

At Sha Tin College, attendance protocols reinforce positive attendance patterns while reflecting the Education Bureau's (EDB) commitment to upholding students' right to education through proactive early intervention. They enable early identification of at-risk students for timely support and model a culture of safety, inclusiveness, and authentic parental partnership. These guidelines operationalise the overarching ESF Student Attendance Policy within the Sha Tin College context.

## Types of Absence & Authorisation Procedures:

### 1. Unplanned & Medical Absences

- Notification: Parents/guardians must notify the school of unplanned or medical absences before 8:00 AM via the ESF App.
- Self-Certification & Medical Certificates: Parents may self-certify medical absences for up to 5 consecutive days. From the 6th day of illness onwards, a valid medical certificate from a recognised medical practitioner is required to register the absence as medical/illness. Without a medical certificate, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### 2. Planned Absences (Non-Medical)

- Advance Request: Parents must submit requests for planned non-medical absences (e.g., sporting commitments, arts performances, family circumstances) to the Head of Year (HoY) at least two weeks in advance.
- Approval: In alignment with EDB guidelines and ESF policy, the school reserves the right to decline requests for frequent or trivial absences. Unapproved planned absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

### 3. Absences of Concern

- These are any other absences which have not been communicated to the school. These can refer to one lesson or an entire day of absence. These absences will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

During periods of absence for all categories, academic support and expectations will be tailored to each student, according to their circumstances and individual needs.

## Non-attendance Protocols:

Attendance is monitored continuously and reviewed every 6 weeks.

| Attendance (%) | Classification       | Required Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Below 95%      | Early Concern        | The Tutor conducts a supportive discussion with the student to identify underlying issues. Tutor contacts parents/guardians to raise awareness of the impact.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Below 85%      | Persistent Absentee  | The Head of Year meets with the student and invites parents/guardians for a meeting. This meeting will include an analysis of the efficacy of support already provided which could result in alternate strategies being suggested.                                                                                                                                       |
| Below 80%      | Significant Absentee | If student attendance falls to this level, their pattern of non-attendance is considered chronic. Irrespective of the other measures put in place to address the situation, the Senior Leader (Guidance and Well-being) will speak with the Vice Principal (Guidance and Well-being) in conjunction with the student and parents to discuss options for further support. |

*Enrollment Reservation: In cases of significant and prolonged unauthorised absence, where parents fail to engage with school support mechanisms, the school reserves the right to withdraw student enrolment in alignment with EDB guidance and ESF policy.*

## **Statutory EDB 7-Day Reporting Requirement**

- 7 Consecutive Days Threshold: Where a student is absent for 7 consecutive school days (regardless of whether the absence is authorised, unauthorised, or medical), the Vice Principal must immediately notify the EDB
- Parental Notice: Parents/guardians are notified following the EDB notification.
- Safeguarding Escalation: If an unexplained or persistent absence indicates child abuse or welfare concerns, school staff must immediately activate the ESF Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and statutory reporting procedures.

## **Student Re-Integration**

When a student returns to school after prolonged absence or disengagement, the HoY and Student Support Team will implement a structured reintegration plan as soon as reasonably practicable:

- Reintegration is facilitated through short-term adjustment programmes featuring flexible timetabling or phased returns tailored to individual student needs. This process is further reinforced by deploying targeted support roles across the school, including School Counsellors, School Social Workers, Learning Diversity Support, and Peer Supporters or Buddies

## **Daily Attendance Taking**

EDB guidelines and ESF policy specify that electronic registers are official legal documents that must be completed daily by designated staff.

- Tutor Time Registration: Tutors take official morning attendance in SMART during Tutor Time (8.15am).
- Lesson-by-Lesson registration: Subject teachers take registers at the start of every lesson in SMART.
- Students will be marked as late if they arrive after the day/lesson begins. However, we will exercise flexibility and handle late arrivals with compassion during severe weather events or major transport disruptions.
- Attendance Notification: Daily attendance data is collated centrally, and parents of all absent students are notified through Section Administrators within 2 hours of the start of the school day.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

- Ensure student's timely arrival at school in time for tutor time at 8.15am
- Communicate any unplanned absence to the Section Administrator before 8:00am on the given day via the ESF App.
- Communicate any planned absence to the Head of Year with advanced notice.
- Partner with the student support team to effectively address patterns of non-attendance or absences of concern.

## **Types of Support**

Multiple types of support are readily available. These include:

- The counselling team, for those experiencing mental health issues, such as anxiety, problems with friendships and family conflicts.
- Our social workers, for family liaison and communication.
- Individual subject teachers or our Learning Diversity Department for students facing learning challenges
- Tutors, Heads of Year, Senior Leader and Vice Principal (Guidance and Well-being) for students dealing with social and emotional issues.
- Curriculum Coordinators and Vice Principals for students requiring academic programme support
- Peer Supporters