

John Port Spencer Academy



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance Team

Attendance Welfare Officers: Mrs A Allen and Ms C Walsh

Attendance Officer for Sixth Form: Mrs G Barnett

Safeguarding Team

Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr L Shepherd

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs C Golaub

Safeguarding Officers (Mental Health Leads): Mr W Perry and Mrs V Davies

Safeguarding Officer (Anti-Bullying Lead): Miss A Southall

Designated Lead for Prevent: Mr N Collier

Designated Lead for Sixth Form: Mrs G Barnett

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Mrs C Golaub

SENCO: Mr S Thompson

Designated Link Governor for Safeguarding: Mrs E Twigg

Revised: August 2019

To be reviewed: December 2020 or before

Parents/guardians have a legal duty under the Education Act 2011 to ensure that children who are of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis. Every half day absence has to be classified by the academy as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

- **Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from the academy for good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes.
- **Unauthorised absences** are those that the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been granted, such as truancy or unexplained absences.

Parents/guardians **cannot** authorise an absence, only the academy can do this. Parents/guardians are required to contact the academy daily on the Student Absence Line and leave appropriate information which will be recorded on the attendance system.

Attendance Issues

Where there are any attendance issues, the Attendance Team (which is made up of two Attendance Welfare Officers [AWO] and an Attendance Officer [AO] for Sixth Form) will make contact with parents to discuss/resolve these.

If a student's absence falls below 96%, the Attendance Team will make contact with the parent/guardian to see how we can help encourage regular, consistent attendance - crucial to the child's learning.

If a student's attendance drops below 90% (Persistent Absentee), the student, parent/guardian will be invited into the academy to meet with a member of the Attendance Team to discuss matters in more detail and any further action that may be required. These meetings are part of the Improving Attendance Programme (IAP). This meeting may also include the Head of Year (HOY)/Pastoral Manager (PM) and in some cases the Assistant Vice Principal responsible for Attendance. If appropriate, outside agencies may also be asked to attend.

In cases of continual, persistent absence [or absence with no cooperation], legal proceedings may begin.

Improving Attendance Programme (IAP)

The Improving Attendance Programme is a 'plan of action' designed to closely monitor a student's attendance to support that student in making the necessary changes in order to improve their attendance. It will always involve a member of the Attendance team and student, but will often involve the parents for greater effectiveness. If the IAP fails to have an impact it will also involve the Head of Year/Pastoral Manager and then the Assistant Vice Principal in charge of attendance. In these meetings, short-term targets are set and monitored closely. Positive phone calls home and praise are both central to maintaining positive improvements in attendance in this programme.

Procedures

1. On each day of absence, the parent/guardian should call/text/email the Attendance Team with the reason for absence and appropriate updates prior to 8.45am.
2. On return to the academy, the student is required to bring in a letter covering the reason and dates of absence – this should be given to the Form Tutor who enters the relevant code in to the system (SIMS). If they are unsure of a specific code they should contact the Attendance Team for support on the correct code (all codes are provided to all form tutors in advance). This letter will be included in the student's personal file. Parents can also e-mail the Attendance Team directly instead of sending in a note with the student.
3. If a student is not present in the academy and the Attendance Team has not been informed, a text will be sent to the parent/guardian alerting him/her to the fact that their child is absent.
4. In all cases, the Attendance Team will enter absences onto the attendance system.

Illness and other acceptable reasons

For longer term illnesses or other long term authorised absence, the Head of Year/Pastoral Manager will arrange for work to be sent home, following consultation with parents/guardians. For illnesses longer than five days, medical evidence **may** be requested to further back up an absence. Regular contact is required between the parent/guardian and the Attendance Team.

If a student has been absent in excess of five days, it is likely that the Attendance Team will want to meet with them to encourage their progression and future attendance. This may lead to a student being part of the improving Attendance Programme (IAP)

Holidays / Other Absence / Exceptional Circumstances

The academy will not authorise absences for holidays, shopping days, birthdays, day trips etc.

If leave of absence is required, the parent/guardian should complete an **Exceptional Circumstances Leave of Absence Form** [refer to Appendix 1]. This form should also be completed if absence is required for sporting, musical, drama events etc. The academy will continue to look favourably on and, support where appropriate, extra-curricular / enrichment activities that students may need to request leave of absence for [sport release days/music exams/cadets/ college taster days etc.].

It will be at the Principal's discretion to grant leave in exceptional circumstances, however the Principal can delegate responsibility to the Attendance Team, authorising them to grant leave in most cases. If leave of absence is not authorised and parents/guardians disregard this, then unauthorised absence will be recorded and a penalty given in the form of a fine. This could then lead to further legal proceedings against the parent/guardian.

For emergency situations, for example family bereavement or necessary medical appointments (not a requirement on a leave of absence form), appropriate consideration and authorisation will be given.

Lateness

Lateness is monitored during registration and for every lesson. Lateness and attendance is monitored very closely at the start of the day in registration. If a student fails to attend registration and then also fails to register in period 1 then a message is sent home to notify parents that their child is absent. Late arrival after period 1 without a valid reason will be recorded as unauthorised.

Heads of Year/Pastoral Managers will monitor punctuality. If students are frequently late then appropriate sanctions will be implemented. The 'Inventory programme' will be used to monitor punctuality to the academy. If a student is late to the academy more than once in any given week they will be detained by their Head of Year/Pastoral Manager.

Summary

The academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and to promote good attendance. If a student is not in regular attendance, he or she is being deprived of their right to a full time education. It is a proven fact that attenders are achievers. Equally, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends. The academy is committed to working with students, parents/guardians in the best way possible to ensure a high level of attendance.

People Responsible for Attendance

- Academy Governors
- Principal
- Attendance Team [Attendance Welfare Officers and Attendance Officer]
- Assistant Vice Principal with responsibility for attendance
- Director of Sixth Form
- Heads of Year / Pastoral Managers
- Parents/Guardians
- Students

Persistent Absence

We try to work with students and parents in every situation, but where a student's absence is below 90% we place them on the Improving Attendance Programme. If a student's attendance continues to decline, we may be forced into a decision to prosecute after reasonable steps have been taken to improve a student's attendance. If the student is in Year 11 there may be a decision taken not to enter the student for examinations.



[Appendix 1]

Student Leave of Absence for Exceptional Circumstances

Please use for all leave **other than medical and illness**. Email a signed and completed form directly to attendance@johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk or hand in at Student Reception. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Principals should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Student Name: Form:

Absence from: To: (incl)

Please consider leave of absence for the following **Exceptional Circumstances**:

Supporting evidence attached - please tick overleaf if necessary

Parent/Guardian making the application – Where leave is denied and you proceed to take your child out of school unauthorised absence will be recorded. This may result in a Penalty Notice.

Name:

Signature: Date:

Email address and contact number:

Where no email address is available, a response will be forwarded to the home address.

Separated Parent Details (if applicable) – please note in such cases both parties are informed of School's decision. **Both parties may be subject to penalty.**

Name:

Is Separated Parent **in agreement** to application Yes/No (please delete as necessary)

Email address and contact number:

Where no email address is available, a response will be forwarded to the home address.

Sibling at another School: Yes/No Name of School:

OFFICE USE ONLY: Date request received:

Comment:

Request Approved Request Denied Signed: Date:

Date parent notified: Sep. parent notified: