

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

October 2023

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

The latest government guidance states that pupil attendance is mandatory and the usual rules on attendance apply in relation to:

- Parents¹ duty to ensure 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 local authorities' codes of conduct.

Ensuring regular attendance is the legal responsibility of every parent. Please be aware that permitting absence from school without a valid reason is an offence in law which can result in prosecution.

We will 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; any medical 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 and academy staff.

We will:

- Publish all our term dates on our website so that learners know when they should attend. Please note that the academy's term dates and INSET days sometimes differ from other Staffordshire schools.
- Provide you with regular information regarding your son's/daughter's attendance.
- 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 (ten days) from school.
- Refer to the local authority for a possible penalty notice for learners with 20 unauthorised absences.

¹ Within this document, the term parent refers to those with parental responsibility for a learner

Learner Leave of Absence

Amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 make it clear that headteachers should only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this. These amendments also removed references to family holiday and extended leave.

Requests should be made well in advance of the desired period of absence and it should be noted that there is no automatic right to any leave during term time. Leave of absence application forms can be requested from Learner Reception or downloaded from the academy's website <https://jcb-academy.com/information-guidance/>

Should the academy decide not to grant a leave of absence and a learner is taken out of school, 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 fail to ensure their child of compulsory school age (5-16) and school registered attends regularly.

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 local authority 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 the absence line or email first thing in the morning to advise us of the reason for their absence and when you anticipate they will be back at school.
- Wherever possible, provide us with evidence of why an absence is/was necessary.
- Only allow your son/daughter to miss a school day if they are genuinely unwell enough to attend.
- If your son/daughter has to attend a medical appointment during the school day, please 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 your son/daughter may not be enjoying or upcoming tests and deadlines which may be causing them to want to avoid lessons or coming to school.
- If you have any concerns about your son's/daughter's attendance, please talk to us, we are happy to help.

If you need to speak to a member of staff about attendance, please call 01889 506100 and ask to be put through to either your son's/daughter's Year Team or Mr Spooner (Attendance Officer). Alternatively, you can email your son's/daughter's mentor or Mr Spooner (m.spooner@jcbacademy.com).

If you need to let us know that your son/daughter will be absent, please email attendance@jcbacademy.com or call the absence line daily on 01889 506100 option 1