

Attendance Policy



Last Review : June 2026
Next Review: By the end of the Autumn Term, 2027
Committee: Inclusion

This policy should be read alongside the government's statutory guidance set out in 'Working together to improve school attendance, 2024.'

1. Introduction

- Attendance at school is important for a successful school career. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lateness can all undermine achievement and lead to long-term disadvantage to young people. Students who do not attend regularly may be placed at considerable risk.
- It is recognised that students may have difficulties in attending regularly for a variety of complex reasons, e.g. medical, social and emotional factors for the student, and educational factors operating within school. Nevertheless, it is a parental responsibility to ensure that a child attends school, and they need to cooperate with the School and Local Authority in order to maximise attendance.
- The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made when necessary so that students with disabilities, long-term medical conditions and protected characteristics are not unfairly treated.

2. Action by the School

- Staff at JCoSS will provide a positive pro-active ethos which places high value on attendance and punctuality. All school staff have a responsibility to personally model good practice in this area, and to keep accurate records of students' attendance, mindful that they may be used as legal evidence in court in the event of a prosecution.
- JCoSS is legally obliged to accurately record students' attendance in the morning and afternoon. Below the Sixth Form, students are:
 - *Present* in the morning if they are registered by 8.30.
 - *Authorised Late* if they arrive at school after 8.30 and before 9.00 (this is marked by Code L).
 - *Unauthorised Late* if they arrive after 9.00 (this is marked by code U, and counts as an unauthorised absence for the half day).
 - *Present* in the afternoon if they are registered by the beginning of registration
 - *Authorised Late* in the afternoon if they arrive after the beginning of registration

Different codes apply where the lateness is due to delays on school coaches.

For arrangements in the Sixth Form, please see below.

- Punctuality: Students (including Sixth Form) arriving after morning registration has started (8.30) will be greeted by members of the Pastoral Team in the Heart Space and, unless a reasonable explanation is given, will be issued with a lunchtime detention on the same day.
- 1st day contact in the event of absence without reason will take place using email and/or telephone. This will be recorded by the Student Services and shared with the relevant school staff.
- Subject teachers and members of the Pastoral Team will refer concerns about a student's attendance to Student Services in the first instance. Absence patterns will be reviewed weekly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), and actions agreed. These may include letters of concern, meetings with relevant school staff and/or EWO, "Fast-track" referrals, fixed penalty notices and, if necessary, court action. The school expects students to be punctual. Punctuality to school will be reviewed weekly by

Heads of Year and by the EWO and actions agreed. These may include the issuing of a fixed penalty notice where a student has been late to school on 6 or more occasions during one school term.

- Students with low attendance may be refused permission to participate in school trips where these are during the school day
- If a student is absent from school for more than 10 days following an authorised holiday, they may be removed from the school roll providing the conditions below have been met:
 - I. The pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted
 - II. There are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or any unavoidable cause
 - III. Both the school and the Local Authority have made reasonable enquiries and failed to ascertain the child's whereabouts.
- The School may remove missing children from roll providing **all three** of the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - i At no time was the absence during that period authorised by the School
 - ii. There are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or any unavoidable cause
 - iii. Both the School and the Local Authority have made reasonable enquiries and failed to ascertain the child's whereabouts.

During the first ten days of absence, the School will make reasonable attempts to locate the child and facilitate their safe return to school. Enquiries will include writing to the parents, attempting to make telephone contact with parents, appropriate friends and relatives, speaking to other children and parents and home visits

- All absence immediately adjoining school holidays, including closures for Jewish festivals, will be unauthorised unless there is medical evidence confirming that the student was unfit to come to school (and may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority).

Requests for Authorised Absence

- The school will only authorise absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. Parents wishing to request such absence must apply to the Headteacher in good time.
- Decisions will take into account:
 - the circumstances of the request and the activity for which absence is sought (as set out in the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance', paragraph 37)
 - the absence history of the student and their age and stage within school
 - the amount of notice given
- The decision will be communicated by letter signed by the Headteacher and will indicate whether the absence is authorised, unauthorised or a mixture.

Unauthorised Absence

- Where absence is unauthorised and persistent, the school will write to the parent(s) with a 'notice to improve'.
- If unauthorised absence persists, the school will refer the case to the EWO and a fixed penalty notice of £80 may be issued (rising to £160 for a second unauthorised absence).
- The threshold for 'persistent absence' is 10 'sessions' (half days) in a 10 week rolling period. A 10 week rolling period might span two terms or academic years. However, Barnet Local Authority can use

discretion to issue fines *before* this threshold is met, for example when absences are due to multiple term-time holidays or 'special events' that have not been authorised by the school.

- A penalty is applied to each parent for each child for the first two instances of unauthorised absence within any three year rolling period
- The school will authorise, at its discretion, 1 day (or 2 half-days) of absence for a student's Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrations. Absence beyond this will be unauthorised, and the student's attendance record will be taken into account before any absence is authorised.

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Long-term illness

Schools must provide their Local Authority with the name and address of sick pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days.

3. Action by Students

Students are responsible for punctuality and regular attendance.

- Students should attend all of their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.
- Students who arrive after 8.30 must report to the member(s) of the Pastoral Team who is on duty in the Heart Space. After 9am, they must sign in at Student Services.
- Students who experience difficulties which may prevent them from attending school regularly should speak initially to their form tutor. They will then be offered prompt and sympathetic support.

4. Action by Parents

Parents are responsible for making sure that their child attends school on a regular basis.

- Parents should notify the school whenever a student cannot attend school due to sickness or an unavoidable cause. This may be done by telephone, email (from an address held on record by the school) or in writing.
- If an absence is unexplained, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, it will be recorded as unauthorised. This decision rests with the Headteacher.
- Parents should avoid, if possible, making routine medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.
- Any requests for exceptional absence should be addressed to the school with as much notice as possible.
- Parents should inform the School of any significant change or influence in their child's life which may have an impact on attendance or learning.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Student attendance is the responsibility of the Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral. It will be monitored and addressed by Student Services and Heads of Year, and will form part of the review of each Year Group by the Senior Leadership Team.
- The implementation of this policy, together with official Attendance Statistics, will be reviewed at least annually by the Governing Body.

Sixth Form Attendance

Context:

- Students at Key Stage 5 typically have 27 taught lessons per fortnight for examined courses in Year 12, and 27 in Year 13. In addition to this, students typically have 7 further timetabled lessons per fortnight including supervised study periods, Kvutzah and Jewish Education, all of which are compulsory, and optional PE.
- Students therefore have a number of 'free' periods throughout the week, and this policy is designed to address this, acknowledging also that many students travel long distances each day to attend school.

Attendance policy for Sixth Form students:

- Sixth Form students are expected to attend school every day, on time for morning registration, regardless of the number of lessons that they may have that day. Once students have shown that they have developed good attendance and study habits they may be given permission to leave school after their last timetabled lesson, or supervised activity of the day, and are required to 'sign out' with the Sixth Form administrator. In this case, they would not have to wait until afternoon registration.
- In rare cases a student may have no timetabled lessons, Kvutzah or supervised study activities on a particular day; if so, they are not required to attend school on this day.
- Sixth Form students are allowed to leave the school site between lessons and return in time for their next scheduled supervised activity if they so choose. The Sixth Form Team reserve the right to remove this privilege at any time.

Recording and Reporting Attendance in the Sixth Form:

- Sixth Form students who leave school in the circumstances above will be officially recorded on the register with the official code 'X', as per DFE requirements (October 2014). This code recognises that the student is not required to attend.
- Attendance is recorded on the basis of sessions (i.e. timetabled lessons/activities) attended out of the total number of sessions that the student was expected to attend. (Attendance in other years is recorded on the basis of half-days attended out of a maximum possible).

University visits and extended Summer school placements

- Students in the Sixth Form are entitled to a maximum of 3 authorised University or Higher Education visits during their time in the Sixth Form. If a student wishes to attend a University open day, they must collect the appropriate form from the Sixth Form administrator, have it signed by all of their subject teachers for that particular day and return it to Assistant Headteacher KS5 before permission to attend is considered.
- Attendance of extended Summer school programmes of 3-5 days run by universities during term time will be considered on a case-by case basis by the Assistant Headteacher KS5.
- In all cases, permission will only be considered where there are no concerns with attendance, punctuality or academic progress.

Sixth form students causing concern in terms of attendance and punctuality:

- Attendance and Punctuality are taken very seriously in the Sixth Form. Attendance to school and punctuality are directly correlated to academic progress. Sixth Form attendance and punctuality will be reviewed every two weeks by the Heads of Year and Deputy Headteacher for KS5 & Attendance.
- Where there is cause for concern, e.g. where attendance or punctuality falls below the school target of 95%, a student may be placed upon Attendance/Punctuality report to the relevant Head of Year. Sanctions may be applied and/or pastoral support mechanisms may be put in place.

- Such students may, at the discretion of the Assistant Headteacher KS5, be required to attend school for the length of the entire school day, until such time as their academic progress, attendance or punctuality are no longer considered a concern.
- Ultimately, unsatisfactory attendance and/or punctuality may result in the student being withdrawn from their public examinations and may put into jeopardy their place in the Sixth Form at JCoSS.