

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Information to Parents of changes in the policy

1. ATTENDANCE AT SJP

Regular attendance at College is expected. The reasons for this are obvious: pupils learn best and receive most from College when they are actually there. This issue is highlighted regularly in the parents' handbook, the weekly College newsletter and is featured in the Home/School Agreement which all parents are asked to sign at the beginning of each year. The importance of attendance is explained during the interviews of all pupils who wish to come to St. John Plessington. Full attendance is rewarded via Achievement Assemblies, Head of Learning (HOL) rewards and attendance rewards.

2.

Attendance	95%	90%	85%	80%
Numbers of days of lost learning	9.5	19	28.5	38
Number of lessons lost	47.5	95	142.5	190
Number of lessons lost for a six day period	57	114	171	228

Is 95 % attendance good? This means pupils will have missed 10 school days in a year. Over 5 years this means 50 days, which is almost a full school term.

3. ABSENCE BELOW 95%

Any pupil whose absence falls beneath 95% will be noted by the Head of Learning and the pupil may be placed on the 'Attendance Strategy' which is an escalating intervention system. This is to encourage improved attendance and put support systems in place with Education Welfare Service, Attendance Officer and School Nurse, to address persistent absence issues. Other outside agencies may also be involved in cases which show persistently poor attendance.

4. HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Amendments to the 2006 regulations from the Department for Education (which come into effect from September 2013) remove references to family holidays and extended leave. “Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances”.

Please note ‘exceptional circumstances’ do NOT include a situation where parents choose to take pupils out of school to fit in with their work related holiday dates. Please refer to the DfE “Amendments to School Attendance Regulations” for further details. If you believe that your circumstances meet the ‘exceptional’ criteria, please put your request in writing to the Head Teacher at least one month in advance of the date. Parents who take pupils on an unauthorised holiday in term time will be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

5. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

SJP will also consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for absences which are ‘believed to be condoned’ (fixed penalty protocol from Wirral). This will look at all pupils when attendance drops to below 80%. Other circumstances where these notices may be issued include parents who refuse to work with SJP on issues of attendance, choosing not to attend Stage 2 or Stage 3 attendance interviews called by the College via Head of Learning or Assistant Headteachers. The Colleges attendance officer (Mr N Francis) will also contact families where attendance is seen to be a cause for concern. Again, his recommendations will also be considered when fixed penalty notices are issued.

6. PUPILS UNDER 90% ATTENDANCE

For pupils who are under 90% attendance and have more than 10 ‘illness’ absences, a Doctor’s note will be required. If one is not produced, the absence would be marked as unauthorised and therefore count towards the fixed penalty procedure and any future prosecution.

7. KEEP KIDS SAFE SYSTEM

The College has invested in the ‘Keep Kids Safe’ system. Each morning any pupils absent will receive an automated phone call requesting parents/carers to provide a reason for the absence. Text messages/emails may also be sent from the Attendance Secretary. The Attendance Secretary also calls home for all pupils under 86% attendance each day. HOL and Learning Coaches (LC) have a set list of pupils they will target each day to call home through a set period, as does the SJP Attendance Officer with responsibility for attendance.

If parents are unable to return a call for whatever reason, a written explanation for the absence is necessary upon a pupil's return to College. There is a facility for parents to be able to leave a message stating their son/daughter's reason for absence.

8. OTHER ABSENCES

If any absence, whether covered by a note or not, is considered as an unauthorised absence by a member of staff, HOL should be informed. This can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice. Parents will also be informed by a Head of Learning of our concern.

In any case of suspected truancy, parents will be informed of the school's concern at the earliest possible opportunity.

In cases of truancy or when serious concern about absence arises within school, the Education Welfare Service will be contacted by the school. This facility is also available for parents to use themselves.

Wherever possible, medical appointments should be made outside school hours or in school holidays. Where this is not possible, pupils should ensure they are only absent for part of the day i.e. if the appointment is in the morning, they should attend school in the afternoon and vice versa.

*Payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid after this time, but within 28 days.

*Non-payment of Fixed Penalty Notices:

Non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the notice and may trigger a prosecution of parents by the Education Social Welfare Service under Section 444 Education Act 1996.