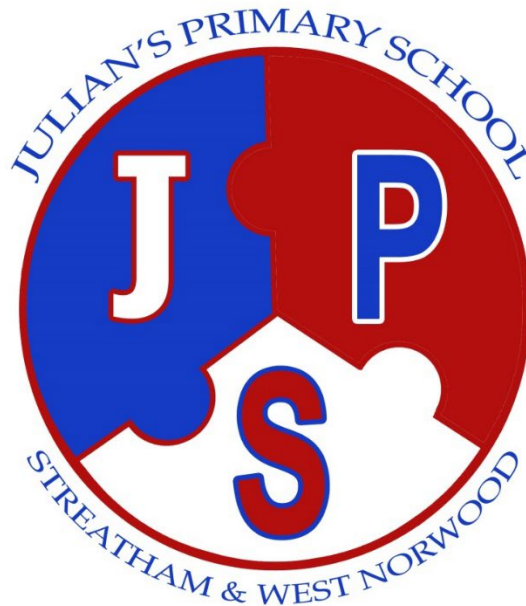


Julian's Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2023/2024



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Executive Headteacher

Approved by Governing Body

Signed by Chair:

Date:

Date of next review:

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1. Aims and objectives

Children's learning is at the heart of everything we do at Julian's Primary School. We aim to ensure that all of our children are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and we firmly believe that excellent attendance and punctuality plays a crucial part in helping children to reach their full potential and expand their future life choices.

At Julian's we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Lambeth Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every part of the school day and for every day that the school is open. We will do all we can to support parent/carers to ensure their children achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any issues that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- The parent/carer must call the school on 0208 761 1894 and leave a voicemail with their child's name, class and reason for absence before 9.30AM on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide medical evidence, or other documentary evidence, to support their child's absence, when this has been requested
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making all non-urgent medical and dental appointments outside of school hours
- Notify the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance or welfare

- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of school or home life
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss their child's attendance and welfare
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Inform the school of any change of address and/or telephone number
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance
- Promote the value of a good education and excellent school attendance within the home environment and to be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure any child in their care arrives at school appropriately prepared for the day (including extra-curricular activities) and having completed any homework they have been given
- Abide by the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy

3.2 Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Speak to their class teacher, or another member of staff, if they are experiencing any difficulties at school or at home
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late

3.3 The Governing Body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Agree school attendance targets
- Monitor the school's attendance through termly reporting at Governor's meetings.
- Annually review the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure resources are available to fully implement the policy

3.4 The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.5 The Designated Senior Leaders (Sam Linton, Streatham site and Becky Coburn, West Norwood site) are responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents/carers
- Delivering targeted interventions and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents/carers and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.

3.6 The School Education Welfare Officer (EWO, External) is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analyzing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance and the Executive Headteacher
- Working with appropriate school staff to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Executive Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.7 The Class Teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the codes as advised via our MIS system (Arbor)

3.8 School Administration/Office Staff are responsible for:

- Processing communication from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the MIS system (Arbor)
- Flagging initial concerns regarding attendance and punctuality with appropriate members of staff

3.9 All Staff are responsible for:

- Encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality through outstanding teaching and learning experiences that supports all pupils to attend and achieve their full potential
- Providing a welcoming, safe and high quality learning environment for all pupils
- Nurturing positive relationships with pupils and their parents/carers
- Monitoring each pupil's attendance and follow agreed school attendance management procedures
- Consulting with parent/carers regarding their child's attendance and welfare
- Working in partnership with parent/carers to resolve any difficulties relating to their child's attendance
- Using appropriate interventions to support pupils and parent/carers to improve attendance
- Complying with current legislation and regulations when recording the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site

- Ensuring registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Referring irregular attendance to the school's education welfare provider and/or the London Borough of Lambeth

4. Attendance Procedures

4.1 School Processes for Recording Attendance and Absence

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorized or not
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9AM on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 9AM and will be kept open until 9.30AM. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at the end of that year groups designated lunch break and will be closed upon completion.

4.2 Absence

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly however, if a child is unavoidably absent from school then parent/carers are expected to:

- Call the school on 0208 761 1894 and leave a voicemail with their child's name, class and reason for absence before 9.30AM on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- On the fourth consecutive day of absence, or when specifically requested, provide medical evidence, or other supporting documentation, that supports the level of absence. Examples of medical evidence include a dated medical appointment card, a photocopy of a signed and dated prescription, labelled medication

packaging, a note or computer printout from a GP/Hospital confirming your child has been seen, together with the reason

- Upon the child's return to school, provide a written note confirming the reason for the absence
- Provide an appointment letter or card to support any hospital or clinic appointment that takes place during school hours

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence may be recorded as unauthorized and the matter may be referred to the EWO.

4.3 Late Arrival to School

Any pupil arriving after the register has been taken will receive a late mark (L code - late before the close of register). Any pupil arriving on or after the register has closed will be marked as absent for the entire morning session (U code - late after the close of register). This is classed as an "unauthorised absence".

Parents/carers will be contacted regarding patterns of late arrival. Repeated late arrival after the close of registration may result in a referral being made to the London Borough of Lambeth for consideration of prosecution or for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

4.4 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The Executive Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Executive Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorized to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Family holidays are not considered to be "exceptional circumstances" and will not be authorised.

Any request should be submitted by filling out a special leave request form as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. This form can be requested from the school office.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorized only when a traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

4.5 Procedures Following Unexplained Absence

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, the school will respond as follows:

- The first day calling procedure will be activated for all pupils who are not in school by the close of the register
- If there is no response following the first day calling procedure, the school will contact the pupil's named emergency contacts
- A home visit may be carried out where school have not been able to contact the pupil's parent/carer or named emergency contacts
- If any pupil leaves the school site without permission, school will contact parent/carer and take appropriate action to ensure the pupil's safety and welfare

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Carry out a safeguarding home visit, or contact the police and/or social services where there are concerns for the immediate safety and welfare of the pupil
- Write to the parent/carer to highlight attendance or punctuality concerns
- Require parent/carer to provide medical evidence, or other documentation, to support the level of absence
- Invite parent/carer to a meeting to discuss how the school can support improved attendance
- Refer to an external agency to offer support, guidance and advice
- Refer parent/carer to the school's education welfare service provider for formal intervention to improve attendance
- Refer to the London Borough of Lambeth requesting a penalty notice or to consider prosecution

4.6 Support Systems

We monitor the attendance of all of our pupils on a weekly basis and where concerns are identified, we will work with the family to explore the reasons for the absences and to try and resolve any difficulties.

We recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to achieve good attendance. We also recognise that irregular attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life and this may be related to problems at home or in school. Our aim is to work in partnership with families by offering support that is child focused and planned in discussion and agreement with parent/carer.

Parents/carers are encouraged to inform the school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of

domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional support that may be needed in school. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance, which may include:

- Discussions with parents/carers and pupils
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Mentor support
- Reintegration support packages
- School nurse intervention
- Reward and recognition schemes
- Parent/carer contracts
- Engaging the support of other agencies
- Referral to the London Borough of Lambeth for legal intervention

4.7 Threshold for Formal Intervention

When a pupil's attendance falls below 96%, the school will write to the parent/carer notifying them that there is a concern their child is missing a significant part of learning. The parent/carer will be asked to contact the school if they are aware of any issues that may be impacting on their child's ability to attend school regularly.

Should attendance remain a concern, a further letter will be sent notifying the parent/carer that medical evidence will be required in order that any future absences from illness are authorised. Examples of when the school may require a parent/carer to provide medical evidence are as follows:

- Attendance was below 90% at the end of the previous academic year (Persistent Absentee)
- Attendance is currently below 90% (Persistent Absentee)
- Three separate periods of illness in a six week period
- Absence have occurred immediately before or after a school holiday.
- A pattern of absence has been identified on a specific day
- On the fourth consecutive day of absence

If a parent/carer fails or refuses to work with the school and attendance remains a concern, a referral will be made to the school's education welfare service provider, who will offer further support and guidance but may also initiate a referral to the London Borough of Lambeth for consideration of legal sanctions, which may be in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996, parent/carers found guilty in a Magistrates Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school will receive a criminal record and a fine of up to £1000 for an offence under a Section 444 (1) or a fine of up to £2500 or a maximum of 3 months' imprisonment for an offence under Section 444 (1a).

5. Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analyzing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents/carers of their child's attendance levels if their child's attendance is below 95%.
- Monitor attendance and absence data as appropriate across the school at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and report where appropriate.

- Analyze attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports to the Senior Leadership Team and to the SENCo where necessary to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

6. Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school and/or the EWO considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Assist in providing access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Formalize support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Lambeth Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

7. Deletions from the Register

A pupil can lawfully be removed from the school's roll when it has been established that one of the specified criteria set out under Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, has been met.

8. Moving School

When parent/carer decide to send their child to a different school, it is important they inform Julian's Primary School as soon as possible. The pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will leave Julian's Primary School
- The name and address of the pupil's new school
- The pupil's new home address (if applicable)

An in-year transfer form can be obtained from the London Borough of Lambeth and should be completed by the parent/carers and the Executive Headteacher/Head of School.

9. Children Missing from Education

All professionals working with children have a responsibility to ensure a child's wellbeing and to remain vigilant to their safety and welfare both inside and outside of school. When a pupil is absent from school for 10 consecutive days and their whereabouts is unknown, Julian's will follow the London Borough of Lambeth's protocol for children missing from education (CME procedures). This will involve carrying out joint enquiries with the London Borough of Lambeth to establish the current whereabouts of the child.

10. Elective Home Education

If a parent/carers wishes to Electively Home Educate (EHE) their child, the school will deregister the child at the point written notification is received from the parent/carers expressing their intention to do so and upon the school having notified the London Borough of Lambeth.

11. Legal Sanctions

The school can request Lambeth Council to issue a fine to parents/carers for the unauthorized absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £60 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £120 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – **note there is no right of appeal in court by parents/carers against a fixed penalty notice.**

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil

Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e lives with and looks after the child