

Jack & Jill Family of Schools: Attendance Policy

Applies to:

- Jack & Jill School
- Nightingale House Pre-Preparatory School
- Clarence House Preparatory School

Related Legislation:

- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Related Policies and Documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Early Education Entitlement (EEE) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Jack and Jill Family of Schools Terms and Conditions
- Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Who is this policy for?

- Staff and volunteers
- Parents
- External agencies

Available from:

- School Office
- SharePoint

Monitoring and Review:

To be continuously monitored and reviewed no later than two years from date below.

References:

- “Parents” refers to parents and guardians.
- “Famly” refers to the School’s Management Information System.
- “Staff” refers to employees, peripatetic staff, external providers (e.g., Springboard Swimmers) or specialist staff provided by an external provider.
- The “School” refers to the Jack & Jill Family of Schools (Jack and Jill School Twickenham, Nightingale House Pre-Preparatory School, and Clarence House Preparatory School).
- “EYFS” refers to The Early Years Foundation Stage which is the curriculum for children from birth to aged 5, including the Reception year group.
- “Strategic Leadership Team” (SLT) refers to the team managing the School, currently including the Deputy Principal, Headteacher of Clarence House, Pre-Preparatory Lead Teacher, Early Years Lead Teachers, Pre- Prep Curriculum Lead and Digital Learning Lead.

Reviewer: Designated Safeguarding Lead (August 2023)

Effective: September 2023

Next review: August 2024

Proprietor’s Signature: *Kevin Papinuk*

The Jack & Jill Family of Schools is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all the pupils achieve their potential.

The Jack & Jill Family of Schools promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender, or ability. We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our School.

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the approach and management of attendance at the Jack and Jill Family of Schools. It is a working document designed to promote high attendance levels and ensure absence from our schools is kept to the minimum.

At the Jack & Jill Family of Schools all children on roll are expected to regularly attend every day the schools are in session assuming they are fit and healthy to do so. This is a legal requirement for children of compulsory school age and here at the Family of Schools we also expect the same as far as possible from our nursery children.

In the case of children attending Jack & Jill School where some or all sessions/hours are funded by Early Education Funding (EFF) full attendance is essential, including during the term time plus weeks which parents choose for their children and are scheduled for 5 weeks beyond the normal school term time. Unacceptable absence levels may result in withdrawal of funding by either the school or AfC (Achieving for Children), who audit the take up of such funding.

Staff do everything possible to encourage high attendance levels and put in place appropriate procedures when attendance falls below acceptable levels. The most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

2. Legal Requirements

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents have their child registered at the Family of Schools, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child above statutory school age, attends regularly.

This means their child **MUST** attend every day the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance.

This does not apply for children below statutory school age i.e. Before their 5th birthday. However, we adopt the same processes as outlined later in this policy to monitor attendance and encourage high levels of attendance from the outset.

3. Aims

To ensure good attendance of pupils at the schools we aim to:

- make attendance and punctuality a priority.
- define roles and responsibilities for attendance management and promote consistency in carrying out associated tasks.
- adopt a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data.
- provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- recognise and address the needs of individual pupils requiring reintegration following significant periods of absence.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

The Heads of school ensure arrangements for managing attendance are operated effectively within their schools and work with parents to improve levels where necessary.

The SLT analyse data to report to the Principal and other stakeholders.

The school administrators are responsible for ensuring accurate completion of the attendance registers and contacting Parents immediately to investigate all unexplained absences.

It is the responsibility of all to recognise and act upon children missing education as a safeguarding priority and report concerns about absence to the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

5. Definitions

Registration

Attendance registers are a record of children in attendance or absent during the Family of Schools designated registration periods.

The designated start and close of the schools' day is published to parents upon admission to the schools and is as follows:

- Jack and Jill Nursery 0845-1200 or 1500
- Jack and Jill Reception class 0835-1510
- Nightingale House Pre-Preparatory 0830-1530
- Clarence House Preparatory 0815-1545

Morning registration period remains open for 30 minutes from the published start of day and records children as either:

- Present

- Absent
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Afternoon registration period is at 1330 when attendance for all children is recorded in the same way for all children.

All absences are recorded with a code designating the reason for the absence with an additional note adding further detail causing the absence. Use of the appropriate code denotes whether the absence as authorised or unauthorised see Appendix A.

Attendance data for individual children and for the school is drawn from the application of these codes.

It is the Head/Lead teachers' discretion whether a child's absence is classified and recorded as authorised or not.

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child is absent from school for a legitimate reason and the school has been notified of this by the parent. For example, if a child is unwell, the parent logs the absence on Family or emails the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised; parents do not have this authority.

Not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, taking a child out of school to go shopping is unlikely to ever be an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is absent from school without the permission of the school.

Absence is likely to be unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Persistent Absence

The DfE (Department of Education) defines a persistent absentee as a pupil who, at any point of the year, has accumulated absence at 10% or more of the available sessions regardless of whether any of it is authorised. Persistent absentee status may change as the terms progress, but such pupils are at particular risk of achieving poor outcomes at school and beyond.

Attendance Monitoring

For girls of compulsory school age attendance above 96% is the level expected in normal circumstances.

Should levels fall within 95-91% parents will receive an alert advising them of this with an opportunity to discuss any reason for such levels.

Attendance below 90% requires a meeting with the parents to investigate and discuss the reason for this and ways to improve/ achieve regular attendance.

Nursery age children are expected to attend as regularly as possible even though they are under compulsory school age.

Once children enter the Early Years setting and some/all the child's sessions/hours are funded by EEF, the child's attendance during that period will be monitored to ensure that attendance is in line with the School's general attendance expectations for pupils of compulsory school age.

6. Procedures

Absence

If a child is absent, the class teacher records the reason for absence on Family if he/she has heard from the parent directly or leaves the Family profile unregistered for the school administrator to investigate and complete.

Within 30 minutes of registration time, the school administrator will call the parent/guardian of children absent from school to ascertain the reason for absence and check on the safety of the child, unless the parent/ guardian has already informed the school of illness or reason for absence.

The school administrators ensure all attendance entries are correctly entered on the register and alert the Head of School/DSL when action is required for unacceptable absence levels as detailed below.

Requests for leave of absence

Request for absence for a pre known reason e.g., medical appointment must be sent to the school prior to the day of absence with an estimate of the time the child is likely to be absent from school. This is expected to be the minimum required. This will either be authorised or not depending on the reason for the request. Further details may be requested before a decision can be made.

Children must attend school for all sessions to make the most progress possible.

Our school year is short, and holidays should not be taken during term time; even two or three days affect not only a child's progress but that of the rest of the class. It is unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for such purpose.

In exceptional and unavoidable circumstances, the Head of Schools's permission for absence may be requested but this must be sought before any booking or travel arrangements are made.

Long-term Absence

When children are unable to attend school for a period over five days arrangements will be made with his/her parents to ensure contact is maintained and every assistance is given to ensure the child covers work missed.

Depending on the reason for absence this could either be through a period of online learning, or programme to cover once the child has recovered sufficiently from a lengthy illness.

The class teacher together with the school administrator and head of school will manage this process with the parents.

Repeated Unauthorised Absences

Contact will always be made with the parent of any child marked as absent without reason.

If no explanation is given or the reason for absence cannot be authorised this will be recorded as unauthorised with a note for the cause of absence when reported.

If a child has repeated or high level of unauthorised absence, the parents will be contacted to explain the circumstances preventing the child from attending school.

At this stage, the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will be informed to take whatever action is appropriate to ensure the safety of the child and that he/she is able to access the education provided.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Principal to monitor overall attendance ensuring that every effort is made to maintain high attendance figures.

The attendance registers are legal documents and entries must be preserved for 3 years from the date of entry.

The registers record pupils present during the registration period so can only be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time and it is therefore necessary to subsequently correct the register. This should note the person making the change to the original entry and time/date of change.

The SLT monitor levels of attendance with scaled action as required for those not achieving acceptable levels.

The SLT report on headline attendance figures to the Principal and other stakeholders, comparing figures for the different schools, cohorts, and year on year.

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class.

The school administrators manage all associated administrative requirements and ensure the admissions and attendance registers are kept in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Any concerns about the attendance of a child must be reported to the Head teacher/Lead teachers/DSL for further investigation with the parents.