

Transcript for IRIS Absence Call (Detailed) Video

This video is aimed at organisations that are in the process of or are currently migrating from Truancy Call to IRIS Absence Call. However, it is also suitable for all users of IRIS Absence Call. This video provides an overview of the module, including how to set up and use.

This video is accessed from the IRIS Absence Call Videos topic in the [IRIS Reach help centre](#).

Transcript

Hello, you are attending this webinar as you are currently in contract with Truancy Call and we are migrating you to IRIS Reach Absence Call due to the discontinuation of Truancy Call.

Following this session, you will be able to begin using IRIS Reach for your absence reporting right away. We want to support you as much as possible throughout this migration so you can e-mail us with any questions or queries on migrate_absencecall@iris.co.uk.

In this session, you will learn how you can use IRIS Reach to send absence notifications to parents, how you will find parent responses, and how you will process those absence notifications within IRIS Reach. Once you are clear with how the system works, we will go through some configuration to ensure that your system is ready to receive messages from parents.

When you log into IRIS Reach, you will be directed to the **Dashboard**. The left-hand side shows the modules available within IRIS Reach. You will notice that you have fewer menu items that you can see on my screen, but it's worth noting that IRIS Reach allows schools to communicate with parents and facilitates receiving payments from parents amongst other things. If you want to know more about IRIS Reach, e-mail us and we can have your account manager get in touch with you.

An important thing to note here is the student data summary specifically for those students without priority one contacts. If a student doesn't have a priority one contact, IRIS Reach will not be able to send absence alerts for that student. To check this, click on the number beside **Without a priority one contact** and it will show you a list of students without P1 contacts. You can export this list into an Excel sheet or a PDF and use that information to ensure that SIMS is updated accordingly.

Next we have a number of message sections. We'll put information on here which we feel is relevant to any given time. It could be system issues, planned maintenance, or we might just like to tell you about promotions relating to other IRIS products. We can send absence alerts to contact parents when their children have been reported with absences N or O, and separately you can send a Parent Reach message for absences which are marked L or U. We can send parents a text message or we can send an absence call. Absence Call is an auto-dialling system which calls parents at times which is specified by you when we go through the setup process. Once the registers have been taken and entered into SIMS, we

need to run the Absence Alerts report to download your absence information from SIMS into IRIS Reach.

There are four steps to sending absence alerts. Click **Absence** and **Send Absence Alerts**. In the section **Upload Student List** there will show a drop down with **AM** and **PM**. These are automated attendance reports generated from SIMS. You would select the appropriate list for the time of day and click **Go**, and this will start the process of bringing through those students who have been marked **N** or **O**, **L** or **U** in SIMS in preparation for Step 2. This step can take a few seconds, so please do not refresh your browser or click any buttons.

[pause]

My student list has been imported and I am now at Step 2. This step displays my outgoing message. You can amend this message in Settings which I will show later in the session. If I scroll down the page, I will see all the students who have been marked **N** or **O** within SIMS. If you would prefer an alphabetized list of students, you can click this button *[button label: **Click Here, to display the absentees in a simple alphabetical list**]* to display the students in a simple list. At this point, perhaps the student has turned up and we don't need to send a message, so we can simply untick them.

Next to each child's name you can see some icons. The icons show how IRIS Reach will communicate with the parent, and this is based on the information that is held on the parent record within IRIS Reach. The first icon tells you that the parent would receive a text message since they provided you with a mobile number. The second icon shows you that the parent will receive an e-mail since they provided you with an e-mail address. If the parent provided you with a landline number, then the parent will receive a voice broadcast of this message to their landline. And lastly the spanner icon shows that the parent will receive the automated absence call. If you are happy with how your parents are going to receive their communications, you can simply click **Go**.

Step three is confirming the students that you've selected on the previous page. At this point, nothing is sent to parents. If you do need to make changes, just scroll to the bottom of the page and click **Back** and this will restart Step 2. If you're happy with the information held in this step, you can just click **Go**.

Step 4 confirms that the messages have been successfully sent. At this point, you might want to send late reminders. Click the **You can now send your late reminders by clicking here** and this will take you to the **Parent Reach Group Message Composer** where you can send a message to be sent to parents of students who have been given an **L** or a **U** mark. If you don't want to send the late reminders now, then later on you can come to the **Parent Reach, Send Communication, and Send a Group Message**.

You can see that we've got some groups here, **Most Recent L Marks, Most Recent U Marks, and Most Recent L's and U's**. Click into **Send A Message** and compose a message for this group of children. I will go through sending messages in a little bit more detail further along in the session.

If you needed to resend absence alerts later, you can come back to **Absence** and **Resend Alerts**, which begins the **Send Absence Alerts** process again from Step 2.

Parents will have received communications from IRIS Reach and they can reply directly to these emails or SMS text messages and their responses will show in your inbox. You can see that I have notifications in my inbox. Click **Inbox** and navigate to the **Absence** inbox. You can see that some of my parents have already responded to their messages. I can see the parent reporting the absence and I can see the student for whom they are reporting. You can use this information to update SIMS. To record this, click on the name of the student and this will take you directly to the **Unanswered Absence Breakdown** report and to today's session. You will see that the parent response is already typed into the description field. You can amend the attendance mark. You'll be asked if you want to write this back to SIMS.

Now that you've seen how to send the absence alerts and how to receive responses from parents, let's take a look at how Absence Call works.

Absence Call is an automated system which will attempt to call parents directly and ask them to confirm their name, their child's name, and ask whether or not they are aware of their child's absence and it will allow them to leave a message detailing why their child is away from school. You need to configure Absence Call first, so to do this, click into **Absence** and **Absence Call Setup** and here you will specify the students who you want to receive the automated absence calls. For example, you might want to set this school wide so that all students by default receive the automated call. Or perhaps you've identified persistent absentees and you feel you'd receive a faster response from those parents by using the automated caller functionality for those students. To search for students further down the list, use the search function in your browser, usually control F, and search for the child's name, and you can toggle that child on to receive the absence call. Scroll down to the very bottom of the page and click **Update** to save your settings.

You will need to configure the automated absence caller settings. Click into **Absence**, **Absence Call**, and choose **Manage Settings**. You can setup your school name and your greeting. And you can specify how often you'd like the caller to attempt to call your parents and how often to retry, and set the time frames in which you want these calls to be attempted. Contacts for students for which you have enabled Absence Call will receive an automated voice call advising the student is absent and requests that they provide a reason via voice recording. This recording is stored in **Absence** and **Absence Call** where you can review the status of those calls.

When the absence call is being sent the status shows as **Pending** and this will move to **In Progress** once the first call attempt is made. Once the first call has been attempted the status will move to **Schedule** and the reason states which stage the outbound call is in. When the parents voice message has been received the status moves to **Completed** and the voice message shows. If in the meantime the student turns up, you can cancel the call by clicking on the status and adding a reason for cancellation of the call.

If your parent has left a voice clip, you can use this information to update SIMS. Search for the student using the search bar at the top right-hand side. Just click on the student's name and it will take you to the student's report. Scroll down to the **Unanswered Absence Breakdown** report and to today's date and you can use the details from the report recording to update the student's mark. Add the reason for their absence and have this written back to SIMS.

If a response to a call is not received, further attempts are made until the call is cancelled or the student is no longer absent. IRIS Reach offers a number of reports that you can view. Click into **Reports Manager** and we'll have a look at some of the reports on offer.

Attendance Reporting provides a number of reports. You can report attendance detail for the entire school or break absences down to **House, Year, or Registration Groups**. Click into the report that you want and you're able to export this information into **Excel** or as a **PDF**. If you want to send an SMS to persistent absentees, you could click on **Reports Manager, Attendance Reporting, and Persistent Absence**.

Select your students and **Send a Message**. This will take you to the message composer where you can setup your message. You can personalise your message using the **Dynamic Text** fields. You can see how many text credits per parent this will cost you and how many characters you have remaining in this text message. You can specify whether or not parents can respond to this message, and you can either send immediately or specify a future date for this message to be sent. Once you're happy with this message, click **Go**. This will take you through to a confirmation page where you can click **Send Message** and your messages will be sent to parents.

If you click into **Reports Manager** and **Student Report**, you can view information about a specific student. At the top of the screen you will see the child's attendance information.

Maybe this student's parents don't speak English as their first language. Scroll near to the bottom of the page and find **Blocking and Language** and you can change the language for this student. If you then send an absence alert to this student via text message, the parent will receive a message that looks like this. The message is in English with a translation tool just above that. The parent will click on the translation tool and they'll see a message that looks like this. The message in English, the message in their home language and they can choose from this dropdown menu which language they'd like to respond in. Pop in their message and then what you will see in your **Absence** inbox is the message from the parent with **Auto Translation**. The system has translated the parent's message into English for you.

If you click into **Reports Manager** and **Audit Trail** and absence, this shows you all the absence messages that have been sent today, how the message was sent and the date and time the message was sent.

If you don't have access to the **Absences** module, your administrator will need to click into **Settings** and **User Logins**. Find your user account and click **Edit**. You will need to ensure that members have access to **Absence Management, Parent Reach** if you wish for them to

message ills and news and the **Reports Manager** if you wish to use the reporting functionality within IRIS Reach.

You might also want to amend the default Absence template which is sent to parents in step one of sending absence alerts. Click into **Settings** and **Absence Management** and you can write up a template here. You can use the **Dynamic Text** buttons to personalise the outgoing message. If you need any help following this session, remember that you can contact us via the e-mail address migrate_absencecall@iris.co.uk otherwise if you click **Help** and **Help Page**, you'll be taken to an external help site for IRIS Reach. There's a section dedicated to absences, and all of your articles related to absences are here on the left.

So you can start using IRIS Reach Absence Call straight away. Truancy call will be deactivated for you in a few days. Thank you very much for listening.