



SEDBERGH INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Absences Policy	
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Policy owner	Nicky Millington
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Introduction

The International Summer School requires that, unless students are ill or have made other arrangements – which are made clear to staff prior to the course – students must attend all meals, lessons, activities and excursions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Authorised Absence

1. Illness

Pupils at Sedbergh International Summer School who feel ill must inform their House Parent or Teacher, who will then monitor the situation and use their best judgement to assess how severe the situation is. If unsure, they will liaise with the Welfare Officer (formerly Matron) for advice.

- **Medication:** Any regular (pre-authorised) medication must be given by the Welfare Officer, unless specific instructions are given to another staff member (usually House Parent) by the Welfare Officer. Records must be kept of all medication given, the time and dosage, including for self-medication (e.g. inhalers).

Once it is established that a student is ill, they will remain in their house, monitored by their House Parent and/or the Welfare Officer, who will keep the pupil's teacher informed as to their status in time for the beginning of each lesson. The teacher will mark a pupil as ill on their register for each lesson that is missed due to illness. If a doctor or dentist appointment is required, the Welfare Officer will accompany them and keep staff the relevant members updated with the progress and outcome.

2. Other

On rare occasions, a student might have a pre-arranged absence from the course. For example, parents staying in the area might arrange to collect the student for a short period or a day, and this will have a written agreement before the course, and the teacher and all relevant staff will be informed beforehand.

Unauthorised Absence

If a pupil has not arrived in good time for a meal, activity, lesson or excursion, the following steps must be taken.

- **Mealtimes:** two staff members will look for the student in the relevant boarding house.
- **Roll calls:** two students (preferably students from the same room as the missing pupil) should be sent to look for them. If they are unsuccessful, the House Parent/duty staff member should contact another member of staff, e.g. Activities Staff, to look for the student while they remain with the group.
- **Lessons:** the teacher will take a register at the beginning of each lesson and attach the register to the front of their door within the first ten minutes of each lesson. The DOS/Course Director/Operations Director will, each lesson, check the registers for any absence and then check the relevant houses. The teacher also has the option of sending a message via SMS, WhatsApp etc or the school email to alert a member of staff to the pupil's absence.
- **Activities:** activities do not commence or leave until all pupils in the group are assembled in the meeting area, usually the dining hall. During on-site activities, if a pupil goes missing (e.g. goes to the toilet and does not return), the staff member on duty should alert the Operations Director, who will search for the student. **The activity staff member should not depart unless they can leave another member of ISS staff (not external staff e.g. instructors) with the group.** During off-site activities, if a pupil goes missing or does not report to an agreed meeting point on time, if there are multiple Activity staff they should co-ordinate a search, and if not, they should stay with the group and follow the procedure outlined below for excursions.
- **Excursions:** If a pupil goes missing during an excursion or if a Senior student does not meet at the agreed time, the staff member should first and foremost call the mobile number on file for the student (collected on departure from school and destroyed on return to school). If the student answers and is lost, the staff member should try to coordinate a meeting point or tell them to go into a shop and ask for directions (which the students are told in their induction). If they cannot get through to the student's phone, or the student does not answer, they should inform the Operations Director / DOS while they wait for the student to arrive. If they do not arrive within 15 minutes of the agreed meeting time, and no contact has been made, remaining students should depart for the coach/bus/train, and a member of staff should wait for the student, attempting to call again. If the pupil does not arrive within 30 minutes of the agreed time, the staff member should contact the Operations Director / DOS again and refer to 'Searching for a student – extreme cases' below.

Searching for a student – extreme cases

If a pupil cannot be found, a search will be conducted of the school grounds/vicinity of excursion location. While the search is happening, the Operations Director / DOS will make efforts to contact the pupil by phone and, if necessary, call an agent or parent to see if they can establish contact. If this is unsuccessful, the Police may need to be called to assist. In this case, the rest of the group may depart the excursion and leave two staff members on the site to liaise with Police. Any cost incurred as a result (e.g. organising public transport back to school for the staff members) will be reimbursed to the staff member and may be charged to the pupil in question.

Repeated lateness or absence

If a pupil is repeatedly late or absent from a meal, lesson, activity, roll call or excursion, and causes disruption by being late on several occasions, a discussion will be had with the DOS /Operations Director, and sanctions such as missing a disco or activity will be discussed. Records of such discussions and their outcomes will be recorded, and parents informed.