



Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College Attendance and Punctuality Policy

With God's grace, we excel and lead.

Excellent attendance promotes excellent learning. If students are to achieve their full potential, they must attend school regularly. It is the duty of parents and teachers to encourage, facilitate and ensure that students have excellent attendance. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. Attendance therefore is a high priority for the school staff, school governors, parents and students.

The attendance of all students will be monitored every week by Year Curriculum Leaders and Form Tutors. Individual absences need to be investigated quickly and carefully followed up. As set out in this policy, we aim to work with families to early identify reasons for poor attendance and work with parents and the Educational Welfare Officer to try to resolve difficulties.

Aims of the policy

At CJM, all students are valued. As such, it is imperative that attendance is recognised as a shared responsibility between the school community, parents and students. The aim of this policy is to:

- Maintain and promote excellent attendance
- Maintain and promote excellent punctuality
- Support students in achieving their academic potential
- Provide information and guidance for parents

Definition of Good Attendance/Punctuality

Attendance	Definition	Approx. day lost per year	Approx. weeks lost per year
98% - 100%	Excellent	0-4	Less than 1
95% - 97.9%	Good	5-9	1 – 2
93% - 94.9%	Satisfactory	10 – 13	2 – 3
90% - 92.9%	Unsatisfactory	14 – 18	3 – 4
Below 90%	Persistent Absence	More than 19 Equivalent to 38 sessions	More than 4
Below 85%	Referral to Education Welfare Officer (EWO)	More than 28	More than 5

Principles:

- Students and parents/carers understand issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- All school staff, including governors, administrative and support staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- Parents/carers and students having the opportunity to raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns.
- Allocating resources e.g. time, people, space to support the policy.
- Rewarding students who have for good attendance and those who strive to improve their attendance.
- Identifying patterns of absence and intervening early. Research shows patterns of attendance are established early in a school career. Children who miss significant amounts of their education in primary schools are more likely to underachieve. CJM will work with the information from the primary schools to identify and support these students.
- Sanctions for failing to ensure regular attendance are fully understood by the whole school community and parents/carers.
- Establish clear guidelines and procedures for the registration of pupils and the follow up of attendance.
- Clarify the expectations and responsibilities of all those involved in the process.
- Seek ways to actively promote good attendance and punctuality in order to prepare our girls for the demands of life beyond school.

The Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; expectations of attendance are encompassed in all aspects of school life and are supported by our policies on safeguarding, behaviour management, equal opportunities, anti-bullying, sick children and medical needs, the Attendance Action Plan, Rewards and Sanctions Ladder. In addition to this, The Home School Agreement also addresses the importance of attendance outlining expectations and responsibilities.

Rights/Roles/Responsibility

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement.

CJM believe that excellent school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, students and the wider school community.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers.
- Have a named member of the SLT to lead on attendance – (Danielle Peppiatt) who co-ordinates the work of the Pastoral Team on attendance.
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through reporting at Governing Body meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority and DFE as required and on time.
- Have clear systems in school to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to develop strategies and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

The Leadership Team (SLT and YCL) will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Make staff aware of the Attendance Policy and are adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Have a named member of SLT to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and DfE as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Have systems in place to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Collate and analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to develop solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Involve our Education Welfare officer and develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Teachers and Support Staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers.

- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve. A positive climate is essential for promoting good attendance.
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Parents/Carers will:

- Talk to their daughter about school and their experiences whilst there. Take a positive interest in their daughter's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home.
- Follow absence procedures as stated in the student planner.
- Encourage their daughter to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc outside of school hours.
- Provide evidence of medical appointments.
- Ask the school for help if their daughter is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their daughter's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their daughter's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, going to bed at an appropriate time, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their daughter off school to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Not take their daughter on holiday during term-time.
- Sign the home school agreement
- Please keep the school informed of any changes to home address and contact telephone numbers. The school must be able to contact you in the case of any emergency, so keep us updated.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when they are required to attend. This is communicated to them through the school staff, parents/carers, and the school timetable.

- Speak to their form tutor/class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school time table.
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. Pupils are held responsible for this and it is made clear to all students what this procedure is by their class teacher/form tutor. This will help the school monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation
- Sign the home school agreement form.

Recording Attendance/Punctuality

Punctuality to school is fundamental for success and considered a priority at CJM. Students who arrive to school late do not allow themselves to begin the day with a positive attitude.

Registration begins at 8.40am and all students are expected to be in their form room at this time. Students arriving between 8.40am and 9.00am will be marked as late (L) by their form tutor. Students who arrive after 9.00 should report to the attendance officer who will mark them as late (L).

The register will close at 9.30am. Students arriving after the close of the register will be recorded as absent (U). This will not be authorised (U).

On arrival after the close of register, students must immediately report to the school attendance officer office to sign in to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

As a school, we are aware lateness can severely affect achievement. We monitor punctuality closely and have strategies in place to address lateness. We run late detentions every day and double late detention every week. Year Curriculum Leaders and Pastoral Support Managers monitor students if lateness becomes persistent. Awareness of the impact of lateness is raised with students, staff and parents regularly.

Persistent lateness where a student's attendance is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) may result in a more serious sanction or the parent/carer being served with a Penalty Notice or summons to court. Parents/ carers have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do is an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Following up absences (school actions)

CJM runs a first day absence calling system if students are not in lessons and notification from parents has not been received. A text message or phone call will

be sent to parents asking them to provide a reason for absence. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the Year Curriculum Leader or Pastoral Support Manager will contact the parent/carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

Form tutors will chase students for written explanations from their parents/carers for their absence upon the student's return from being away. This is for the school records and is necessary no matter what the reason or length of the absence.

The school will take disciplinary action against any pupils who are discovered to be truanting and parents/carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help. The minimum sanction for truancy will be that students will make up the hours of missed school time through detentions.

When a pupil's attendance falls below 85% they may be asked to provide evidence for all absence from school. This would include illness absence, and evidence of a medical appointment, prescription would be necessary to authorise the absence. If a pupil's unauthorised absence amounts to 10% a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer will be made. Attendance will then be monitored by the local authority.

Referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service (EWS) – Role of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) meets regularly with school staff and individual cases are raised and discussed. If a student's attendance is of serious concern, the school will invite parent/carer in for a meeting at the school to discuss attendance, this is classed as a pre-referral meeting. The Education Welfare Service (EWS) will take referrals from schools where a student has 85% or less attendance, with a significant amount of absence recorded as unauthorised (U) and/or where attempts by the school to improve a student's attendance have been unsuccessful. If your daughter's attendance falls into this category you will be provided with the contact details of the EWO linked to CJM and they will arrange to meet with you to discuss your daughter's absence, following a referral to the service. In some cases the EWO may make an unannounced home visit. If you are not at home, a calling card will be left. If your daughter has unauthorised absence of 10% or above, there then follows a 16 week timetable of casework. The EWS will arrange a translator for all meetings if required.

Stage One Meeting

If your daughter continues to have unauthorised absence of 10% or above, the EWO will invite you to a meeting at the school. School staff and other professionals supporting your family will be invited. The aim of the meeting is to allow the EWO and school to find out why attendance is still poor and to explore with you and your daughter how a solution can be found. The EWO will explain to you what needs to be done to comply with your legal obligation and the timescales to achieve this. Even if you do not attend this meeting you will be notified of the outcome within five days.

Stage Two Meeting

If your daughter continues to have unauthorised absence of 10% or above, the case will proceed to Stage Two. At the meeting, the case will be reviewed and you will be advised of the range of legal options available to the EWS. Even if you do not attend this meeting, you will be notified in writing within ten days of the final decision as to whether the EWS will:

- issue an formal warnin;
- issue an Education Penalty NoticE;
- prosecute you
- or take no action.

Complex cases

Complex cases, where a family is receiving extra support for social or health needs, may take longer than 16 weeks to conclude.

Categorising absence and procedure for reporting absences

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Parents/carers should inform the school by telephone by 8.40am on each day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. A note in the student planner should be presented to the form tutor on return to account for the absence.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation and/or evidence for the student's absence has been received.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness

In most cases a note from the parent/carer informing the school that their daughter is ill will be acceptable. Where there are repeated absences due to reported illness parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. or in some cases a doctor's note.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. Work to be sent home or will be collected by the parent/carer.

Family holidays/extended leave during term time

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to remove their daughter from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their daughter is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year. Parents/carers are strongly advised to avoid taking their daughter on holiday during term time.

CJM, working with representatives of the Local Authority, have decided that **we will not authorise holidays in term time or leave of absence in term time.**

If you feel that there are exceptional reasons why you need to take a leave of absence in term time, please discuss these with your daughter's Year Curriculum Leader before making your plans. Leave of absence in term time will NOT be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances and these will be at the Head teacher's discretion. The school governors and Local Authority will support the Headteacher's decision.

A formal request for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Head teacher at least 4 weeks in advance of the leave being taken and will be responded to in writing. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil still goes on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised and parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice.

Religious Observance

CJM acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. Parents/carers are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their daughter to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Study Leave

CJM will offer in school study programmes/facilities for GCSE and A level students where students are granted authorised absence to revise at home. The school operates study sessions at school within this time to help with revision and to reduce the amount of time spent out of school.

Un-authorised absence.

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

- Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:
- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms/shoes
- Attending appointments with family members
- Closure of a sibling's school for teacher training (or other) purposes
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

Regular unauthorised absences where a parent has not provided a reason for mean that a parent or parents may be breaking the law and could be:

- issued with an Education Penalty Charge Notice of £120 by the local authority
- found guilty in a magistrates court and fined up to £2,500
- In very severe cases parents can be imprisoned for up to 3 months.

Where parents do not contact the school to inform us that their child cannot attend, the school will contact the family. When a family cannot be contacted for 3 days a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Officer (see above). In situations where a child is subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan the child's social worker will be informed on the first day of absence. If the Educational Welfare Officer cannot locate the child or family, the school will report the child/family to the Local Authority as Child Missing from Education.

Deletions from the Register

CJM will follow Brent Education Children Missing Education Protocol when a student's whereabouts is unknown. A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The reasons below provide a summary.

Brent's local protocol requires schools to notify the Brent Education Welfare Service of any pupil who has been absent for three consecutive school days or more without parental contact.

A pupil can be off-rolled if she has:

1. Been taken out of school by their parent/s and are being educated outside the school system. The parent must put this in writing and state how their child will be educated.
2. A medical condition certified by the school medical nurse that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school.
3. Been permanently excluded.
4. Been registered at another school and written confirmation has been received from the proprietor of the other school.
5. Has died.
6. Ceased to be of compulsory school age.