



Attendance and Absence Policy

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Introduction

Excellent attendance and punctuality promote excellent learning. Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. James Calvert Spence College believes that regular and punctual school attendance is crucial to allowing children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of students who miss more than 50 per cent of school only three per cent achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C(or the equivalent) including Maths and English.

The Department for Education (DfE) published [research](#) in 2016 which found that:

- The higher the overall absence rate across Key Stage (KS) 2 and KS4, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of KS2 and KS4
- Pupils with **no absence** are 1.3 times more likely to achieve level 4 or above, and 3.1 times more likely to achieve level 5 or above, than pupils that missed 10-15% of all sessions
- Pupils with **no absence** are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*- C or equivalent including English and mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4 lessons

James Calvert Spence College believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, students, and the wider school community. James Calvert Spence College values all students. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to early identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a thread that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour for learning. This policy also takes into account the Education Act 1996, Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations Act 2000, the Equality Act 2010, DfE (2019) 'School attendance', DfE (2016) 'Children missing education', and DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'.

James Calvert Spence College defines our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance	Description
97-100%	Excellent attendance. All pupils whose attendance is 97% and above are part of the green zone. As a 'Green' pupil you are much more likely to achieve.
91%-96.9%	Satisfactory attendance. Those pupils who have fallen between 91%-96% are in the Amber Zone. Those in this zone are automatically monitored by school and are more likely to underachieve.
Less than 91%	Persistent absence. All pupils whose attendance falls below 91% will be considered for legal monitoring by the Local Authority. 'Red' students are highly likely to underachieve.

Statement of intent

James Calvert Spence College believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is Mr McCudden, and can be contacted via the school office. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the relevant Pastoral Support Officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

1. Principles

James Calvert Spence College believe the following important principles underpin our approach to managing attendance:

- Pupils and parents/carers understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- All school staff, including governors, administrative and support staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- Clear procedures for enabling pupils to come to school.
- Attendance issues are addressed in the curriculum.
- Parents/carers and pupils having the opportunity to raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns.
- Allocating resources e.g. time, people, space to support the policy.
- Rewarding students who have good attendance and those who strive to improve their attendance.
- Identifying patterns of absence and intervening early. Patterns of attendance are established early in a school career. Children who miss significant amounts of their education in primary schools are more likely to truant later on. We will work with the school partnership using data to identify students early.
- Sanctions for failing to ensure regular attendance are fully understood by the whole school community and parents/carers.

Each of these principles is explained in full detail in the following guidance.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behavioural Policy

3. Definitions

The school defines “**absence**” as either:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

The school defines an “**authorised absence**” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.
- Exclusion

The school defines an “**unauthorised absence**” as:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Holidays

The school defines “**persistent absenteeism (PA)**” as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the academic year for any reason.

4. Roles and responsibilities

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of pupils who miss more than 50 per cent of school only around three per cent achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C(9-5) including Maths and English.

James Calvert Spence College believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider school community.

4.1 The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the ELT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

4.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

4.3 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

4.4 The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

4.5 Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment
- Contacting school on the first morning of absence.
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Parents will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their children during term-time.
- Parents will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure their children attend school every day.

4.6 Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- All pupils are responsible for their punctuality to lessons.

5. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson.

The school day starts at **8.50am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin their Tutor Curriculum Time session at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8.45am at the latest**. Pupils will have a morning break at **11.15am**, which will last until **11.35am**, and a lunch break at **12.35pm**, which will last until **1.10pm** – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9.00am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **9:20am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by **1:20pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at **1:40pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Class teachers will also take informal registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that pupils are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

6. Student expectations

Students will be expected to attend school every day. The school expects all students to attend lessons punctually. Students will be expected to report any absence immediately to the relevant member of staff.

7. Students at risk of persistent absence

7.1 The Assistant Headteacher - Ethos and Culture will:

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Having regular tutor review.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.
 - Creating attendance clinics.
 - Ensure that the Pastoral Support Officers have a weekly EWO review.
 - Attendance Contract in agreement with parent/student
 - Offer short term reduced timetables to reintegrate into school.
 - Work with outside agencies who may be able to support e.g., PMH.

The school will use attendance data to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after **one term**, the attendance officer/AHT Ethos and Culture will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

7.2 The governing body will

- Engage in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment.

7.3 Pastoral Officers and Tutors will:

- Where possible, welcome students back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.

- Provide students with Mental Health/Wellbeing resources as identified to be of benefit for individual student e.g. Kooth.
- Meet with students to discuss absence, patterns, barriers, and problems. Consider referrals to School nurse/PMH.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, e.g., reduced timetable for a short reintegration period.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the pupil and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading **weekly** check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support where feasible.
- Making regular contact with the pupil's parent to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day. We also expect

parents/carers to keep us fully informed of further absences and likely return date e.g. by contacting us each and every day of absence. This will be monitored in the mornings by Attendance Administration Support.

Parents may choose to send a note on the first day their child returns with a signed explanation as to why they were absent. This may be done even if we have already received a phone call.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness OR if the attendance of the student is a concern. This medical evidence will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

It is at the discretion of the college to decide what is deemed appropriate medical evidence, for example a mental health diagnosis must be made by a professional in mental health.

Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to reception, where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.

The PSO will prioritise making a telephone call to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the pupil's parent may be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the PSO, who will liaise with the EWO.

The school will inform the LA, on a monthly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 91 percent, the EWO will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents where appropriate.

Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from the school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the student from the admission register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

9. Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Parents will be expected to:

- Treat staff with respect.
- Actively support the work of the school.
- Call on staff for help when they need it.
- Communicate with the school about circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

10. Attendance register

The school uses Bromcom to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational activity.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school

- H = Authorised holiday
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- [New] S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- D = Dual registered at another educational establishment
- B = Off-site education activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **three years**.

11. Attendance Roles (PSO)

If they are persistently absent, students will be referred to the PSO, and the PSO will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement.

If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the PSO's will refer to the EWO, who has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

The PSO will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that early intervention is delivered quickly to address absence.

The PSO will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures.

12. Lateness

Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.

The school day starts at 8.50; Students should be in their classroom at this time. The gates are closed at this time, so students must access school via the front reception and will be met by a PSO with a demerit issued by the Form Tutor.

Registration begins at 8.50, students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

The register closes at 9.20am; Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site but will count as an absent mark.

13. Truancy

Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of students, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.

All students are expected to be in their classes by 8.50am and 1.10pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.

Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting.

If truancy is suspected, a member of the ELT or the relevant PSO will be notified and they will contact the child's parents, to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term time and persistent late arrival at school.

14. Missing children

Students are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from a member of the ELT.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing during the school day:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform On Call OR a member of the ELT immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the member of ELT.

- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the student has not been found after **no more than 15** minutes then the parents of the student will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contacts provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the list has been exhausted, then the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form on Bromcom, describing all circumstances leading up to the student going missing.

If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

When the student has been located, a designated member of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.

A member of ELT will take the appropriate action to ensure the student understands they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.

Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

A member of ELT will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.

Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behavioural Policy.

Prolonged periods of unauthorised absence without contact will be handled in accordance with [Section 8](#) of this policy.

A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

15. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

15.1 Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of

absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a pupil is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason
- Where granting the leave of absence would take the student attendance below 90% and into the PA category.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

15.2 Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

15.3 Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **97 percent**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

15.4 Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

15.5 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

16. SEND and health related absence and Young carers

The school understands the difficulties young carers face and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as throughout their time at the school

The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.

- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

17. Exceptional circumstances

When absence is due to exceptional circumstances, the 'Y' code will be used on the attendance register

Exceptional circumstances include when a student is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending.
- The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

The use of the 'Y' code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

18. Rewarding good attendance

The school will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance in the following ways:

- Phone calls home
- Merits every week for 100% attendance

- Shining Lights stickers and Certificates

Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:

- Phone calls home
- Merits
- Certificates

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away. The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

Attendance at the Year 11 prom requires good attendance across all five years. This will tend to be over 90%, although individual circumstances such as chronic medical conditions will be taken into consideration.

19 Monitoring and analysing absence

The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

The school's attendance target is 97%. Therefore we expect all students to achieve an attendance figure of 98% unless they have chronic illness.

Pastoral staff have the responsibility for ensuring that all the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Bromcom system. Regular meetings are held with the Assistant Headteacher to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents.

At JCSC we follow a traffic light system, the purpose of colour coding helps staff, Parents and Pupils have a clear understanding of our expectations. (See appendix 2)

- **Red Zone: Under 90%**
Students in the red zone are more likely to underachieve, find making friendships difficult and misbehave. Legal action may also be taken against Parents/Carers of Red Zone pupils.
- **Amber Zone: 91% - 97%**
Students in this zone are still at risk of underachieving due to the absence level. Students who miss school regularly are more likely to suffer from school related stress. If your child is in the Amber Zone we may contact you to complete a Parent Contract to help avoid attendance falling into the Red Zone.
- **Green Zone: 97% - 100%**
We expect students to have Green attendance throughout their education. Those in the Green are more likely to do well in examinations, have better job opportunities and can develop strong friendships within school.

The attendance officer with the support of the PSOs will monitor and analyse attendance data **weekly** to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Year groups preparing for exams.

- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer with support from the PSOs will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a **half-termly, termly and full-year** basis to identify patterns and trends. This could include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data where available to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

20. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

21. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher –Ethos and Culture and the PSO team.

Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2023.

Appendix 1 – Example School Attendance Contract

Name of Child:	DOB:	Age:
	School Year Group:	
Home Address		
School: Address:		
Parent/Carer (1):		
Parent/Carer (2):		

Attendance Contract

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from her education it is vital that he/she attends regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is important therefore that you make sure that (*student name*) attends regularly.

Why regular attendance is important

Any absence affects the pattern of your child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect her learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring [name]'s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Understanding absence

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (NOT BY THE PARENTS), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, such as emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after registration has closed.
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

Appendix 1 – Example School Attendance Contract

- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child. If NAME is reluctant to attend, it is not acceptable to cover up his/her absence or to give in to pressure to excuse him/her from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. If NAME attendance at school is affected by persistent illness the school will not authorize the absence until they are satisfied the absence is valid.

Persistent Absentee (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year FOR WHATEVER REASON. Absence at this level damages your child's educational prospects and we need your fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. If [name] is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark you will be informed of this immediately.

Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a note in to school on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence and the dates of the absence – you should do this even if you have already telephoned.
- Or you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child's attendance deteriorates, we will:

- Write to you.
- Invite you in to school if absences persist to discuss the situation with the appropriate staff
- Refer you to the Education Welfare Service

Contact Details

There are times when the school and Education Welfare need to contact you about lots of things, including absence, so we must have your up-to-date contact details. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number – if we don't then something important may be missed

Parents/Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, Education Welfare will become involved. The service will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve [name] attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, then sanctions such as Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court will be used. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Education Welfare Service/ Local Authority.

Lateness

Appendix 1 – Example School Attendance Contract

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If [name] misses the start of the day, he/she can miss work and time with his/her class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. The school day starts at 08:50 and we expect [name] to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by twice a day and NAME will receive a late mark if he/she is not punctual. In accordance with the Regulations, if [name] arrives after the close of registration she will receive a mark that shows her to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with staff in school to resolve the problem, but you can approach staff at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Leave of Absence in term time.

Any applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the Headteacher. In making a decision the Head Teacher will consider the exceptional circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave or absence in term time. Full details of policy and procedures are available from the school. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or more than that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the School Attendance Contract.

Signed by:

PARENT/CARER

SCHOOL

Date:

Appendix 2 – Individual Attendance Plan

Name:	DOB:

Attendance Zone	Less than 90%	91% - 96%	97% - 100%
Review 1			
Review 2			
Review 3			

What are the reasons for absence? (please tick)			
Genuine Medical		Illness	
Parent Mental Health		Truancy / lesson avoidance	
No Reason Provided		Student Mental Health	
Behaviour / exclusions		Bullying	
Historic Attendance Issues		Peer/Relationship Issues	
Poor Parenting		Dislike of school	
Other:		Reason:	

What actions have been taken? (please tick)

Appendix 2 – Individual Attendance Plan

Traffic Light Monitoring		Part time hours	
Student Interview		Referral to internal unit	
Telephone calls home		Attendance Report	
Meeting with parent/carer		Curriculum/class changes	
PSO Ref.		Peer mediation	
Parent Contract		Rewards & Recognition	
Legal Action		CAF	
Group work		Referral to Outside Agency:	
Other:		Please state:	

Historic Attendance:										
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11

Background/Additional Information:
Genogram:

Appendix 2 – Individual Attendance Plan

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Actions:

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Academic Information:

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Lesson Attendance:

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Appendix 2 – Individual Attendance Plan

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Appendix 3 – JCSC Attendance Proces

