



BJS Federation of Schools

Attendance Policy

Policy Adopted: Spring 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Parker".

Signed: _____

Ms A. Parker Executive Headteacher

Statement of Intent

- The BJS Federation of Schools is committed to providing a full and beneficial educational experience to all its pupils, if this commitment is to succeed good pupil attendance is imperative.
The Federation will do all it can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils.
- Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed speedily.
- Parents have a vital role to play in ensuring that pupils attend School regularly and on time.
- Individual parents will be contacted immediately if concerns arise over their child's attendance or punctuality with a view to resolving any problems that may have arisen.
- The Federation will seek advice from the Education Welfare Service should queries arise around pupil attendance.

Rights and Responsibilities

- The Federation requires pupils to attend school regularly, on time and properly equipped and ready to learn.
- The Federation requires good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- The Federation staff will promote matters of attendance and punctuality.
- The Federation staff will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- The Federation will work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve issues, which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- The Federation will include in reports a registration certificate on pupil's attendance at least annually.
- Parents must ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Pupils will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school.
- Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on the morning of every day of any absence.
- Parents will be required to present the school with **evidence** after the third day of a child's absence due to sickness.
- If attendance problems do develop, the school requires parents to work actively with school staff to solve them.
- Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record.
- Parents do not have a right to take children on holiday in term time (see Leave of Absence Policy).
- If a pupils attendance falls below 90% without clear reasons, parents will be required to attend a formal meeting with the Headteacher; all meetings will be documented and minuted.
- The school will refer a pupil to the Education Welfare Service when attendance remains a concern following school intervention. The Education Welfare Service will work with schools and families to address attendance issues. However, if attendance fails to improve, legal action may be taken against parent/carers and could include a Penalty Notice, Education Supervision Order or Prosecution.
- If a pupil is absent for 10 sessions (5 days) and the parents have failed to notify the school and the school has been unable to make contact with the parents an notice will be sent to the Education Welfare Service

Registration

Type of Registration and general register maintenance

At the BJS Federation of Schools a manual registration system is used.

Emergency:

Start and Close of Registration

The Federation will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Registration begins at 9.00am each morning, across all schools and 1.00pm in the afternoon for Infants, KS1 and LKS2 and 1.45pm for UKS2.

If a pupil arrives after the commencement of the registration period, they will report to reception to be entered into the late record book.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. At the BJS Federation satisfactory attendance is 95%.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (/).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The Legal Status of Registers

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils' attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised.

A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a pupil.

Registers must be kept for a minimum of 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

Staff responsible for processes

- The Attendance and Punctuality Leader is responsible for attendance issues and will check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns.
- The administrative team are responsible for ensuring that registers are kept safely and are available for inspection to relevant professionals.
- The administrative team are responsible for logging additional attendance information onto the computerised system.
- The class teacher is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the AM session and once for the PM session.

The BJS Federation of Schools will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Procedures for following up absence /lateness

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school in the morning of every day of the child's absence. If this contact is not made then the school will contact the parent/carer by telephone. If this does not elicit an explanation of the absence and the absence continues, a letter will be sent.

If this letter does not elicit an explanation for the absence a second letter will be sent to the parent/carer, the school's Education Welfare Officer will be informed and /carer will be invited into the school for a meeting by the Headteacher.

This meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance. Should there be no improvement in attendance following a panel meeting or should there be non-attendance of a panel meeting, the next step will be to initiate court proceedings or implement a fixed penalty notice.

If the pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks, in exceptional circumstances there will be provision to allow the pupil to ease back into the school system. In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence then an individual reintegration programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Absence for the following reasons could be authorised:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances of bereavement
- If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the Headteacher for reasons given above
- Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond
- Statutory walking distance

After 3 days of sickness absence the parent/carer will be required to provide evidence. The following are examples of acceptable written evidence for sickness absence:

- Appointment cards/letters
- Medical certificate
- Letter from GP
- Prescription certificate

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school or the Education Welfare Officer may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

Holidays taken during term time are strongly discouraged due to the impact on a child's education. Therefore, holidays requests during term time will be refused. The headteacher will take into account a child's percentage of attendance before issuing a fixed penalty notice. Should attendance be below satisfactory (95%), then the headteacher has the right to unauthorise the holiday with the possibility of a fixed penalty notice being implemented. The parents will receive a letter from the headteacher to confirm to what extent a holiday has been unauthorised. It will also state the child's attendance figure used to inform this decision.

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

In the belief that pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is exciting, relevant and meets their needs the curriculum will be regularly reviewed.

Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices. Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the home school agreement, school prospectus, parent consultation meetings, newsletters and the display of relevant policies on the school website.

Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and pupil reports will be used.

Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

Pupils with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and will be set targets for improvement.

Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school (please refer to anti-bullying policy, behaviour policy and equal opportunities policy).

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

- Half Termly celebrations of children who have had a 100% attendance and punctuality throughout the half term through certificates and prizes.
- Improved attendance celebrated for individual pupils.
- The class with the best attendance is congratulated weekly in assembly
- A display in the hall shows the weekly attendance of each class
- Specific assemblies designed to promote good attendance held each term
- End of academic year pupils presented with a reward for achieving 100% attendance

Target Setting/Monitoring & Evaluation Mechanisms

- Targets set annually for attendance – these are regularly monitored with reports sent to Head teacher half-termly.
- A late letter sent to parents after three lates within two weeks – if no improvement made parents are requested to attend a meeting with the head teacher and a school governor with responsibility for attendance

Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy annually and update accordingly to include changes in the law and guidance on good practice. The policy will be promoted throughout the school community and shared with outside agencies and partners as required.

Our aim is for every child at the BJS Federation of Schools is to have outstanding attendance in order to benefit from an outstanding education.