



Have faith...believe you can!

St John the Baptist School

Attendance Policy

Status & Review Cycle: Annual Review

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Approved by: Lee Evans

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1. Aims

“The mission of SJB is to be a Catholic School where every individual is highly valued and where care and concern for others is central to our work. All our students are expected to achieve their full potential and leave us ready to make a positive contribution to society.”

To be a Christian means to live our life in Christ and live by Gospel values. To be a Christian means to love and serve others and to show understanding, compassion, and kindness towards others. It also means acting for the greater good.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- › Promoting good attendance
- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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 \(Student Registration\) \(England\) 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 The governing board

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The headteacher

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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

- › Leading attendance across the school.
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- › Having an oversight of data analysis.
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lee Evans and can be contacted via email at L.Evans@sjb.surrey.sch.uk

3.4 The Head of Key Stage

- › To review attendance regularly.
- › To implement attendance strategies focussed towards improving individual student attendance in their key stage.
- › To monitor persistent absence levels.
- › To support the Pastoral Support Manager and HOY with attendance issues.
- › To ensure appropriate action is taken to achieve outstanding attendance.
- › To inform the key stage link governor of attendance figures across the key stage and whole school on a termly basis.

3.5 The Pastoral Support Manager

- › To analyse whole school attendance regularly.
- › To ensure all registers are accurate and up-to-date at all times.
- › To implement attendance strategies focussed towards improving individual student attendance.

- › To liaise regularly with the member of SLT responsible for Attendance and Punctuality, to discuss attendance issues.
- › Issue attendance concern letters to parents when thresholds have been reached.
- › To meet with parents where attendance concerns are evident.
- › Liaising with the HOY regarding attendance for each year group.
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- › To liaise with the Head of Inclusion regarding the attendance of students on alternative provision and ensure register coding is accurate.
- › To liaise with external agencies including referrals to the EWO, SCC Inclusion Services.
- › To provide Heads of Year and Heads of Key Stage, with attendance reports, including Persistent Absence lists and students with attendance concerns.
- › The Pastoral Support Manager is Sally Powell and she can be contacted via email at S.Powell@sjb.surrey.sch.uk

3.6 The Head of Year

- › To regularly review the attendance of their year group.
- › To implement attendance strategies focussed towards improving individual student attendance in their year group.
- › To review Persistent absence and act as appropriate to improve attendance.
- › To meet regularly with the Pastoral Support Manager to discuss action with regards to students whose attendance is of a concern.
- › To meet with parents where student attendance is of concern.
- › To have an overview and work alongside SJB's Head of Inclusion for students who are on long term absence.

3.7 The Head of Inclusion

- › To liaise with HOY and Pastoral Support Manager regarding the attendance of students in alternative provision.
- › To update registers on Arbor daily for the statutory AM/PM records for students on alternative provision using the correct register codes.
- › To review attendance of students in alternative provision on a weekly basis.

3.8 Class teachers

- › To record attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to registers on Arbor.
- › Registers will be taken at the beginning of every lesson. PM statutory registers will be taken at the start of Period 6, 1.45pm.
- › To update the register if a student arrives late to the lesson or leaves for a scheduled appointment.
- › To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.
- › To ensure that any missed work is caught up.

3.9 Form Tutors

- › To mark the register during AM registration daily at 8.50am using the correct codes.
- › To update the register if a student arrives late to the lesson or leaves for an appointment.

- › To inform the office of any absences they have been made aware of.
- › To implement attendance strategies focussed towards improving individual student attendance in their tutor group.
- › To discuss attendance issues/concerns with the student.
- › To welcome back students who have been off sick.
- › To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.
- › To ensure that missed work is caught up.

3.10 School office staff

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor.
- › Update daily registers with absence information communicated by parents via Arbor
- › Record planned absences onto Arbor which have been agreed to or for where there is a planned medical or dental appointment.
- › Ensure registers are updated for all students who sign in or out during the school day
- › Transfer calls from parents to the head of year/pastoral support manager when required in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.11 The 6th form manager

- › Student absence that has not been reported – 6th form manager to chase for a valid reason and to assign detention on Arbor. When assigning detention, this should be set as 'Sixth Form – Missed Event' and a comment should be added to the notes for what this has been assigned for.
- › Take calls from parents about Sixth Form absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor.
- › If student fails to reply or reason requires further discussion – 6th form manager to email HoY, cc Head of Sixth Form and appropriate actions to be taken.
- › 6th form manager to check that all students who should be in a Thursday detention are assigned on Arbor on Wednesday afternoon.
- › 6th form manager to monitor student overall attendance and let HoY and Head of Sixth Form know when a student's individual attendance is of concern
- › To send attendance concern letters when required.
- › To initiate a review process with the HOY & Head of Sixth Form when attendance has not improved after concern letters have been issued.
- › To provide HOY & Head of Sixth form with overall attendance reports to include attendance data for each student and an overview for each year and the whole Sixth Form.

3.12 Parents/carers

- › Make sure their child attends school every day on time (students must be in tutor time from 8.50am)
- › Contact SJB to report their child's absence before 8.00am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence) and advise when they are expected to return. This can be done through Arbor.
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.13 Students

- › Attend school every day on time.
- › Attend every timetabled session on time.

- In 6th form, contact the 6th form manager to report their absence before 8.00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

SJB will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

SJB will take the statutory attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (tutor time) and during the second session (Period 6). It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

SJB will keep every entry on the attendance register until the student reaches the age of 25.

Students must arrive in school and be in their tutor rooms by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am. The register for the second statutory session will be taken at 1.45pm.

Lesson Start Times:

Period 1: 9.15am

Period 2: 10.05am

Period 3: 11.15am

Period 4: 12.05pm

Period 5: 12.55pm (Main school lunch) some 6th form lessons in place.

Period 6: 1.45pm (Monday 1.35pm)

Period 7: 2.35pm (Monday 2.15pm)

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.00am or as soon as practically possible by contacting the school office.

This can be done through Arbor.

We will mark absence due to illness as per appendix 1 unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness t

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student'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 will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

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

For medical or dental appointments please contact the school office with details of the appointment, where possible always please return the student to school after the appointment has passed.

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

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student in Year 7-11 who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- › Students who arrive late to school will receive a same day break time detention with a member of the SLT as per the behaviour policy.
- › Students who arrive late to a lesson will receive a negative comment, which will be recorded on Arbor for parents to view as per the behaviour policy.
- › Lesson truancy: Students who truant lessons will receive a Head of Year detention, in this case parents will be contacted by their HOY.

A student in 6th for who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- › Being on time to form is compulsory – any student who is late twice in a week will get 30 mins after school on a Thursday in line with the behaviour points below (if a student arrives so late that it is deemed they have missed most of the form time, this can be counted as missed form time and the 6th form manager should be notified by the tutor to assign the detention) – names to be provided by the office from the lates book each day by SLT.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- › Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school will record this as an unauthorised absence, the HOY/Pastoral Support Manager/DSL will be notified, and they will take appropriate actions.
- › Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- › Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- 20+ consecutive days of unauthorised absence may result in a student being removed from roll at SJB

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

SJB will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance in each round of monitoring which is sent throughout the academic year. Year to date attendance is also available through the parent portal on Arbor. Where attendance becomes a concern, reporting of your child's attendance will be done so more frequently by the HOY/Pastoral Support Manager.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Requests for holidays during term time will not be sanctioned/authorised.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Monitoring attendance and strategies for promoting attendance

To promote outstanding attendance across the school, students will be divided into 5 categories dependent upon their attendance. The pastoral team will always analyse attendance and implement support within the context of the individual student and attendance will be monitored on a student-by-student basis. Student attendance will be regularly reviewed and movement between each of the 5 categories will take place on a half termly basis or more frequently where there are significant attendance concerns.

SJB reserve the right to take appropriate action outside of the below framework at any time, where flexibility to overcome or meet the student's individual needs are required.

Student-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 share this with the governing board.

6.1 Year 7-11

6.1.1 Students with attendance of 97%+ (Green)

Students whose attendance falls into this category will:

- Be recognised and rewarded in a variety of formal and informal ways by HOY & form tutors.
- 100% club – Prize draw in year assemblies every fortnight for those with 100% attendance over the previous 2 weeks
- Celebration Assemblies will take place every half term, celebrations of outstanding attendance will form an integral part of these assemblies.
- 100% attendance certificates will be issued every term and house points awarded for those with 100% attendance.
- Praise letters and postcards will be issued by HOYs on a half termly basis for those who have outstanding attendance.
- Whole school awards evening will also recognise achievements of outstanding attendance at the end of each academic year.
- Students with 100% attendance from the previous academic year will be issued with a 100% attendance badge and be able to skip the queue at break and lunch during the first term of the year.

6.1.2 Students with attendance of 95 – 96.9% (Blue)

Students whose attendance falls into this category will:

- Be monitored by tutor over several weeks, ensuring that regular conversations are taking place with the students highlighting the importance of outstanding attendance.
- Student attendance will be reviewed for a move to the Yellow or Green group at the end of the half term by HOY & PSM

6.1.3 Students with attendance of 93 – 94.9% (Yellow)

Students whose attendance falls into this category will:

- Meet with their tutor during tutor time to discuss any patterns of absence.
- Tutors may then make contact home with the parent/carer via email/phone call.
- The HOY will regularly liaise with Tutor, & PSM to monitor attendance with regular "check-ins".

- Positive strategies used to support the student including the tutor to identify any barriers to attending school or patterns in absence and liaise with the HOY to identify any support measures which may be required to improve attendance.
- Tutors and HOY to liaise with SENCO where this is appropriate and SEND have been identified.
- Student attendance will be reviewed for move to Amber or Blue group at the end of the half term by HOY & PSM

6.1.4 Students with attendance of 90.1 – 92.9% (Amber)

Students whose attendance falls into this category will:

- Have their attendance monitored and reviewed on a fortnightly basis by the PSM.
- HOY/ PSM to meet with parents of students whose attendance is of concern to discuss reasons for low attendance and agree on a positive approach to improve students' attendance.
- As part of the parent meeting with the HOY/PSM there will be a review of any in-school issues which may be acting as a barrier towards an improvement in attendance and a discussion around how the student can be supported will take place. (e.g. absence from particular subjects, peer issues, support at home)
- HOY & PSM to liaise with each other & Inclusion / safeguarding team if appropriate.
- Positive strategies will be used to support the student in improving their attendance.
- Warning letter 1 is sent out to parents if attendance reaches 92% or below from Autumn half term 2 onwards.
- Student attendance will be reviewed for a move to the Red or Yellow group on a fortnightly basis between KS lead, HOY & PSM.

6.1.5 Students with attendance of 0 – 90% (Red)

Students whose attendance falls into this category will:

- Have their attendance monitored daily. These students will form the first phone calls of the day for the PSM if the student is absent & no reason given to the main school office as part of the normal absence recording procedure.
- PSM & HOY to create an Attendance Support Plan alongside SJB's Head of Inclusion if appropriate this will be shared with the parents and students at the earliest possible opportunity and their input will be requested.
- HOY to communicate attendance concerns and support plans with staff through email/pastoral briefing.
- From Autumn half term 2, if attendance falls below 90%, the student will be classed as a persistent absentee and the persistent absentee letter will be sent home.
- Once the persistent absentee letter has been sent, if there is no improvement in attendance, warning letter 2 will be sent out if attendance reaches 85% or below.
- Once warning letter 2 has been sent all future absences will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided to the HOY/PSM/school office.
- SJB may exercise the right to make a formal referral to SCC Inclusion Services if no improvement seen after letter 2 has been issued.
- Once a referral to SCC Inclusion Service has been made if attendance doesn't improve, Parents/carers may be given a Warning of Fixed Penalty Notice (WFPN) by the Inclusion Officer (SCC). SCC may begin court proceedings where appropriate.
- Student attendance will be reviewed for move to Yellow group on a fortnightly basis between KS lead, HOY & PSM will take place

› 6.1.6 Punctuality

- › Any students who arrive at the school gates after 8:50am without a valid reason will be issued with an immediate break time detention for the same day.
- › All break time detentions will be recorded on Arbor on that morning under Break Detention: Late for school.
- › Parents will be able to monitor this through the Arbor parent portal.
- › Students who arrive late to lessons will be coded as late (L) on the register.
- › Students arriving to lessons late will be issued with a negative comment as per the behaviour policy.
- › HOY will monitor patterns of poor punctuality and will issue punctuality reports where appropriate.

6.2 6th form

1. All absence must be reported to the 6th form manager by 8.00am by parents.
2. Any student going home ill must report to the 6th form manager (if 6th form manager unavailable then the student must find one of the sixth form team or go to the school office) Failure to do this will result in a sanction.– Sanction: 30 mins after school on a Thursday
3. Form time attendance is compulsory. Failure to attend will result in a sanction.
– Sanction: 30 mins per form time on a Thursday after school (when form time is 5 days a week, a detention of 2 hours will be issued on a Thursday for missing 4 or 5 form times and an extra week of registered studies will be added too)
4. 1 to 1 tutor meetings are compulsory. Failure to attend will result in a sanction.
– Sanction: failure to attend is 30 mins after school on a Thursday
5. PSHE, Spiritual Development, key skills, liturgies, mass are all compulsory. Failure to attend will result in a sanction.
– Sanction: 1.5 hours after school on a Thursday for any missed event
6. Failure to attend any other event.
– Sanction to be set by HoY (or Head of 6th Form in absence)
7. Signing in/out when coming in after form or leaving before the end of the day – student must either have the app on their phone or sign out manually.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Lee Evans, Assistant Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel because of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day