



St Dominic's
Sixth Form College

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of Approval	October 2024
Approved by	Catholicity and Curriculum Committee
Date of Next Review	October 2026
Author	Assistant Principal
Available on	College Website

St. Dominic's is a Roman Catholic Sixth Form College committed to the personal and spiritual growth of all its members based on Christian values, academic excellence and high quality pastoral care.

Context

The Mission of the College is to promote 'academic excellence' within the context of strong pastoral and spiritual support. To achieve this, we must maximise students' learning opportunities by:

- Setting high expectations for attendance and punctuality at all timetabled sessions.
- Working in partnership with students and, where applicable, their parents/carers, to promote high levels of attendance and punctuality, embedding a culture of reliability and commitment.
- Monitoring and taking action to improve attendance and punctuality where necessary and following up regularly with parents/carers.

Summary of College Expectations of Punctuality and Attendance

The College expects 100% attendance and punctuality at all timetabled sessions. This includes workshops, compulsory visits, core RE, enrichment, tutorials and 1:1s.

- Attendance of all students is continually monitored throughout the academic year. Any student who falls below 90%, and who is unable to provide a full justification, may face disciplinary action which could ultimately lead to their place at St. Dominic's being withdrawn.
- Parents/carers are expected to provide clear reasons, for all absences, using the reporting absence form via the College website.
- Students will be challenged on punctuality and are expected to provide a reasonable justification for any lateness.
- We may ask for medical evidence for absences due to illness of 5 or more days if deemed necessary.
- Where absences/lateness can be foreseen in advance, the student should notify Student Services, following the appropriate procedure. We may ask to see proof of appointments of a medical nature in order for the absences to be authorised.
- We will work in partnership with students to improve attendance and punctuality – so that they are able to demonstrate to future employers or Universities they are reliable, committed and hard working.
- An absence will not be authorised for any of the following reasons (other than at the Principal's discretion):
 - Holidays
 - Religious festivals
 - Employment
 - Babysitting/childcare
 - Driving lessons/tests
- If there is an absence without notification before 8:15am, a parent/carer may be contacted to ascertain the reason for the absence as soon as practicable. Where possible the student will be asked to attend College, unless there is a valid reason for non-attendance.
- Students must sign in/out with Student Services or Reception if they miss lessons for any reason, and provide proof of appointments.
- At the end of the College day, automated emails will be sent to parents/carers of students who have incurred one or more unauthorised absence.

- Should a pattern of non-attendance emerge, the Personal Tutor will follow this up at the earliest opportunity with the student and sanctions may be implemented, such as the issuing of a Weekly Report/Stage Warning or exemption from College events/activities.
- If the level of non-attendance is judged to be unacceptable then the College disciplinary procedure shall be used to deal with the matter. As the policy states, we expect 100% attendance, anything below this, unless by prior agreement or with valid reason, is unacceptable.

How attendance is recorded at the College

Students use their ID card to register into every lesson. The data is stored on our student information system (SID), and this can be viewed by students and parents/carers on-line.

Registers are marked as follows:

- / - present
- O - absent
- L - late (after the teacher/tutor has begun the lesson)
- U - unauthorised absence
- Z - no register (e.g. you are not required to attend the lesson)
- C - cancelled lesson
- F - forgotten lanyard
- V - educational trip
- D - work experience (arranged by College)
- M - medical appointment
- N - notified absence (e.g. illness)
- E - exam
- I - University/Apprenticeship Interview
- J - University Open Day

NB – Attendance of all students will be reviewed after the first five weeks of the academic year and regularly monitored throughout their time at St. Dominic's Sixth Form College. If students fail to maintain the required level of attendance, they will be managed through the College disciplinary procedure.

Teacher absence

Where possible, lessons will be covered. In the unlikely event that the lesson needs to be cancelled, the teacher will contact students via email to set work and students will not be required to attend the lesson. Registers will be updated accordingly. It is the students responsibility to complete the work set as instructed.

College visits

We will know the names of students who are going on College trips and visits and registers will be updated. However, as a matter of courtesy, we ask students to inform teachers in advance of these absences.

University Open Days/Interviews

If students have a pre-planned absence, such as a University Open Day or Interview, they should see Student Services *before* the event so this can be agreed. We will allow students to attend a maximum of three Open Days per academic year. Anything more than this would need to be agreed with Student Services and the Assistant Principal responsible for Attendance and Punctuality. Proof of booking will be required.

Pre-planned absence

We understand that there may be times where students need to take leave during term time. Any such requests should be emailed from a parent/carer to attendance@stdoms.ac.uk, stating the reason for absence and the dates affected. We will then write to the parent/carer. Absences due to holidays are not authorised. If a return flight is delayed, or there is any reason students cannot return to College on the agreed date, they will be asked to provide proof of any travel disruption.

Attendance/punctuality

If a student's attendance/punctuality is a cause for concern, they can expect this to be followed up by their Personal Tutor and Student Services initially. If there is no improvement, students may be required to meet with the Director of Learning or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Parents/carers of students are always contacted if poor attendance/punctuality becomes a problem. If students have any personal/health issues that are affecting their attendance, please discuss these with the Personal Tutor or Student Services. For absences of longer than 3 days, a member of the Student Services team will contact parents/carers.

In the unlikely event of College closures, we will use the College website and emails to communicate any information.

We strongly recommend that **students check their own SID record regularly** as we record attendance data which can then be used if requested by a potential employer or other colleges and universities. We aim to be fair to students in line with our values, however if attendance is unsatisfactory for no good reason, we do have a duty of care to work with all involved to help improve this.