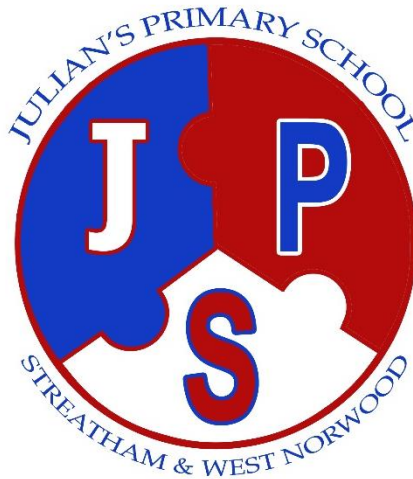


JULIAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



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1. Introduction/Aim

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.

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.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. We will work in partnership with other agencies and professionals to ensure our pupils are safe and that they are participating in education.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is supported by our policies on Child Protection and Safeguarding, Behaviour and Anti-bullying and our Accessibility Plan.

1. Legislation

2.1 Section 7 of the Education Act 1996

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him or her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday and ceases to be so on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

2.2 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Present at approved educational activity
- Absent, or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

3. Roles and Responsibilities

At Julian's Primary School we believe that improving school attendance is a responsibility shared by the governors, school staff, parent/carers, pupils and the wider school community.

3.1 The Governors

The Governors will:

- Annually review the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Ensure relevant legislation is complied with
- Agree school attendance targets
- Monitor the school's attendance through termly reporting at Governor's meetings.

3.2 Our staff

Our staff will:

- Encourage excellent attendance and punctuality through outstanding teaching and learning experiences that supports all pupils to attend and achieve their full potential
- Provide a welcoming, safe and high quality learning environment for all pupils
- Nurture positive relationships with pupils and their parent/carer/carers/carers
- Monitor each pupil's attendance and follow agreed school attendance management procedures
- Consult with parent/carers regarding their child's attendance and welfare
- Work in partnership with parent/carers to resolve any difficulties relating to their child's attendance
- Use appropriate interventions to support pupils and parent/carers to improve attendance
- Comply with current legislation and regulations when recording the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Refer irregular attendance to the school's education welfare provider and/or the London Borough of Lambeth

3.3 Parent/carers

The school expects parent/carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- 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
- Contact the school on their child's first day of absence, and on each subsequent day, to notify the reason for the absence and the expected date of their child's return to school
- 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
- Inform the school of any change of address and/or telephone number
- Abide by the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy

3.4 Pupils

The school expect pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- 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

4. Attendance Procedures

4.1 Expected absence procedure for parent/carers:

Parent/carer/carers/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:

- Telephone the school office on 0208 761 1894 before 9am on the first day of absence, and on each subsequent day, to report the reason for the absence and the expected date of their return to school
- 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

If a pupil is absent and there has been no contact from the parent/carer, the school's Attendance Protocol will be instigated

4.2 Attendance Protocol

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

4.3 Late Arrival in School

The morning register at Julian's Primary School opens at 8.55am and closes at 9.25am. Afternoon registration takes place at 1.15pm and the register closes at 1.25pm.

We expect all pupils to arrive in school on time every day that the school is open. The school day begins promptly and we advise parent/carers to ensure their child is on the school site by 8.55am. Any pupil arriving after this time is required to report to the reception with their parent/carer, who will be expected to enter the reason for their child's late arrival on inventory.

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".

Parent/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.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 per parent/carer/carer per child if paid within the first 21 days of issue, which rises to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The London Borough of Lambeth will consider taking legal action if a Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days of the date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record for each parent/carer/carer.

4.4 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.

Parent/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 parent/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 school's education welfare provider
- Referral to the London Borough of Lambeth for legal intervention

4.5 Threshold for formal intervention

When a pupil's attendance falls below 96%, the school will write to the parent/carer/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/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).

4.6 Attendance Awards

The school operates a number of awards and incentives for excellent attendance. Each term, certificates are presented to children who have achieved 100% attendance. We also recognise the two classes within the school with the best overall attendance.

5. Leave of Absence

5.1 Legislation

Amendments made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into effect in September 2013 and prohibit a Head Teacher from granting any leave of absence unless in “exceptional circumstances”. This includes holiday taken during term time.

Any leave of absence granted due to “exceptional circumstances” is done so entirely at the Head Teacher’s discretion and she will determine the number of days your child can be absent. The regulations do not allow for retrospective approval to be given and therefore a written application must be made to the Head Teacher in advance of the leave being taken.

Should a leave of absence be taken without obtaining the permission of the Head Teacher, or your child is kept away for longer than was approved, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the matter may be referred to the London Borough of Lambeth for consideration of prosecution or a Penalty Notice may be issued.

5.2 Requesting a leave of absence:

Parent/carer who need to request an absence for their child during term time should complete the form entitled, Special leave request. This must, wherever possible, be submitted to the Head of School at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date. Each request will be considered separately and any decision to grant a leave of absence is done so entirely at the discretion of the Head of School in consultation with the Executive Head teacher.

The dates of the school holidays are published a year in advance and can be obtained from the school office or via the school’s website. Family holidays are not considered to be “exceptional circumstances” and will not be authorised.

6. 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.

6.1 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/carer and the Executive Head Teacher/Head of School.

6.2 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 Primary School 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.

6.3 Elective Home Education

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

7. Legal Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- School Attendance, Department for Education (July 2019)
- School Attendance Parent/carer Responsibility Measures: Statutory Guidance, Department for Education (January 2017)
- London Borough of Lambeth’s “Children Missing Education” procedure
- London Borough of Lambeth’s Penalty Notice Code of Conduct
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education (September 2018)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Children Act 2004
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Section 444 (1) and Section 444 (1A) Education Act 1996
- Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

Annex A

8. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

8.1 Regular Attendance:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

8.2 Absence:

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

8.3 Authorised Absence:

The school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Examples of authorised absence:

- An absence due to illness or significant injury
- Urgent medical or dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances or unavoidable cause
- Formal exclusion from school

8.4 Unauthorised Absence:

The school has not been provided with an explanation for the pupil's absence or is not satisfied with the reasons given. Examples of unauthorised absence:

- Absences that have not been properly explained
- Parent/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy, or an unwillingness to attend school
- Shopping, birthdays or looking after other children
- Holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Illness where medical evidence has been requested but not provided
- Arrival at school after the register has closed

8.5 Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil is classed as a "persistent absentee" when their attendance falls to 90% or below for any reason. Over the course of an academic year this equates to 38 missed sessions (19 school days)

8.6 Parent/Carer:

- Any natural parent/carer, whether married or not
- Any parent/carer who, although not a natural parent/carer/carer, has parent/carer responsibility for a child or young person as defined by the Children Act 1989

- Any person who, although not a natural parent/carer/carer, has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Date of Last Policy Review: December 2019

Date of Next Policy Review: December 2020

Owner of Policy: Alison Moller

Additional Staff: Sam Linton/Becky Coburn

Signature

Executive Head Teacher

Date: 13th December 2019



Signature

Chair of Governors

Date: