



John Blow Primary School

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Policy updated: July 2024
Date for review: September 2025

Introduction

John Blow Primary School is committed to working with, and supporting, parents/carers and children to ensure that every child achieves the highest level of attendance at school which in turn will have a positive impact on the learning of each individual.

Aims:

- ✓ Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- ✓ Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence.
- ✓ Support parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- ✓ Encourage all pupils to be punctual to their lessons.
- ✓ To work in close partnership with parents and carers.
- ✓ To celebrate and value punctuality and good attendance.

The school is also committed to working in partnership with other agencies who can contribute to an holistic approach to improving school attendance and to ensure that all other relevant agencies are engaged in the support of particularly vulnerable children and groups.

Duties and responsibilities of parents and carers

The partnership between home and school is key in ensuring that each pupil has the very best opportunities in school. Good attendance has a proven positive impact on attainment and progress. It is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to ensure that they receive the appropriate full-time education. The education should be suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs a child may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

By accepting a place at John Blow Primary School parents agree to ensure that their child attends school for the maximum number of days possible (this includes pupils who are under 5-years-old) to ensure that all children have equal access to all learning, developmental and educational opportunities within school.

Legal Requirements

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education.

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

Legal action may be instigated against parents/carers in relevant circumstances using the wide range of available options including:

- penalty notices
- school attendance orders
- Section 444(1) and (1)(a) of the Education Act 2002

All of the above can be incorporated within a 'fast track to court' process.

Duties and Responsibilities of Schools

The headteacher and governors are responsible for promoting an ethos of good attendance and punctuality throughout school. Effective systems and procedures are in place to monitor attendance and also to take action where attendance is a cause for concern.

Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised to do so by the Governing Body of the school.

At John Blow Primary School this person is the headteacher.

Punctual and Regular Attendance

John Blow Primary School works hard to promote the value of regular attendance with parents/carers and pupils.

This is achieved by;

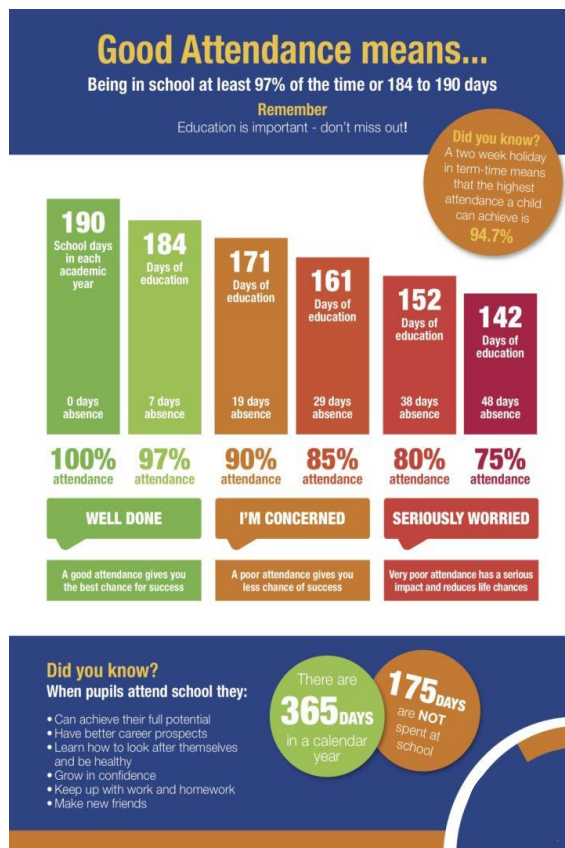
- Letting parents know that regular and punctual attendance is something we value
- Ensuring that parents are clear about school starting and finishing times
- Being consistent and punctual as a school in observing starting and finishing times
- Rewarding good attendance through:
 - Celebrating Class Attendance through the awarding of a weekly attendance trophy.*
 - Attendance certificates for children achieving 98%+ attendance each term.*
- Monitoring poor attendance and taking action as agreed by the governing body.
- Upon enrolling parents are issued with a booklet explaining the school policy on attendance and punctuality.
- Reporting on attendance in the annual school report.

Recording and Monitoring

Whole school attendance figures are reported termly and annually to the governing body. The attendance trends of the school and for vulnerable groups are monitored using the schools data base.

Individual pupil attendance is recorded and monitored weekly. Letters highlighting the level of concern are used to keep parents informed. These letters include ones of celebration when there is a positive result or improvement of attendance for the parents and pupil concerned. Where attendance remains a concern parents will be invited to attend a structured conversation meeting with the class teacher and head teacher in order to fully explore the difficulties and help create actions to improve the situation for the pupil. Where there is no improvement a referral may be made to the Targeted Support Service.

Information about all pupils' attendance is reported to parents in the summer term in the Annual Pupil Report. This is in the form of a percentage and the category of attendance.



Records of lateness are monitored and actioned every half term. Where punctuality is an issue parents will be informed and asked to discuss the situation with the class teacher and or the headteacher.

The School Day

The school gates open at 8.40am. Children should make their way into school and be ready to learn by 8.50 am, when the gates close. Any child arriving after the gates are closed must come into school via the main entrance and be signed into the building. Children entering the building through other doors run the risk of not appearing on the register, this poses a health and safety risk if school needs to be evacuated.

Children arriving between 8.50am and 9.05am will receive an 'L' mark in the register, this denotes 'late before registers close'. This will not affect your child's overall attendance percentage but will mean that they have missed the morning starter activity that is designed to consolidate and review previous learning.

Children arriving after 9.15am will receive a 'U' mark in the register, this denotes 'late after registers close'. This is an unauthorised absence, which will affect your child's overall attendance percentage. If your child is too ill to attend school, you must notify the office via the App, telephone or email before 9am. After this time, the office will use the contact details we have on file to ascertain the child's whereabouts. School have a legal obligation to follow up absences and may still record the absence as unauthorised if we believe it to be the correct course of action. Repeated late arrival to school can be referred to support services and may result in a fixed penalty notice.

The school day finishes at 3.30pm and children should be collected from the appropriate playground. If another adult is to collect your child, the school office must be informed. If you are going to be late to collect your child due to an exceptional circumstance, then please inform the school office. If your child is not collected from school by 3.40pm, and we have had no contact regarding the late pick-up, then they will be sent to The Woodlands after school club where the after-school fee may be applied.

Attendance Registers

School attendance registers are marked at the beginning of each session and distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences.

Schools have a duty to inform the LA about pupils who have continuous absences of two weeks or more and pupils who fail to attend school regularly except where such absences are covered by a medical certificate or where they have been granted leave of absence.

The following codes are used by the school.

Registration Code / \: Present in school

Code B: Late arrival before the register has closed

Code **B**: Off-site educational activity

Code **D**: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment Code

P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Code **V**: Educational visit or trip

Code **C**: Other authorised circumstances

Code **E**: Excluded but no alternative provision made

Code **H**: Holiday authorised by the school

Code **I**: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Code **M**: Medical or dental appointments Code **R**: Religious observance

Code **G**: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher

Code **N**: Reason for absence not yet provided

Code **T**: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence Code

L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Code **O**: Absent from school without authorisation
Code **U**: Arrived in school after registration closed
Code **X**: Not required to be in school
Code **Y**: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Code **#**: Planned whole or partial school closure
Code **Z**: Pupil not on admission register

Authorised Absence

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, school registers for pupils of compulsory school age, must distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences. Regulation 7 gives the following reasons for treating a pupil's absence as authorised.

- because of sickness or some other unavoidable cause
- because of a day of religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong
- because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home, ie. two miles for pupils under eight years of age and three miles for older pupils, and no suitable arrangements, eg: transport, have been made for him or her by the LA
- because of attendance at another school at which he or she is registered
- because he or she has been granted leave of absence.

this may be granted under the following categories:

- a. sporting activities
- b. music exams
- c. arts/theatre performances
- d. dance events
- e. Family events where the child's parents have no control over the setting of dates (eg a family member's wedding, international travel to family events)
- f. Serious family illness
- g. Long term illness
- h. Bereavement
- i. Days of Religious Observance - Section 199 of the Education Act 1993 permits absence for days of religious observance. This would normally apply to one-off absences for annual religious festivals. Absence for non-religious festivals such as the Chinese New Year is not permitted.

Unauthorised Absence

Parents are asked to avoid arranging medical or similar appointments during school hours if at all possible. Where absence is for a medical appointment parents are asked to provide an appointment card or letter as proof.

Where parents wish to take their child away from school for a long period, the Head will discuss with the parents the impact such a break would have on the child's education. Parents may make an application for Leave of Absence using the relevant form from the office or the school website.

Parents should be aware that:

- Pupils may not be granted leave of absence to undertake employment except for work experience or to take part in a performance, licensed by the local authority.

Holidays During Term Time

Parents cannot demand leave of absence for holiday purposes as of right. Parental requests for leave of absence for holidays should be made on the Leave of Absence at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence.

As a result of recent legislation leave of absence for holidays will only be granted where there are extreme and exceptional circumstances.

Response letters are forwarded to parents authorising or declining their request accompanied by relevant attendance data for the pupil in question.

Other Request for Absence

No reason given by parents for absence is classed as unauthorised absence.

FINES FOR ABSENCE

John Blow Primary school believes that working with families to improve attendance is essential for the child. However there may be circumstances where the school will seek to issue a fine for unauthorised absences. We will consider the individual circumstances of each case before recommending fines and is committed to pursuing a graduated response to improve attendance.

Where a child is absent during the week of statutory testing (Ks2 SATs) fines will be issued.

First Day Action

John Blow Primary School requires parents to inform the office of the reason for absence on the first day. The involvement of parents/carers at this early stage can prove to be helpful and supportive. Where no information is received a phone call will be made by office staff to investigate the reason for absence and subsequently update school records.

Working with other Agencies

Poor school attendance can be both a symptom of other difficulties faced by a pupil and their family, and a cause of other problems including exclusion and involvement in criminal activity. A coordinated approach on a multi-agency basis is required to support these children and families.

The Nottinghamshire County Council Targeted Support Service

The Targeted Support Service will only take referrals for cases of persistent absence (85% or below) where:

- a significant proportion of the pupil's absence is unauthorised by the school.
- There is evidence that the parents/carers have been notified by the school about the concerns around their child's attendance and
- The schools can evidence that they have made reasonable efforts to meet with the parents to explore the underlying issues and identify and implement possible solutions.

The Local Authority through Targeted Support will prosecute cases of persistent absence where an individual case meets the criteria set out in the County Council Enforcement Policy and in the case of Penalty Notices, the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct. Schools and services will try to engage with the parents to understand and address any underlying issues as an alternative to prosecution.

Referral

On receiving a referral related specifically to attendance, Targeted Support will

- Allocate a Case Manager to the child/young person for whom the referral has been made.
- Issue or give serious consideration to issuing a Notice to Attend to the parents following an initial meeting with the family.
- Undertake an assessment of the young person to ascertain why their attendance is an issue. For young people at Level 3 in the Pathway to Provision the assessment will be the Family CAF.
- Share and explain a copy of the attendance register with the parent or carer

- Make it clear to the parent or carer both verbally and in writing that there is concern over the child's attendance and that the seriousness of the concern may lead to prosecution
- Include the parents/carers in the assessment,
- Develop and implement an action plan to address the issues impacting on the pupils attendance,
- Work with the school to explore any strategies for addressing the attendance issue. These might include addressing issues of bullying, offering mentoring, making temporary adaptations to the pupil's timetable or considering transport issues.

Proceeding to Prosecution:

Prosecutions will be undertaken in line with the County Council's Enforcement Policy. Prosecutions will be undertaken by a Senior Case Manager (Education Welfare) within Targeted Support to allow the designated Case Manager to continue to work with the child/young person and their family.