

The JCB Academy

Attendance Information - September 2021

Regular attendance is vital for learners to achieve in line with their potential.

Attendance is mandatory and that the usual rules on attendance apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil.
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.
- The ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with authorities' codes of conduct.

There are certain circumstances where a learner cannot attend school due to coronavirus (Covid-19); this is when traveling to school or attending school would be:

- Contrary to guidance set out by Public Health England.
- Prohibited by any legislation.

For the latest guidance, please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>

Please be assured that we will continue to follow all professional advice to ensure that we will keep our learners and staff as safe as possible at all times.

It is really important at this stage that we all remain extremely vigilant and that learners are reminded both at home and in the academy to keep their distance from their friends, to regularly wash their hands and to use hand sanitiser as directed.

During Y9, Y10 and Y11, I am sure you recognise that learners who miss school will miss vital learning which could impact on their performance in examinations. Furthermore, a learner's attendance record forms a significant element of their reference for employment and further education opportunities; we are therefore keen to ensure that all learners achieve full attendance.

We will look to offer support to any learner whose attendance falls below 95% or who has unauthorised absences on their registration certificate. Attendance is classed as being present at school; a dental appointment will lower a learner's attendance percentage even though this may be authorised. Missing the academy transport, resulting in missing the morning register mark, will also affect a learner's attendance record and will result in an unauthorised register mark. The government classifies learners with an attendance percentage below 90%, over a school year, as persistently absent.

We do believe that regular attendance is a shared responsibility between learners, parents/carers and academy staff.

We will:

- Publish all our term dates via our website so that learners know when they should attend. Please note that our term dates and INSET days sometimes differ from other Staffordshire schools.
- Provide you with regular information regarding your son's/daughter's attendance percentage.
- Support you to address any issues which are impacting on your son's/daughter's attendance.
- Comply with government guidelines regarding prosecution for poor attendance and learner leave of absence.
- Request medical evidence to authorise absences due to illness and/or medical appointments once your son/daughter has reached 20 absences (10 days) from school. If we have requested medical evidence from you in the past, we will continue to require it for all future absences
- Refer to the local authority for a possible penalty notice for learners with 20 unauthorised absences.

Learner Leave of Absence

The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests should be made well in advance of the desired period of absence. There is no automatic right to any leave during term time. Leave of Absence application forms are obtainable from the Attendance Officer in Learner Support or can be downloaded via The JCB Academy website under Parental Information.

Should the academy decide not to grant a leave of absence and a learner is taken out of the academy, or an absence is not requested, it will be recorded as unauthorised, which may result in a penalty notice fine of £60 per parent per child. This fine will increase to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine may lead to court proceedings.

Poor Attendance/Persistent Absence

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 amended section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to allow parents to be issued with a penalty where they failed to ensure their child of compulsory school age (5-16) and school registered, regular attendance.

A penalty notice for each parent, per child is initially for £60. If this £60 is not paid within 21 days from the date of issue it rises to £120. If, after 28 days of the date of issue the £120 is not paid, the council will prosecute the parent/s under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. This will lead to a hearing in the Magistrates Court and may result in a fine of up to £1,000.

We would ask that you support us, and your son/daughter, in the following ways:

- If your son/daughter is going to be absent please telephone/email us first thing in the morning to advise us of the reason for their absence and when you anticipate they will be back at the academy.
- Provide us with evidence of why an absence is/was necessary whenever possible.
- Only allow your son/daughter to miss a day if they are genuinely not well enough to attend.
- If your son/daughter has to attend a medical appointment during the academy day, consider making it for as late as possible in the afternoon to minimise absence from lessons and minimise the impact on attendance
- If your son/daughter is routinely missing the academy bus, support them to improve their morning routines.
- Be aware of subjects that they may not be enjoying, upcoming tests and deadlines which may be causing them to want to avoid lessons or coming to the academy.
- If you have any concerns about your son's/daughter's attendance, please talk to us, we are happy to help.

To speak to someone about attendance please call 01889 506100 and ask for Mr M Spooner, our Support and Guidance Co-ordinator with responsibility for attendance, or email m.spooner@jcbacademy.com

If your son/daughter is absent, please call 01889 506100 or email office@jcbacademy.com