

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Where the policy refers to the Governing Board, the Governing Board are currently replaced by an Interim Executive Board (IEB). The Chair of Governors will currently be Chair of the IEB.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction

The Island VI Form aims to provide all its students with an environment that will help them maintain the highest standards regarding their personal behaviour, so that they are able to make the most of their lives through learning. The VI Form is committed to developing the individual holistically and an important aspect of this development includes the student taking responsibility for their own learning by meeting clearly defined expectations. Attendance and punctuality are critical parts of these expectations, as high rates of attendance and punctuality are closely linked to successful outcomes for students.

The VI Form recognises that full attendance and punctuality are key to success. Learners are expected to have 100% attendance at all scheduled sessions and to be punctual in doing so. This expectation covers all sessions identified on the student's timetable including, GCSE English and mathematics, mentoring sessions, enrichment and work experience/placement.

Purpose of this Policy

- To set out the roles and responsibilities of students, parents/carers, VI Form staff and other stakeholders required to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that all students and their parents/carers understand the importance of high rates of attendance and punctuality, including for work experience/placement as required by their course.
- To highlight and ensure that all students understand that failure to attend all learning sessions disadvantages them and negatively impacts on academic success.
- To understand the responsibility of students to attend where group work and collaborative learning is taking place and the negative impact non-attendance makes to other learners.

Definitions:

- Attendance means being physically present at the lesson, arriving on time and staying for the duration of the session.
- In exceptional circumstances as directed by the VI Form, attendance may also include attending and participating in online lessons when instructed to do so.
- Being punctual means joining the lesson at the scheduled start time.

Expectations of Students Regarding Attendance

- To attend all timetabled or otherwise scheduled sessions.
- To take responsibility for their attendance thereby maximising their learning potential and personal development.
- Where absence is unavoidable, students should follow the procedures for non-attendance. (please see appendix)
- To ensure that all missed work, due to absence from a lesson, is covered and understood at the first opportunity. This includes catching up on any work set and being aware of the deadlines.

- When, in exceptional circumstances, the VI Form directs a learner to participate in an online session, the student must join this lesson at the scheduled time and participate fully in the session as instructed by their teacher.

Expectations of Students Regarding Punctuality

- To arrive on time for lessons, fully prepared, and to stay for the duration of the session.
- When a sixth form student is late, the learner should knock on the door and wait outside the room until they are given permission to enter. Students should then:
 - Join their group/session causing minimal disruption.
 - Apologise for their lateness on entering the classroom.
 - Discuss reasons for lateness with the teacher as soon as possible.
- It is not VI Form policy to refuse students access to lessons on the grounds of poor punctuality. However, on rare occasions it is accepted that the teacher may wish to use discretion in this matter, in which case the student is expected to report to Student Services where they will be seen by the team.

Expectations of Parents/Carers

- To be fully supportive of the VI Form's high expectations regarding attendance and punctuality.
- To support the VI Form and its students by not taking holidays during term time and, where possible, minimising all other authorised absences, for example medical appointments.
- To follow The Island VI Forms attendance procedures by informing us immediately when a student is unwell and unable to attend the VI Form (please see appendix).
- To respond to requests for meetings or further discussion when requested by VI Form staff.

The Island VI Form Responsibilities

- The College will keep parents/carers of students who are under 19, or considered vulnerable, informed of a student's attendance through:
 - Regular progress reports.
 - Live attendance information available through the Arbor App
 - Daily attendance emails/phonecalls where absences have been recorded.
- The Head of School will provide a framework for high expectations regarding attendance and punctuality and promote a culture across all staff at the VI Form of following up concerns when they arise, in a timely and supportive manner.
- Teachers will take registers for timetabled activities in a timely and accurate manner.
- Teachers/Student Services will monitor their individual learners' attendance and punctuality using the VI Form's Arbor system.
- Teachers/Student Services will raise concerns regarding attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity with students and their parents/carers through emails or phonecalls home.
- Teachers/Student Services will provide support and guidance to learners with issues regarding attendance and engagement.
- The Head of School will communicate expectations regarding attendance and punctuality to parents and students at the start of each academic year, and on an ongoing basis, through:

- Induction presentations
- Parental welcome events
- The Arbor System
- Periodic communications and reminders via email where appropriate
- The Head of School will monitor attendance data in aggregate for groups of learners and use this information to track attendance and punctuality and hold staff to account.
- Mentors will have access to regular timely reports on attendance and punctuality, and they will discuss this with the student at mentoring sessions.

Absence Recording and Long-term Absence

The VI Form may record an absence as being authorized or unauthorized. The VI Form may use subcategories of presence/absence in lessons to better understand patterns in relation to attendance and punctuality. If a valid reason for absence is not given, the VI Form will treat an absence as unauthorised.

Any long-term absence will be addressed by the attendance procedure (Please see appendix). In such cases, the VI Form will seek to meet with the student and their parents/carers to support them in getting back on track.

If a student has a serious medical condition which leads to extended absence, they will be supported to keep up with their studies as far as possible by their teachers. If it becomes unviable for a student to complete their study programme, due to ongoing health issues, the Student Services team will meet with the student to discuss the issue further in line with a discussion over fitness to study.

The VI Form is required to comply with Educations and Skills Funding Agency rules and regulations. Students who have been absent from lessons and have not engaged in learning for a period of 4 weeks or more may be withdrawn due to funding rules.

Appendix A

Process for managing VI Form Student Attendance

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From November 2024 until next review

All students must notify Student Services when they are too ill to attend or if they wish to request absence for a planned medical appointment, an educational activity or to compete in a sports event.

Students must do this by sending an email to: attendance@theislandviform.org.uk

Day 1 of student absence (not pre-planned)

An email is sent to parent(s) informing them of the absence and reason. (Unless they have already contacted the VI Form). The student is also emailed if they have not notified Student Services of their absence to ascertain the reason for absence.



Day 2 of student absence (not pre-planned)

The student is telephoned to check on their welfare and to encourage them to return to school, unless medical reason is known. An email is sent again to the parent(s) informing them of the absence unless parents have supplied formal notification.



Day 3 of student absence (not pre-planned)

A phone call is made to the parent(s) to check on the student's welfare and to ask if they can encourage their young person to return to school if appropriate. Repeat this step every day until the student returns.



If contact cannot be made with either the parents or the student by Day 5, the student is deemed to be Missing in Education and an IARF (Inter-Agency Referral Form) should be submitted. A home visit may be made, and the school will also consider calling the police.



Process for managing VI Form Student Attendance

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Students whose attendance is below 95% will receive a letter home to parents from the VI form indicating that attendance is approaching the Persistent Absence cut off and will encourage them to improve their attendance.



If a student's attendance falls below 90%, this will be considered as Persistent Absence, and an Attendance Warning Letter sent home. A SAM (School Attendance Meeting) will be held at the VI Form with Student Services and parents may be invited. At the meeting, a 6-week plan will be drawn up to improve attendance.



If a student's attendance does not improve or continues to fall, a final warning letter will be sent home stating that the student's VI Form place is at risk. A second SAM meeting will be held at the VI Form with the Head of School to discuss the situation and to draw up a revised 4-week attendance plan.

If a student's attendance still does not improve or continues to fall, a meeting will be convened to discuss whether remaining on the Island VI Form's roll is the best course of action for the student.

NB:

- 1) Any requests for course changes must go through the Head of VI Form. Students should continue to attend lessons in their original choice of courses until a final decision is made.
- 2) Absence for driving lessons, holidays and other non-essential activities will not be authorized and an 'O' code will be entered into the register.
- 3) Students who are struggling with mental health difficulties will be considered for a six-week reduced timetable. The Head of VI Form will make the decision about this after a meeting with the student and their parent(s). A package of support will be put in place – e.g. with the Mental Health Support Team – with which the student is required to engage.
- 4) Arrangements for students to access remote learning can only be put in place by the Head of VI Form and will be considered in the unusual situation of there being no other options available.
- 5) Students who request a reduction in the number of courses they are taking must ask their parents to write to the Head of VI Form.
- 6) Teaching staff will only enter codes 'I', 'N' or 'L' into their registers. Should changes be then required, this will be undertaken by Student Services.

