

0. Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed as required, prior to approval by governors.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Policy written by: | Rachel Thompson and Lucy Szemerenyi |
| Date policy last reviewed: | August 2023 |
| Approved by: | Board of Governors |
| Date approved: | Awaiting Governor Approval November 2023 |
| Review by: | |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy gives details of the School's policy and procedures for recording and monitoring attendance.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Fire Safety Policy
 - Missing Child Policy
 - SEND Policy
- 1.3 This policy has regard to Part 3 (Welfare, health and safety of pupils), Paragraph 15 of the Independent School Standards Regulations

2. Scope of 'Attendance'

- 2.1 The school day runs from 8.30am to 3.45pm, with several activities taking place before school from 7.45am and after school until 5pm. After School Club finishes at 6.15pm every day of the week.
- 2.2 The co-curricular and sporting life of the school is varied and rich and will from time to time require pupils to spend early evenings at school. E.g. fixtures, trips that need an extended day or admissions events.

3. Overview

Pupil attendance at City Junior School is expected to be excellent. The expectation is that most pupils will go for an entire year without missing any school and pupils and their parents will try to keep any absence to a minimum. In cases of more prolonged absence the role of the school would usually be to reassure families that such absence will not be detrimental to their child's progress. The Attendance Policy should therefore be read with this background in mind and the Senior Leadership Team will use their discretion when applying it.

4. Registration Procedures

- Registers are completed electronically on the CJS iSAMS portal, twice daily.
- Form teachers are responsible for taking the class register in the morning. They should be in their form rooms to take the morning registration by 8.30am. Anyone arriving after 8.40am will be marked late.
- If the form teacher is not available in the morning then they should make alternative arrangements with other members of teaching staff or teaching assistants in the first instance, or ask for support from SLT, to ensure the register is taken.
- If a pupil arrives late for morning registration, they must be signed in on arrival at the front desk. Pupils who arrive in their form room after 8.40am should be entered using the code L (Late arrival before the register has closed); pupils that sign in late at reception will also be marked as L.
- Afternoon registration is taken at the start of the afternoon prior to period 5 at 12.45pm and is the responsibility of the form teacher. There may be occasions when the form teacher requests that the teacher responsible for period 5 takes the register instead, but it remains the responsibility of the form teacher to ensure this it is completed.
- The member of staff taking registration must record accurately all those who are present. Anyone who is not in the room must be shown as absent. If the member of staff taking the register is certain that a child has a notified absence, he or she should record the relevant code in the register. If there is any uncertainty the N code should be used to record an unexplained absence.

- The Junior School Receptionist is responsible for chasing up any missed marks. They will email class teachers by 9.30am in the morning or 2.30pm in the afternoon to chase any missed marks for that day.
- The Junior School Receptionist will send a weekly email to all form teachers and Head of Year on Friday afternoon if there are any outstanding unexplained marks or any missing marks.
- Parents of children who are persistently late will be contacted in line with the Attendance Policy.
- Pupils who are not present in the room for afternoon registration must be marked with an N in the register. If they arrive before the register has been closed, please amend the entry to L. Pupils taking part in music lessons should inform their form teacher ahead of it, particularly if it is during a registration period. This and a register of other music activities will be shared by the Music Administrator with the / Junior School Receptionist or Attendance Officer so the registers can be updated.
- Parents will be informed by letter of their obligation in the absence procedure.

5. Procedures to be followed in case of absence:

- The Junior School Receptionist or Administrator with responsibility for attendance will amend the register to record the presence of those who are late or who have been attending a school activity such as music.
- Parents are asked to notify the Junior School Office when their child is absent and to provide the reason for that absence. Any absences which have not been reported are first checked to see if the pupil is in school. If they are not, the Junior School Administrator will ring home to find out the reason for absence.
- The Assistant Head Pastoral, or other member of the SLT in their absence, will be alerted if a child is unaccounted for, i.e., because the parents cannot be contacted. If further attempts to contact the parents are unsuccessful, friends will be asked if they know where the child is. Our primary concern in these cases is that a child has left for school and has failed to arrive.

All absences must be followed up to ensure that we have an explanation, and the correct code should be entered in the register by the Junior School Receptionist/Administrator or form teacher:

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| B | Educated Off Site |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances |
| D | Dual Registration |
| E | Excluded |
| F | Extended Family Holiday (Agreed) |
| G | Family Holiday (NOT Agreed) |
| H | Family Holiday (Agreed) |
| I | Illness |
| J | Interview |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments |
| N | No Reason Yet Provided For Absence |
| O | Unauthorised Absence |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| P | Approved Sporting Activity |
| R | Religious Observance |
| S | Study Leave |
| V | Educational visit or trip |
| W | Work Experience |
| X | Non-Compulsory School Age Absence |
| Y | Exceptional Circumstances |
| Z | Pupil Not Yet On Roll |
| # | School Closed To Pupils |

- Most absences are expected to be no more than three days. After this, form teachers will contact parents to discuss how long the absence is likely to be and to give assistance about catching up missed work. Absences of more than a week should be referred to the Head of Year and Assistant Head Pastoral and/or SLT.
- If a pupil is absent for two weeks, we would expect to receive a doctor's note confirming the reason for absence. In some cases of a well-documented, chronic medical condition, it might be felt that this would be unnecessarily intrusive. Discretion will be exercised by the school in this case.
- Every Friday the Junior School Receptionist or Administrator will email the SLT with an overview of the overall attendance in school for that week. Any pupil whose attendance falls below 85% will be carefully looked at to explore the reasons behind the absence. This would be discussed at weekly SLT meeting. For those pupils where there are no reasonable explanations for low attendance and where there is cause for concern, a conversation with parents will be arranged by the form teacher to discuss the absences in more detail.
- The Assistant Head Pastoral will meet with the Camden Education Welfare Officer once every half term to monitor attendance and will keep a spreadsheet of those with attendance below 90%.
- If a pupil repeatedly appears on the list, parents will be called in and if there are significant grounds, a referral to the relevant external agency will be considered, such as the Education Welfare Officer, CAMHS or Children's Social Care.
- Where unauthorised absence is suspected, the Assistant Head Pastoral will immediately be informed by the form teacher. Most of such absence at CJS relates to parents taking their children on holidays which overlap our terms. In such cases the Head or Assistant Head Pastoral will write to the parents, but no further action will be taken provided the absence is no more than five days and it is not a repeat offence. If either of these is the case, referral to the appropriate LEA will be considered and will always be made if the absence is ten days or more.
- Where unauthorised absence occurs which does not appear to be a family holiday, this will trigger safeguarding concerns and the procedures outlined in the Missing Child Policy.

6. Procedures for sending pupils home

- 6.1 When possible, the school nurse or a first aider should take the decision to send a pupil home if they are considered too unwell to continue to attend lessons. In exceptional circumstances the Head or Deputy Head may take this decision if a pupil is too unwell to participate in lessons and the school nurse or a first aider is not readily available. Parents will be informed of this decision.
- 6.2 Parents must **always** be contacted and spoken to directly by a member of staff to inform them that their child needs to be collected. This would typically be the school nurse, the first aider or the Junior School Administrator. The school nurse, form teacher or first aider dealing with the issue will inform the office that the pupil is being sent home and give the name of the adult collecting them. The Junior School administrator will enter the correct code in the register as soon as the pupil leaves the school building.

7. Term dates and the pattern for school holidays

- 7.1 The School term dates are published in advance on the school calendar and website and must be observed. Generally, there are three weeks holiday at the end of the Autumn Term, two or three weeks at the end of the Spring Term and seven or eight weeks in the summer. Generally, there is a half term break of two weeks in October or November, another one in February and a final week's break at the end of May/early June.
- 7.2.1 Personal and family holidays should be taken during the published holiday periods. Any request for absence during the School term must be authorized in advance by the Head or Deputy Head. Only in exceptional circumstances will such absences be granted and will be for reasons of either compassionate leave or because the out-of-school activity is of educational value.

8. Punctuality

Pupils are allowed to arrive from 8.15am for the start of the school day. Registration takes place at 8.30am. All pupils should be in their form rooms by 8.40am for the start of period 1. Any pupil who arrives later than this time will be recorded as late, unless they have a valid reason. (See valid codes for absence) Latecomers must report to reception on arrival and sign in.

Lateness will be monitored closely by the form teachers, [the Heads of Year](#) and the Assistant Head Pastoral, along with the Head and Deputy Head. Should any pupil accumulate 4 lates in a term, their parents will be contacted by the form teacher in the first instance to ascertain if there are any family circumstances relating to the persistent lateness. Incurring 8 lates in a term will lead to the parents being invited into school to meet with the Head of Year and / or Assistant Head Pastoral to see how the school can support the family in getting their child to school on time.

9. Summary of procedures for dealing with requests for absence(including for reasons other than illness, medical treatment or religious observance)

- 9.1 The school's policy is to discourage parents from seeking leave of absence for pupils during term time except for reasons of illness, medical treatment or religious observance.

Parents are informed of our policy on absence from school for reasons other than illness, medical treatment or religious observance in the Parents' Handbook and they are regularly reminded of our policy and the requirements of the DfE in end of term mailings.

Parents must always ask for leave of absence in advance, ideally a minimum of 2 weeks' notice, and should not present the school with a *fait accompli* or seek permission for an absence retrospectively. If they do so, we are obliged to record the child's absence as unauthorised.

9.2 Absence owing to illness

If a pupil is to be absent through illness, parents must inform the School on the morning of the first day of absence via the CJS Reception and on each subsequent day of absence. On the pupil's return to School a letter, note or email of explanation must be provided.

If a pupil is absent through illness (including mental illness) for an extended period of time (normally for a period of longer than five days) a doctor's certificate, or equivalent, should be provided to cover the period of absence. Where necessary, the pupil will undergo a phased re-entry to school. A phased re-entry to School will almost always be agreed with the School with guidance from the pupil's specialist consultant or other appropriate medical professional.

9.3 Absence owing to religious observance

Pupils may take days of absence from School for religious observance. Requests for absence for religious observance are collated by the Junior School Receptionist and/or Administrator, on behalf of the, Assistant Head (Pastoral) at the start of the Autumn term.

9.4 Absence other than because of illness or religious observance

Good attendance is essential to ensure pupils make good academic progress and are well integrated into the School. A leave of absence, other than that resulting from illness or for religious observance (as described above), must be sought from the Head or Deputy Head. The guidance on School Attendance indicates that such a request for leave of absence cannot be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances; the DfE guidance does not allow retrospective leave of absence requests or notifications from parents to be recorded as authorised.

Parents will be reminded regularly to email any absence related communications to the Junior School office. From time to time, parents may write to Form Teachers asking for their child or children to be allowed out of school for a reason other than illness, medical treatment or religious observance. When this occurs the Form Teacher should pass the letter to the Assistant Head Pastoral to deal with.

If the request is for an absence of more than one day in duration, or if the reason for the request seems questionable, the Assistant Head Pastoral will pass the letter on to the Head or Deputy Head to deal with.

For absences of more than three days in length, or if there are other circumstances which cause

concern, such as a pattern of absence from school, the Assistant Head Pastoral will pass the letter on to the Head to deal with or raise with the Education Welfare Officer.