'Academic Permission' below);
- Approval from parents/guardians (for pupils under the age of 18) has not been received by the school;
- Where a pupil needs to go off site during school time and 'Academic Permission' has not been obtained (see below for details);
- A pupil has been ill during the day and asks for permission to go out in the evening after school;
- The details on the permission Slip have been incorrectly filled in.

### Parental Authorisation

Parents/guardians are required to approve exeat requests via email to [exeat@isca.uk.com](mailto:exeat@isca.uk.com):

- for all requests if the pupil is under the age of 16
- for overnight exeats if the pupil is under the age of 18, or is 18+ but has not been authorised by their parents to approve their own exeats

Email approval for overnight exeats must contain:

- the name of a responsible adult\* who the pupil is staying with
- The phone number of the responsible adult
- The address where the pupil is staying
- The times and the dates of departure from and arrival back at school

*\* we define a 'responsible adult' as someone who is at least 25 years old*

### **Academic Permission**

Academic Permission is required when a pupil needs to requests leave of absence on a school day.

The school will only grant leave of absence on school days in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect pupils to fill in an Academic Permission Slip and get it signed off by tutors and the Director of Studies, at least 24 hours prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence. This is in addition to the standard Online Permission Slip on Google Forms (see above).

Parents or guardians are also required to send an email to [exeat@isca.uk.com](mailto:exeat@isca.uk.com) at least 24 hours prior to the proposed date(s) of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the date(s) during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for Academic Permission during term time are considered on an individual basis, taking into account the pupil's previous attendance record. Where permission is granted, the Head of School (or the Director of Studies in his absence) will determine the length of time the pupil can be

away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays or overnight stays on school days.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during exams/assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence in the four weeks prior to the request
- Where a pupil's attendance record is already below 90 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school is recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance are marked as unauthorised.

#### Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents/guardians/pupils are expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, they are expected to obtain approval to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

#### Religious observance

Parents are expected to request absence for religious observance at least a week in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

## **9. SEND - and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents are contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection Policy is followed.

The school will alert the LA about any pupil who misses 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness, as they may need additional support from the LA.



If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans are regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Evaluating any implemented reasonable adjustments;
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan;
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable;
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes;
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out;
- Temporary late starts or early finishes;
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence;
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons;
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **10. Absence in exceptional circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the pupil from attending.
- The pupil is in custody and is detained for less than four months.

The use of the 'Y' code for exceptional circumstances is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

## **11. Truancy**

Truancy is considered to be any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence, or where the school has reason to doubt the truth of the reason provided.

In the boarding context, this might include pupils who falsely claim to be unwell in order to avoid attending lessons, or who create an excuse to leave the lesson temporarily but fail to return.

Of particular gravity is overt truancy such as, for example, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent or prolonged early departures at the end of term or late arrivals at start of term.

All staff are actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Any pupil requiring permission to leave the school during a school day must:

1. Complete an Academic Permission Slip, signed by tutors and the Director of Studies;
2. Request permission to go off site and receive approval by filling in an Online Permission Slip on Google Forms;
3. Report back in to on-duty staff on their return.

When there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting, the Head of School is notified, who will contact the parent/guardian in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures is taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning is sent to the parents and guardian of the pupil, inviting them to meet with the attendance officer, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- In cases of 'Unacceptable Absence' (see section 5 above), in particular where there is 'overt truancy', the school will consider reporting the case to the Local Authority and (if the pupil is on a visa) to UK Immigration Services.

## 12. Off site without permission

Pupils who leave the school premises on any day (for boarding pupils, this includes the evening and weekends) without permission are considered to be absent and 'off site without permission'. Pupils who return late from leave of absence without informing the school will also be considered to be 'off site without permission' until they report in or contact has been made.

The following procedures are followed in the event of a pupil going missing in this way:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will report it to the School Office, which will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- In the first instance the school will call the pupil using their contact number; if unsuccessful, friends of the pupil who are on site are asked to try and make contact.
- If no contact is established, all available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises – tutors must remain with their classes supervising their pupils at all times.
- The following areas are searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets

- The canteen
- The common room
- The sports hall and swimming pool
- The pupil's room
- The pupil's friends' rooms
- The outdoor smoking area
- The school grounds and sports fields
- The area immediately beyond the school gates
- If the pupil has not been found after **30 minutes**, then the Head of School is notified and the school will attempt to contact parents/guardian using the emergency contact numbers;
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police are contacted;
- The member of staff reporting the missing pupil will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing;
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well;
- Parents and any other agencies are informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The Head of School will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions are issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

### **13. Attendance intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SMT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish escalation procedures which are initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Counselling pupils;
  - Having weekly Cause for Concern meetings with tutors in which attendance is always on the agenda;
  - Sending letters to parents;
  - Meeting with parents and pupils to discuss strategies to improve attendance.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies are developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

## **14. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and guardians and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication is maintained with pupils and their parents/guardian about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise where necessary with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents are made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Head of School in advance. The school will keep parents/guardian informed about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/guardian to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach parents/guardians to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

## **15. Pupils at risk of Persistent Absence (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- Looked after children (LAC)
- Young carers
- Pupils with English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parents/guardian to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parents/guardian to discuss progress.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## 16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data **weekly** to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, authorised absence and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.

The attendance officer will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a **termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data and will support the SMT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

## 17. Training of staff

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The Head of School will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff is offered ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## 18. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality is monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 95%.

This policy is reviewed every year by the Head of School. When the policy is due for review and update, the views of parents and pupils will be sought.

Any changes made to this policy is communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

## Attendance Monitoring Procedures

### Monitoring Criteria

School Register (not including weekends and evenings)

Attendance Issue	Intervention
A. Session attendance below 90% for any reason across a term	<i>HoS meets with parents - 2 weeks to improve</i>
B. More than 5% unauthorised absences across the year	<i>HoS meets with parents - special action plan - parents and pupil re-sign attendance contract</i>
C. Unauthorised absence for 20 sessions in a row	<i>Report to Local Authority – remove from roll</i>

International Students:

D. Missing 10 or more 'contact points' in a row	<i>Report to UKVI – remove from roll</i>
E. School attendance falls below 80% without reasonable justification	<i>Report to UKVI</i>

Class Register

Attendance Issue	Intervention
F. Overall class attendance falls <b>below 95%</b> across a term for any reason AND/OR 1 unauthorised absence in a fortnight	<i>Email to pupil – Tutor speaks to pupil</i>
G. Overall class attendance falls <b>below 90%</b> across a term for any reason AND/OR 2 unauthorised absences in a fortnight	<i>Letter to parents – DoS speaks with pupil - pupil given 2 weeks to improve</i>
H. Overall class attendance falls <b>below 85%</b> across a term for any reason AND/OR more than 3 unauthorised absences in a fortnight	<i>HoS meets with parents and pupil - special action plan and continuous monitoring - parents and pupil re-sign attendance contract</i>

### Monitoring Frequency

Daily

The Registrar will:

1. Check School Register is complete and accurate – add explanatory notes to any unauthorised absences
2. Check Class Registers are complete and accurate

3. Tally Class absences with School Session absences – check that pupils have not registered for the session but not gone to class.

#### Fortnightly

- The registrar will:
  1. Produce a report for HoS & DoS on pupils meeting criteria A to H.
  2. Produce a report for Tutors on pupils meeting criteria F to H.
  3. Send email to pupils meeting criteria F (copied to tutors)
  4. Send email to parents and guardian of pupils meeting criteria G (copied to the DoS, the pupil, and tutors)
  5. Report pupils who meet criteria D and/or E to UKVI
- Tutors will counsel pupils who meet criteria F.
- The DoS will meet with pupils meeting criteria G, and help devise an action plan to get them on track within two weeks.
- The Head of School will:
  1. Meet with parents, guardian and pupil where criteria A, B and H are met.
  2. Remove pupils from the roll who meet criteria C or D



## Attendance Agreement Form

### Pupil Attendance Agreement

I understand the importance of attendance and agree to attend school. I will strive to ensure my attendance does not drop below 100 percent. I will ensure that the school is made immediately aware of when I will not reasonably be able to attend, and will give the school full details of my absence.

As a pupil of International School of Creative Arts (ISCA), I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being punctual to school and lessons.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.
- Arriving on time at the start of term
- Not leaving early at the end of term
- Not being absent from school for trivial reasons.

<b>Pupil name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Form tutor name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

### Parental Attendance Agreement

I understand that it is my responsibility to work with ISCA to ensure my child attends school. I agree that my child must attend school every day and understand the school will take action and intervene if he/she does not. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed and the school is properly informed.

<b>Parent name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Form tutor name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>