

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by : Safeguarding and
Welfare Committee

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Status : Statutory

Next Review : March 2020

Commitment to Attendance

The staff of Jubilee High School are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

Regular attendance is key to achieving success. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Parent Responsibility and the Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- A. to his age, ability and aptitude and
- B. to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Registers

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Registration & Lateness

The school day begins at 8.40am. Morning registration will take place at the start of the day during tutor time. The registers will remain open for 20 minutes. Any student who arrives within this period will be marked present. However if the teachers register has been done, they will be marked as present but late. Any pupil arriving after this time should sign in with the attendance officer in pupil services and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Persistent lateness before close of register by a student will be dealt with through school detentions and parental meetings with the Head of Year and/or Attendance Lead.

The afternoon registration will be taken during period 5.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the 20 minute registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Escalation Process

If a child is absent for any reason, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school on **every day** of the absence. Parents must make contact with the school before 8.40am of that day. However if the child is absent and no reason has been provided the following procedure will apply:

First Day Absence

The school will contact the parent to request reason for absence. School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised.

Second Day Absence

The school will contact the parent to request reason for absence. School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised.

Third Day Absence

The school will contact the parent to request reason for absence. School will note any reason given for absence and will categorise it as authorised or unauthorised. If no response is received the school will send a letter and the attendance lead will be informed.

Ten Days Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to Education Welfare. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Where a child is absent from school the following procedure will be followed for welcoming them back. If they've been off for one day, the tutor welcomes them back and checks they are ok. If they are off for a few days, further communication from the tutor will be made and provision made for the student catching up with work. For longer term absences a meeting with the Head of Year will take place and a more formal reintegration is implemented with a plan to catch up, some sessions may be provided where the student is given support by the Learning Centre.

Frequent Absence

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 your child is reluctant to attend, it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Education Welfare meets with school staff on a weekly basis to discuss attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s by:

1. Phone call to parent by Head of Year and issues discussed with student within school.
2. Letter sent to parents stating concerns.
3. Meeting at school with Head of Year.

If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to Education Welfare.

Persistent Absence (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 is considerably damaging a child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Parents will be notified by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

An application form for leave of absence can be downloaded from the school website. If a child does not return to school on the agreed date from an authorised absence, the school can remove that child from the school roll in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these

circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Medical evidence

The school may request medical evidence in the event of persistent absence.

Pupils moving schools

The school will only remove a child from roll when they have started at another school or an alternative provision in accordance with regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

The Education Welfare Officer

Education Welfare monitors the attendance of all children on a weekly basis. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to Education Welfare. The EWO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the EWO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

Truancy Patrol

When a student comes to the notice of a Truancy Patrol, the student's pattern of school attendance is investigated. If there are unauthorised absences in the preceding 4 months, a warning letter may be sent to

the parents. If there are further unauthorised absences during the subsequent 15 schooldays, a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent.

If there is no significant improvement in attendance in the 3 subsequent weeks, a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Effect of Poor Attendance

Attendance is clearly linked to achievement. Evidence suggests:

- If your child's attendance is 100% he/she is more likely to achieve or exceed their target minimum grade.
- If your child's attendance falls below 90% (one day absent per fortnight) he/she is likely to achieve one grade lower than their target minimum grades.
- If your child's attendance falls below 80% (one day absent per week) he/she is likely to achieve two grades lower than their target minimum grades

Roles & Responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping a register of attendance for each lesson and raise attendance concerns with their Head of Department.

Form tutors:

- Provide pastoral support to address attendance issues.

Heads of Year:

- Regularly meet with education welfare to identify and action any attendance concerns.
- Work with families to resolve attendance issues.
- Monitor the attendance of the year group
- Ensure all absences are accounted for by an explanation from parents/carers
- Monitor the attendance of the individual students in the year group
- Through individual intervention, support students whose attendance is less than good to improve
- Liaise with the parents/carers of students whose attendance falls below 90%
- Meet fortnightly with the education welfare service to discuss support and intervention for students whose attendance is a cause for concern
- Refer to MAZE those students who are unable to attend school on medical grounds

Tutors

- Take the morning register
- Set an attendance target for each child in discussion with tutees and taking account of the Year Group target
- Encourage and motivate tutees to maintain at least good attendance by the promotion of good attendance and the attendance competition and displaying the weekly attendance figures
- Through individual intervention, support students whose attendance is less than good to improve

Attendance Officer:

- Will ensure morning and afternoon registers are taken and are up to date during periods 1 and 5. Contacts parents and requests reasons for absence. Listen to messages left by parents/carers regarding attendance and amend the registers as necessary
- Collates daily attendance records and, together with the attendance lead, puts in place agreed procedures to monitor and respond to poor attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor the taking of registers and sending reminders when these have not been completed
Send out Truancy/Late Calls for those students for whom their absence/lateness is unaccounted
 - Prepare attendance information for the tutor group attendance competition and to support the work of the education welfare service
 - Prepare standard letters to the parents/carers of students who arrive late
 - Prepare letters at the behest of the assistant headteacher where leave of absence has been requested

Attendance Lead:

- Monitors and reviews the attendance policy on an annual basis.
- Monitors and reviews the attendance procedures and works with the attendance officer and Education Welfare to ensure reasons for absence are identified and interventions are put in place.
- Identifies and monitors attendance of PA students.

Headteacher:

- Promotes the attendance policy within the school and ensures that it is implemented effectively.

The Governing Body:

- Agrees appropriate absence targets on an annual basis.
- Plays an active role in ensuring targets are met.

Punctuality:

- Teachers and tutors challenge lateness to lessons or registration.
- Late Gate is staffed by SLT and HOY every day to challenge lateness to school
- Senior staff monitor the neighbouring area between 8.20 and 8.40am and encourage students into school
- Sanctions for the students who arrive late for school- HOY detention
- Use of assemblies and tutor time to promote good punctuality
- Sanctions/actions taken for individuals including parental/carer notification and discussion as appropriate and referral to the education welfare service.

Attendance:

- Potential poor attenders identified in Year 6 (before entry)
- *Computerised sessional and lesson by lesson registration*
- *A member of administrative staff dedicated to the administration of attendance*
- **School, year group and tutor group targets set and targets for individuals where necessary**
- Year breakfasts and tutor group rewards to promote good attendance
- Individual rewards for students with excellent and good attendance
- Holidays taken in term-time not authorised
- Parents/carers removing their children from school for holidays for five or more days consideration for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice

- Promotion in assemblies and tutor time.
- Support and education welfare appointments are available for parents/carers and students where attendance issues are emerging.
- Parents/carers encouraged to ring the school on the first day of absence
- Ring home system on the first day of absence
- All students remain on site at lunchtime
- Attendance Governor is part of the monitoring process; termly reports are made to the Governing Body
- Weekly monitoring of attendance figures for each year group and for the school as a whole. Attendance figures for various groups are monitored.
- Detailed analysis of attendance figures and trends carried out annually; Students encouraged to keep a record of their own attendance in their tutor time
- Study leave kept to a minimum.
- The school buys in the services of an education welfare service to work with the parents/carers of students whose attendance is below 90%