

Jersey College Preparatory School Attendance Policy

At JCP, attendance and punctuality are given a very high priority. In keeping with our core values, we are committed to developing motivated learners who make good progress, achieve high standards and have good habits for lifelong learning.

Overview

This document describes procedures and processes relating to school attendance, punctuality and welfare of all pupils. It sets out the arrangements that are in place to enable pupils to fully benefit from the educational opportunities and, in addition, supports families to fulfil their statutory obligations.

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure that all staff tasked with recording pupils' attendance are fully aware of the legal requirement placed upon them in regard to these procedures. Children's attendance, punctuality and welfare is monitored closely by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, Faculty Leaders and class teachers.

Aims

- To encourage, promote and maintain positive individual pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To implement strategies and initiatives to improve 'whole school' attendance.
- To ensure that registers are accurate and up to date.
- To regularly audit school registers to identify any pupils with attendance and/or punctuality concerns.
- To monitor and promote the welfare of every child.
- To ensure that all appropriate information and records are available to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) as part of a schools' request for Education Welfare Service (EWS) involvement.
- To ensure regular communication with parents/carers to highlight the importance of continuity of learning, particularly in relation to family holidays during term time
- To collate and utilise attendance data effectively.
- To recognise of the importance of early intervention, including first day response in contacting parents/carers.
- To ensure that children with chronic/long term illness are supported in accessing their learning needs.
- To ensure consideration is given to critical times (for e.g.) Key Stage 2-3 transition.
- To ensure a range of strategies are in place to deal with absenteeism and lateness.
- To have regular structured meetings between the schools and the EWO.
- To ensure reasonable steps are taken by the school before requesting the involvement of the EWO.
- During parent/carers evenings and other opportunities, remind parents of the school policy on attendance.
- To ensure involvement of Governors.

Response to Absences, Lateness and Welfare Concerns

Absences and Punctuality

Early intervention can have positive effects on poor attendance and punctuality therefore, when concerns begin to emerge, teachers will raise the concerns with parents/carers in the first instance. Where necessary, the Headteacher will then ask to meet with parents/ carers, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be made aware of concerns and, should the need arise, an Attendance Plan will be introduced.

Review dates should be agreed with a view to improvements being made. Where there are no significant improvements, the school have exhausted all their strategies and absence and/or punctuality continues to deteriorate, we engage with parents/carers to agree to the support of the Education Welfare Service. A Request for Involvement (RFI) form will then be completed.

At JCP, our average overall attendance is 96% (2020-21)

100%	Excellent	Excellent attendance
95% - 99%	Good to very good	Good to very good attendance
90% - 94%	Fair	Average to low attendance
85% - 89%	Low	There would be a concern about a child's attendance falling below 90% <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversations with parents/carers about improving attendance.• Discussions with Education Welfare Officer.• Possible Attendance Plan.• Monitoring in place.
Below 85%	Of concern	Children's attendance below 85% is a cause for significant concern <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education Welfare Officer Involvement.• Attendance Plan in place.• Weekly monitoring.

Attendance Panel Meetings

Where a pupil's attendance and/or punctuality attendance fails to improve, despite the involvement of both the school and the EWT, the EWO will send parents a warning letter indicating their intent to refer to attendance panel. No further improvements will result in a letter from the EWT team manager/SBEWO Manager requiring parents and the pupil (age appropriate) to attend an attendance panel meeting.

Attendance panels address persistent concerns around school attendance and punctuality. Panel meetings represent a platform for professionals to meet with parents and pupils (age appropriate) to receive and review reports from the EWT, schools and other services, and as part of this, to consider and agree suitable next steps to achieve improvements.

Parents are invited to submit their own reports/information and in conjunction with the pupil (age appropriate) are encouraged to contribute to any discussions. Should the parents fail to attend, the meeting will continue and a decision made in their absence.

The decision to progress a case to a panel meeting is made by the EWO team manager/SBEWO Manager and would typically include evidence of the following:

- persistent and long-term concerns in the area of attendance and/or punctuality
- school-led intervention
- direct involvement from the CBEWO / SBEWO as evidenced by relevant documents (e.g. attendance plans)
- appropriate involvement of other agencies, for example, evidence of Early Help
- parental non-engagement/non or disguised compliance

The panel will include: a senior manager from CYPES; the EWT team manager and a senior manager from Children's Services.

Possible outcomes of the Attendance Panel include:

- a period of review for parents and pupil to evidence significant improvements. This will sit within an attendance plan or TAC/F Plan and may include the involvement of further professionals (Early Help) if not already considered
- an enquiry to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)
- a referral to the Parish Hall with a view to prosecution
- application to the court for an education supervision order (refer to the Education (1999) Jersey Law)

After the case has been referred to the Parish Hall, it is the responsibility of the Parish Connétable to contact the parents and pupil (age appropriate) and invite them to attend a Parish Hall Enquiry. This may result in either a deferred decision to allow for a review period or the parents being charged at Parish Hall level or parents being required to attend Court under article 12 of the Education (1999) Jersey Law.

Punctuality

School starts at 8:45am and children are encouraged to be in school from 8:30am onwards. We actively discourage late arrivals due to the disruption this causes not only to the individual but also to the remainder of the class. Patterns of lateness can develop into non-school attendance if left unchallenged. We are flexible where local conditions such as weather or local transport have an adverse effect on pupils arriving on time. The school has a consistent approach to lateness so as not to differentiate between classes/form groups and siblings.

From 8:30am onwards there are teachers on duty in both the KS1 and KS2 playgrounds. Parents/carers of Reception children are encouraged to come into school and settle the children.

We have a before school provision from 8am for KS2 and Year 2 children and 8.15am for Year 1 children, who need to arrive at school earlier. This is a supervised outdoor play time.

Pupils who arrive:

- Up to 30 minutes after the registration has closed should be marked as late – **(L)**
- More than 30 minutes after the registration has closed will be marked as a **(U)**. This will be counted as an unauthorised absence.
- Pupils who arrive up to half an hour late as a result of a medical appointment can be marked as present. The school must have prior notification of such appointment and be recorded in our database.
- Pupils arriving late must sign in at the school office, recording the reason and time of arrival.

Welfare concerns

In cases where the welfare of the pupil is a concern, schools should make every effort to engage with parents with a view to the situation improving. If attendance does not improve, schools should consider an early help assessment, and the involvement of relevant professionals.

Emotionally based non-attendance (EBNA)

It is important to distinguish between truancy and emotionally based non-school attendance, the latter being considered an unmet emotional need. Schools should refer to the graduated response for EWT involvement, which incorporates EBNA. There could be a number of contributing factors to EBNA. Schools should consider using the EBNA assessment tool to establish the route of the problem and following this, the involvement and support of relevant professionals.

Looked after children (LAC)

Each school is responsible for supporting, monitoring and raising concerns in relation to attendance and/or punctuality and welfare for Looked after Children. The EWT are tasked with supporting schools by consistently raising LAC during school consultation meetings including termly PARMS. Attendance and punctuality data will be collated at the end of each academic year.

Children missing from education (CME)

When children and young people go missing from education, for whatever reason, steps should be taken by schools and the Education Directorate to identify and locate them by working collaboratively with other authorities and jurisdictions. A pathway is followed to ensure that all children and young people are identified quickly to effect a swift and effective response. Additionally, this pathway will support schools in following a consistent approach in the management and sharing of information in relation to children and young people who leave their school and /or the island with or without notification.

Attendance Procedures and Recording Attendance and Punctuality

The following procedures underpin the principles in this Policy and generate good practice in matters concerning attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Registers

Attendance registers are legal documents and particular attention should be paid to accuracy. Incomplete registers are **not acceptable**.

Registration

Staff and pupils should be aware that registration is a key part of the school day. **Attendance registers must be called twice daily**, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.

Pupils must be marked as:

- Present
- Engaged in approved educational activity off site
- Absent

Absences should be authorised by way of written or verbal communication with the parent/carer. The appropriate code should be entered into the register and a reason for absence entered into the school's electronic data base. In the event of any absences, school should make first day contact with parents/carers and make every effort to ascertain the reason for any absences/lateness, where parents/carers have not made contact.

(N) would be recorded if the reason for absence is unknown. Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the absence has been established the register should be amended. This code *should not* be left on a pupils' attendance record indefinitely: if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable time it should be replaced with Code O (unauthorised absence)

Parents/Carers Responsibilities

Parents are required by law to ensure that all children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 16) receive a full time education either by registering a child at a school or be arranging an alternative to school in line with the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) policy.

These responsibilities extend beyond ensuring regular attendance and punctuality, it requires parents to make certain that each child arrives at school on time, dressed in line with the school's dress code, with the correct equipment and prepared for learning.

Parents can support their child/ren by keeping requests for absence to a minimum. It should not be assumed that schools will agree to absence requests and unjustified absences from school should not be condoned. If a pupil is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents are responsible for notifying the school on the first day of absence and to keep the school updated on subsequent days.

Parents should work in partnership with schools in all matters concerning their child/ren's education by actively supporting school policies on attendance, punctuality, behaviour and homework.

Parents should avoid taking their child/ren out of school during term time. Such absences can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is at the discretion of the Head teacher to grant leave, only in exceptional cases.

In the area of attendance, the responsibilities of **schools and colleges** are wide ranging and they are advised to consider the following:

- encourage, promote and maintain positive individual pupil attendance and punctuality
- implement strategies and initiatives to improve 'whole school' attendance
- ensure that registers are accurate and up to date
- undertake regular audit of school registers to identify any pupils with attendance or punctuality concerns and liaise with their named EWO
- monitor and promote the welfare of every pupil
- ensure all appropriate information and records are available to the EWO as part of a schools' request for their involvement. This might include attendance plans; other evidence of relevant school-led intervention; minutes from meetings with parents and pupils and other correspondence from school to parents
- ensure all pupils open to the EWT have a pupil file to record EWO intervention
- ensure regular case work supervision is provided to the SBEWOs
- undertake termly audits of pupil files to ensure record keeping is in line with the EWT's Guidance for Maintaining a Pupil Folder
- ensure all staff access required child protection training (including opportunities for refresher training)

Leave during term time

The Education Directorate does not, at any time, support leave during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances head teachers have the discretionary power to grant leave in accordance with this policy. It starts from the premise that **every day counts** and that permission is only authorised in exceptional circumstances. Furthermore, leave is not granted as a reward for good attendance.

Each case should be considered carefully taking into account:

- the age of the pupil
- the time of year
- the nature and purpose of the trip
- family circumstances
- attendance pattern of the pupil
- previous requests

While each case is unique, the guidance aims for consistency for schools and families across the Island. To further support consistency, where siblings are concerned, primary and secondary schools should liaise with each other prior to a decision being made.

Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw their child/ren from school and must request permission in advance from the Head teacher.

Where a pupil is absent for longer than the agreed time, s/he should be marked as taking unauthorised leave. The same applies to those parents who remove their child/ren from school without permission.

Parents who wish to take their child/ren out of school for longer than **4 weeks** will have to re-apply for their school placement. It should not be considered that a pupil has the automatic right to return to their departing school. Should the departing school be full upon the pupil's return to the island, the Education Directorate will support parents to enroll their child/ren in another school.

Attendance Data

Attendance data will be collated centrally by the EWS at the end of each term. This information will be broken down into year groups, allowing the EWS to direct their services appropriately. Furthermore, all information will form part of the schools' evaluation.

This information will provide:

- The number of pupils attending schools.
- The number of authorised/unauthorised absences.
- The number of absent days broken down into year group.
- The average number of late arrivals (including after the close of registration).
- The number of authorised/unauthorised holidays.
- The number of Emotionally Based Non Attendance (EBNA) pupils.
- Pupils with a diagnosed significant illness impacting on their attendance.
- Looked After Children (LAC) Attendance Data
- Attendance Data will be collated at the end of each academic year.

For further information please refer to:

<https://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Education/P%20School%20Attendance%20Policy%2020190227%20JP.pdf>

Related Policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Child Protection Policy

Positive Relationships & Behaviour Policy

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Inclusion/SEND Policy

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