



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This document is available on the school website. This policy applies to all pupils, including those in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

1. Rationale

It is crucial that we know where our pupils are at all times so that we can fulfil our duty of care; this applies whether pupils are on site or being educated elsewhere.

We recognise the strong link between attainment and attendance and the important partnership between parents and the school in ensuring that students in our care achieve their potential, both socially and academically. The school is committed to working with students and their parents to achieve the highest level of attendance possible. School attendance is subject to various education laws and this policy is written to reflect these laws, recognising the guidance 'School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities' (Department for Education, May 2022), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, (September 2022)', 'Children Missing Education' (Department for Education, September 2016).

We ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of regular attendance and how this will benefit them. This is promoted through PSHCE, Assemblies and Form times and, where appropriate, is reported on students' reports as well as statistically to parents.

This document aims to:

- Promote high levels of punctuality;
- Reduce further the numbers of authorised absences;
- Promote the support networks in place to help pupils to achieve excellent attendance and therefore achieve their potential

Principles

If the school's aims are being successfully met, pupils should want to attend regularly. To achieve these aims this document is based upon the following principles:

All parents/carers are aware of their responsibility to send their children to school on time and to provide reasons for absence or persistent lateness;

- Pupils are aware of what is expected of them;
- Electronic registers are taken twice daily at the beginning of each session;
- Registers are accurate and personal details are kept up to date;
- Staff concerns about absence and/or punctuality are reported to the relevant Head of Section;
- Staff, where appropriate, share and update information;
- Those pupils causing concern are monitored and strategies developed;
- Negative issues affecting attendance or punctuality are addressed appropriately and support is put in place;
- Support is offered to pupils returning to school after extended periods of absence;
- Staff use the procedures for irregular attendance and punctuality consistently and fairly;
- The links between attendance and punctuality and safeguarding and pastoral issues are recognised as potential concerns and outside agencies are involved as appropriate

Our expectations for attendance are:

97-100% Expected

95-97% Emerging cause for concern

Below 95%, but above 90% A cause for concern

Below 90% A serious cause for concern

2. Assistance

The school recognises that there will be situations where a pupil's attendance falls below expected due to unforeseen circumstances or illness. Some pupils may experience difficult family circumstances and will need extra support. We will always work with parents in supporting pupils who have emerging attendance issues. The Form Tutor is the primary point of contact for their child and has an excellent overview of their daughter. If a child misses school there may be an issue that parents or the school are not aware of and it is important to identify the issue and put in place early intervention. JAGS has a wide range of support systems which complement the school's established pastoral structure. These include staff mentoring, sixth form mentoring, the help of the SENDCO, Nurses, and counsellors. All liaise with pastoral staff and parents in supporting pupils of any age who may have difficulties.

3. School Procedures

(a) Recording Attendance

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Education.

(b) Absence Notification

On the first day of absence and each subsequent, parents of senior school pupils should complete the Senior School Absences Reporting Form, preferably by 8.15am. There is the opportunity for parents to indicate if they would like to discuss their child's absence with a member of staff, e.g. Nurses, Head of Year.

If pupils are unable to attend school by 9.15am, and there has been no contact from parents, our Pastoral Assistant or Office Administrator will begin the process of telephoning parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. Therefore, it is important that the school is made aware of any changes to parents' contact details.

For Junior School pupils, parents should email pre-prep@jags.org.uk (Pre-Prep) or prep@jags.org.uk (Prep School). Requests concerning matters other than illness (e.g. request for absence for family reasons or an external event) should be addressed to the Headteacher or the Head of the Pre-Prep.

There are two main categories of absences:

Authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a pupil's absence from school after a parent's request. This includes parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for:

- shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained
- extended holidays

Notification of absence should always indicate the reason for the absence. Where the written communication is not specific, further follow up may be necessary after consultation with the Deputy Head People or Headteacher of the Prep or Pre-Prep. Absence records will be kept on file.

**NB where the Senior School Pastoral Assistant is referred to, the equivalent is the Prep School Administrator or Pre-Prep School Secretary.*

Registration – Junior School

Morning registration (Prep)	Afternoon registration
8.25am in Form Room	1.10pm in Form Room
Morning registration (Pre-Prep)	Afternoon registration
8.40am in Form Room	1.30pm in Form Room

Registration –Senior School

Morning registration	Afternoon registration
8.25am in Form Room	
Register 8.30am	Register 2.00pm

Any pupil arriving after 8.35am must register with the Pastoral Assistant at the Pupil Entrance.
Registration closes at 8.50am and 2.10pm.

Please refer to the Child Missing from School Policy for non-arrivals; missing during the school day or missing on an educational visit/sports fixture/off-site educational activity.

4. Absence Protocols:

Teams will be used to monitor attendance in the Senior School. The Head of Year will monitor attendance and punctuality on a weekly basis.

If appropriate, staff should follow the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and all related policies and procedures for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. Wherever there is a suspicion of possible abuse, neglect or radicalisation, staff will inform the DSL. Staff should be particularly aware of the needs of SEND and disabled pupils as they can be impacted by matters such as bullying and peer on peer abuse without outwardly showing any signs. Concerns will also be raised for those pupils who are persistently absent from school, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

In line with our expectations for attendance the following table outlines our school procedures:

Attendance below 97% but above 95%	Emerging cause for concern. Discussion between the pupil and her Form Tutor to identify any underlying concerns or worries indicating that extra school support needs to be put in place. If so, this will be addressed.
Attendance below 95% but above 90%	Frequent Absence A cause for concern. Email/phone call home from Head of Year. Discussion with the pupil and her Form tutor. Should there be an underlying concern or worry, parents will be contacted, and the Form tutor and Head of Year will work with the pupil and her parents to put a plan of support in place.

Attendance below 90%	<p>Persistent Absence</p> <p>Serious Cause for Concern: Email home from Section Head. Meeting with parents, Form tutor and Section Head, Support plan put in place/reviewed.</p> <p>The school's DSL may liaise, in collaboration with parents, with external services or professionals such as the pupil's GP and Local Authority Early Help Services as additional support may be needed.</p>
Attendance below 85%	<p>Meeting with DSL and Head of Section and support plan reviewed.</p> <p>DSL referral to Local Authority for advice and intervention, where appropriate.</p>
Attendance below 75%	<p>On-going intervention in conjunction with Local Authority and external agencies.</p>

In the Junior School, the Deputy Head Pastoral or Head of Pre-Prep contact parents early on of any concerns. Support for the pupil and parent(s) will be discussed with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

It is recognised that a single bout of illness can result in the percentage attendance dropping below the expected level. In such cases, the school will use its discretion in deciding the most appropriate supportive measures.

(a) Continuing Absence

Should a pupil be absent from school without parental contact and parents are unable to be contacted, this will be treated as a safeguarding concern and referred to the DSL.

(b) Ten days' absence

The school recognises that "all schools must agree with the relevant Local Authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more" (DfE guidance, October 2014). The school's DSL will notify the Local Authority in such cases.

(c) Frequent Absence

The Form Tutor is a key part of supporting pupils with their attendance and punctuality.

It is the responsibility of the relevant Form Tutor and Head of Year to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. The Pastoral Assistant will also work closely with the pastoral team to identify emerging attendance issues.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absence, the Form tutor will speak with the pupil and protocols will be followed. The school may liaise, in collaboration with parents, with external services or professionals such as the pupil's GP and Local Authority Early Help Services. The school has a duty of care to all of its pupils and absence from school may be an indicator that pupils need additional support.

The potential for an underlying issue should always be addressed including bullying, work concerns, friendship issues etc.

(d) Persistent Absence

Research shows that gaps in attendance affect attainment, specifically when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education. All pupils whose attendance level is 90% or below may be subject to a support plan to help the pupil return to full attendance.

If the issue of poor attendance persists, the school may refer to the Local Education Authority for advice. Pupils will be helped to positively reintegrate into school involving the help of outside agencies where appropriate. This could involve a number of different strategies including a reduced timetable and staff mentoring and will be led by the Section Head. Any negative issues which may affect attendance, such as bullying must be addressed, and a plan of support put in place.

5. Appointments

If there is a planned absence (e.g. for an orthodontist/hospital appointment) the Pastoral Assistant should be notified as soon as possible and preferably with at least 3 days' notice. Routine appointments such as GP, dentist or orthodontic appointments should be arranged for outside school hours. If formal notification has been given it is unnecessary to telephone the school on the day of absence. Children must never contact parents/carers directly to make arrangements to go home. They should always be signed out with the School Nurse or Pastoral Assistant or Office Administrator.

6. Requests for One Or More Days' Leave of Absence

Our school holiday provision is long and provides ample opportunity for holidays during the specified times. We request that parents do not disrupt their daughter's education through making holiday arrangements that require their daughter missing school. Holiday leave will NOT be granted in term time unless the circumstances are exceptional and the pupil's attendance has previously been as expected – 97% and above.

If a pupil needs to be away from school in exceptional circumstances a letter or email requesting permission should be sent to the Head at least three days in advance, or the online absences form should be completed.

Requests for absence of one, two or three days will be responded to by the Head of Section. Requests for more than three days will be addressed by the Head.

Authorising absence in "exceptional circumstances" is at the discretion of the Head. The attendance rate of the pupil will be taken into consideration. Absence may be authorised for one day for special family celebrations such as family weddings, graduations etc.

If permission is given, the Pastoral Assistant/Office Administrator will be informed by the Head's PA. The Pastoral Assistant will disseminate the information to the Form Tutor, Head of Year, and the Section Head. In the Prep, the Headteacher or Head of the Pre-Prep only can give permission and will advise relevant staff.

7. Lateness

Alongside regular attendance, punctuality is equally important, and sanctions are imposed for lateness. An essential part of the curriculum, including bonding with the peer group, forging friendships, assemblies, celebrations, PSHCE and dissemination of messages and information, which is crucial in helping pupils to develop their social and organisational skills, is lost if pupils miss Form time.

In cases where there is no reason for absence at registration the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The Pastoral Assistant/Office Administrator will follow this up and request a letter/email from parents. The Form tutor and Pastoral Assistant should ascertain if the reason for lateness was unavoidable – snow, a traffic accident (normal heavy traffic is NOT a valid excuse for lateness) or exceptional family circumstances.

IN THE EVENT THAT A PUPIL HAS A MUSIC LESSON OR ACTIVITY THAT PREVENTS HER FROM ATTENDING AFTERNOON REGISTRATION, SHE SHOULD SIGN IN AT THE PUPIL ENTRANCE.

In the Prep this is recorded on the register or in the Music lesson attendance book.

In the Prep School Years R – 6 punctuality will be monitored by the Deputy Head Pastoral (Prep) and Head of the Pre-Prep.

8. Lateness Sanctions: Years 7 – 11

Statistics for lateness should be checked weekly by the Head of year in the Attendance Team. There will be a series of responses to repeated lateness.

Incident	Sanction
Late with no reasonable explanation from parents	Form tutor and Head of Year informed by Pastoral Assistant/Office Administrator. Warning mark issued by Pastoral Assistant.
Three warning marks for lateness	After school detention – issued by Head of Year. Letter and phone call home. Heads of Year may place pupils on punctuality reports, both to school and for lessons.
Subsequent warning marks for lateness	Friday 1 1/2 hour after school detention – issued by Section Head. Phone call and letter home. Support plan put in place by Head of Year.
Subsequent warning marks for lateness	Meeting with Section Head and parents. Letter home. Subsequent concerns, meeting with Deputy Head People, Section Head, and parents.

9. The Role of the Form Tutor

Form tutors are the first point of contact with parents and have a key part to play in supporting members of their form and the Head of Year in matters of attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for a period of time will be helped by their Form tutor and Head of Year to catch up on work. If, whilst absent, it is possible for the pupil to complete work, the Head of Year will coordinate this being sent home via either the pupil's school email (Sixth Form) or Microsoft Teams.

As soon as the pupil returns, her Form tutor and pupil will meet and a plan will be drawn up to catch up on work. Specific targets will be set and a record of the meetings be kept on the pupil's file.

Teaching staff are always willing to spend extra time with a pupil to ensure that she is up to date and understands the work that she has missed.

The Form tutor will also ensure that the pupil is brought up to date with information which they may have missed during their absence.

Form tutors are also expected to support pupils who are persistently late by setting targets for improvement and encouraging them to meet these.

The Head of Year should be kept informed throughout and report appropriately to the appropriate Head of Section.

10. Sixth Form Regulations for Punctuality and Attendance

Excellent attendance in the Sixth Form remains critical for good educational outcomes and preparation for the future. It is crucial, whether applying for work, training, or university, that our students have a high level of attendance.

Students are expected to attend every registration and timetabled session published on their timetable.

Absence and registration protocols are the same as for Years 7 – 11.

The minimum expected attendance for each subject is 90% to guarantee entry to the relevant examinations. It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to keep clear and accurate records and convey concerns regarding lesson attendance to the Head of Sixth Form. The school reserves the right not to enter students who fall below this level of attendance.

Attendance: unauthorised absence from school OR from particular lessons is a serious issue and will be addressed appropriately.

The below is discretionary based on individual student circumstance.

Attendance below 97% but above 95%	Emerging cause for concern. Discussion between student and her Form Tutor to identify if there are any underlying concerns or worries indicating that extra school support needs to be put in place. If so, this will be addressed.
Attendance below 95% but above 90%	Frequent Absence A cause for concern Email / phone call home from Head of Year. A meeting with the student and her Form tutor. Should there be an underlying concern or worry, parents will be contacted, and the Form Tutor will work with the student and her parents to put a plan of support in place.

Attendance below 90%	<p>Persistent Absence</p> <p>A serious cause for concern</p> <p>Email from Head of Sixth Form to parents and student. Support plan reviewed and monitored by Head of Year. The school's DSL may liaise, in collaboration with parents, with external services or professionals such as the pupil's GP and Local Authority Early Help Services as additional support may be needed.</p>
Attendance below 85%	<p>Meeting with DSL, Head of Section, student, and parents. Support plan reviewed. DSL to refer to external agencies for advice and intervention where appropriate.</p>
Attendance below 75%	<p>Meeting with DSL, Head of Section, and involvement of external agencies via DSL. Possible request to leave the Sixth Form.</p>

Unauthorised Absences:

One absence will result in a letter home from the Head of Sixth Form.

Two or more unauthorised absences will result in the loss of a free afternoon for at least 2 weeks or 2 after school detentions if a student has no free afternoon.

Repeated unauthorised absence could be grounds for temporary or permanent exclusions.

11. Lateness: (Sixth Form)

Statistics for lateness will be available weekly sent by the Pastoral Assistant to all Form tutors, Heads of Year, Assistant Heads and the Deputy Head, People. There will be a series of responses to repeated lateness.

(a) If a pupil is late to morning registration 5 times in one half term for unauthorised reasons, the HoY will discuss punctuality. If there are no valid reasons, they will issue a before school HoY supervision and a letter will be sent home. If a pupil continues to be late then there will be an escalation in the sanctions. If any of these were unavoidable – snow, a traffic accident (normal heavy traffic is NOT a valid excuse for lateness), exceptional family circumstances. **Any authorised reasons for lateness must be notified via the Absences reporting form or will require a parental letter or phone call.**

(b) A further incident will result in a **supervised detention after school and a further letter home.**

(c) After that, parents will be asked to come in to discuss punctuality.

Should the accumulated number of lates not be clear until the end of the half term, the student will lose the relevant privileges in the next half term.

To help Sixth Form students develop independence and their organisational skills, they may leave school in the afternoon, according to conditions outlined in the Sixth Form rules and regulations, if they have study periods, but they must sign out with the Pastoral Assistant for reasons of health and safety.

12. Publication of Attendance Information

JAGS has a legal duty to promote attendance and to publish its absence figures, if required by the DfE. Parents are sent information concerning their daughter's attendance at the end of each reporting cycle.

The School is usually asked to disclose information on attendance and punctuality when writing references for pupils.

Trends in attendance are regularly monitored and shared with stakeholders.

Other relevant Policies/Guidance:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Racism Policy
- 'Children Missing Education' (Department for Education, September 2016)
- Health and Safety for Outside Trips Policy
- Child Missing from School Policy
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School
- Health and Safety Policy
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education, September 2022)
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Working together to improve school attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities' (Department for Education, 2022)
- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (Department for Education, 2023)