

St James' C of E Junior School



Attendance Policy 2024-25

Head teacher

Signed: *Andrew Beattie*

Date: June 2024

Next Review Date: June 2025

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 St James' Junior School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.
- 1.2 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.
- 1.3 The policy has been drawn up after consultation with the governing body and is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the committee know of the policy and have access to it. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.
- 1.4 In light of the Covid-19 situation the latest DfE guidance will be followed in terms of Covid-19 attendance recording and reporting (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>).

2. School's roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 2.2 Registration
 - i) The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. All classes now use the electronic register on Scholarpack.
 - ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.45 a.m.** and **1.15 p.m.** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.
 - iii) The registers will close at **9 a.m.** and **1.25 p.m.** Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent (Code U)**. Pupils who arrive after 8.45 a.m. but before the register closes will be counted as **present**, but late (Code L).

REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	DfES school closed to pupils	Attendance not required
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required
#	School closed to pupils and staff	Attendance not required

2.3 Categorising absence

- i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the head teacher.
- ii) St James' Junior School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that

inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absences and will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and may render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

- iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised;
- iv) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:
- (a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –
- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
 - a pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's / student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered,
 - in **exceptional** circumstances where permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance
- (b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
- (c) where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand);
- (d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
- (e) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;
- (f) the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
- (g) the pupil is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which required him/her to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits **and**, have reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;

(h) in other **exceptional circumstances** (eg a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.

v) Absence may be authorised in the following circumstances (but remains at the discretion of the Headteacher and absences must be requested, in writing, prior to the absence):

(a) where parents/carers have made a special request for authorise absence, for example –

- to allow a pupil to participate in a sporting or other curricular activity which is taking place on the day of the absence (without licence from the Local Authority) but on presentation of a supporting letter from coaches, instructors or tutors;
- to allow a sibling to attend with a child who is attending a sporting or other curricular event (as detailed above) if suitable other childcare arrangements can not be made.

vi) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil is absent for the purposes of travelling in advance to a sporting activity or other curricular activity (even if the activity days have been authorised) unless circumstances can be demonstrated as to why the absence is exceptional;
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;

2.4 Staff Training

The Head teacher will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. **Collection and analysis of data**

3.1 The School's administration staff will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the Head teacher. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance.

3.2 Attendance is monitored by class and Pupil Premium. It can also be analysed by reasons for absence, e.g. holiday during term time.

3.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

4. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

4.1 Attendance has a high profile at St James' Junior School and is regularly discussed in classes, assemblies and governors' meetings. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and weekly attendance figures are displayed prominently on the weekly Newsletter and school website.

4.2 First-day calling

School has in place a system of first response calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. The full First Day Contact Procedure is included as an attachment to the policy (page 12).

4.3 Working in partnership with parents

Attendance is tracked on a weekly basis and any children classified as persistent absentees (below 90%) or those children who are below 92% and approaching the persistent absentee category, will receive a letter/email home to parents accordingly (see flowchart pg 20). These children will continue to be monitored/parents contacted in line with the flowchart until attendance is above 90%.

At the end of each term, children will be grouped into 5 RAG rated bands.

Well done (Upper Green – 100%)

Well done (Green – 99.99-96%)

Upper Amber (95.9 – 92%)

Lower Amber (91.9-90%)

Red school attendance notification – (Below 90%)

RAGG – rated letters will be sent out to all parents stating current attendance percentages and further actions needed (see example wording on pg 17). It will be explained to parents who receive 'Red Letters' that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them and further attendance panel meetings will be arranged.

4.3.1 Excessive Bouts of Absence

Data will also be tracked on a weekly basis to identify any children who may be taking excessive bouts of absence, beyond what is considered a normal or expected frequency of childhood illness. Messages will be sent to parents when there has been 5 separate bouts of illness in an academic year, to explain that beyond the 5th bout, further absences will not be authorised without medical proof (see example wording on pg 18).

4.3.2 Unusual Patterns of Absence

Data will also be tracked on a weekly basis to identify any unusual patterns of absence which may include, for example, repeated absences/lateness on the same day every week and absences around school holidays. Messages will be sent to parents detailing the schools concerns and confirming that further absences will not be authorised without medical proof (see example wording on pg 18).

4.4 Formal partnership with parents

In cases where interventions in 4.3 are not working and children are remaining in the persistent absentees for a prolonged period, parents will be invited to meet with the Headteacher (or equivalent Senior Leader) to discuss an agreed Action Plan, created in conjunction with the Local Authority, attendance and inclusions team. These plans will be reviewed on a 4-weekly basis until the situation improves. If the situation doesn't improve the Headteacher will liaise with the LA about legal interventions (including possible prosecution as a last resort).

4.5 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive in school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late.

4.6 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the School Office. (It is their responsibility to order their school lunch at the same time.) **It is important that all pupils arriving late following this procedure.**

4.7 Incentives

Strong attendance is recognised during weekly celebration assembly time. A winning class is given the attendance trophy. At the end of each term, children who have 100% attendance will be presented with a certificate to recognise their achievement.

5. **Term-time Holidays**

Amendments to **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** came into force on September 1st 2013. These amendments remove all reference to 'family holidays' as well as the statutory threshold of 'ten school days'. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

5.1 School will consider every application for a holiday in term time individually, whilst paying heed to the statutory regulations. Our policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for

family holidays **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended holiday.

5.2 School will consider authorising holidays for:

- service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- parents who are subject to a strict and un-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect;

5.3 Requests for holidays for the following reason will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

5.4 School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving the reasons for the decision.

6. **Extended leave of absence**

6.1 In considering absence for extended trips overseas we will take account of the following:

- a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday';
- such visits may be important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up;
- parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at school (although parents could be encouraged to use the school holiday periods for at least part of their trip);
- the reasons for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, particularly for ethnic minority families, where huge distances and high costs are involved;

7. **Parents'/carers' responsibilities**

7.1 The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by St James' Junior School.

7.2 School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly and punctually;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

7.3 Parents will also be expected to:

- notify school on the first day of absence, giving an indication of how long the absence will be;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing reading diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. School will support parents to address their concerns.

8. Pupils' responsibilities

- 8.1 All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher or other adult in school.
- 8.2 Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

9. Governors' responsibilities

Section 175 (2)

- 9.1 The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Reviewing the policy

The school will review this policy each year. In writing this policy the following documents have been used:

- Children Missing education – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities November 2013 (DfE)
- Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

ATTENDANCE - A GUIDE FOR PARENTS (*information on school website*)

1. When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.45 a.m.** and the afternoon register at **1.10 p.m.**

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **9 a.m.** in the morning and **1.20 p.m.** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives between **8.55 a.m.** and **9.05 a.m.** he/she will be marked **late (Code L)**.

If your child arrives after **9.05 a.m.** he/she will be marked **absent (Code U)**.

(Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office. If a pupil is persistently late a meeting will be arranged with the Head Teacher and parents/carers.)

3. What do I do if my child is too ill to attend school?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

5. Will the School contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. The full first contact response is explained in the attachment at the rear of the policy.

6. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas trip to visit relatives. What should I do?

The school recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family. Contact your child's class teacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

The school would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs examinations. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence

7. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

8. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.



St James' C of E Junior School

First Response Procedure – Child Missing from Registration

1. 9.00 a.m. Registers saved on ScholarPack.
2. 9.10 a.m. Answerphone/absence calls listened to/attendance emails checked
3. 9.10 a.m. Daily Check carried out in office
4. By 9.30 a.m. Call to be made to first name on contact asking for absence reason.
5. 9.30 a.m. Headteacher to be notified of any absence of a child on the persistent absence list
6. 9.45 a.m. If no response, start calling additional names on contact list
7. Ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted
8. 10.00 a.m. If no reply send text and email to first and second contacts on list
9. 10.00 a.m. Alert HT/DSL that child is absent and no contact has been made within an hour of school start time
10. Home Visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agency involved.
11. Contact Police if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. This should be done using the 101 number.



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Headteacher: Mr Andrew Beattie



REQUEST FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FORM

- Please note that from 13th November 2024 all absences from school, other than for illness, must be notified to the school via this form. Any absences without a completed form will be recorded as unauthorised.
- For all illness notifications the school must be contacted using the procedures in the school attendance policy.

Good School Attendance

We believe that if pupils are to benefit fully from their education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

For an absence to be authorised, it must not be one which cannot be reasonably scheduled for outside of school hours/term time and/or it must meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances. More comprehensive details about unauthorised/authorised absence can be found in our school attendance policy, and we encourage parent/s to consult the policy when making a request for an absence from school. Guidance on the government website can also be consulted 'Working together to improve school attendance – August 2024' which details the most up to date guidance framework schools must follow. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Term-time Holidays

As you will be aware, Government Guidance advises that schools should not authorise requests for term time absence unless the school has received suitable evidence of exceptional circumstances. The Government does not consider a family holiday to be an exceptional circumstance.

You need to request a leave of absence by completing the form on the reverse of this notification. If the leave of absence is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised leave.

I must take this opportunity to remind you, that should you still choose to take your child out of school unauthorised, then the school must inform the absence to the Local Authority Attendance Team. The Education Act 1996 states that parents can be prosecuted if their child is not attending regularly and if you have parental responsibility, this could mean receiving any of the following:

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the headteacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a **fixed penalty notice**. The amount is £80 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £160 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. If a previous penalty notice has been issued the Local Authority may decide to proceed directly to **prosecution**.

Please complete and return the form on the reverse to the school office.

Best Regards

Mr A Beattie, Head teacher

St James' Junior School

"with exploring minds, and faith; we grow and learn together"

(FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY)			
Date Received			
Pupils Current Attendance:		Previous Absence Concerns?	YES
Unauthorised or Authorised (please circle accordingly):	UNAUTHORISED	AUTHORISED	
Signed by Head Teacher/Manager			
Date Parents Notified via Email & Registers Updated			
Details of further action			

REQUEST FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FORM

PUPIL'S NAME _____ CLASS: _____

Requested dates for leave of absence during school time:

Date from (first day of absence): a.m. or p.m.

Date to (last day of absence): a.m. or p.m.

Number of school days your child will be absent:

Reason for absence (please indicate why the above pupil will be absent from school) –

Medical/Dental Appointment Please indicate the name of the hospital/medical establishment and the time of appointment _____

Secondary School Visit Please indicate school name _____

Other reason Please explain the reason for the absence and any exceptional circumstances to support the absence request:

In making this request I/we can confirm that I/we have read and understood the information overleaf about requesting an absence from school in term time. Name(s) of Parent/Carer(s) making request:

Forename _____ Surname _____

Forename _____ Surname _____

Signed _____ Dated _____

(Please ensure you are giving at least 7 days' notice of the proposed absence; retrospective applications cannot be authorised)

You will be notified via email whether this absence will be authorised/unauthorised, please indicate your email address (if different to the one we normally contact you on):

TYPICAL UNAUTHORISED LEAVE OF ABSENCE RESPONSE (USUALLY EMAILED)

Good Morning,

Thank you for submitting a Leave of Absence in Term Time form. Due to the circumstances and reasons for this request, we can inform you that the absence has been unauthorised and the registers have been updated accordingly.

As detailed on the absence form, I am unable to authorise family holidays, except in the most exceptional of circumstances, however it is still important for the office to know when children are off, so thank you for completing the form and returning it.

In order to be fully transparent with families, we would like to explain that the local authority have a responsibility to track the amount of school time due to term-time absence. Each term they ask me to provide details on which children have taken holidays and for how many days they have been absent due to this holiday. Together with a combined poor attendance record and proof of previous incidents of taking holidays during term time could result in families receiving fixed-penalty notices.

This latest absence is the ** incident of holidays taken during term time since your child started at St James'. I must therefore be clear that it is likely that subsequent term-time holidays will result in a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority.

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL GUIDANCE ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

What is regular school attendance?

- Attending school everyday unless there is a very good reason for absence.
- Getting to school on time.
- Being present at school for both morning and afternoon sessions.

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Keep up with school work.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.
- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.
- Stay away from harm.

What does the law say about parental duty concerning children's education?

- Parents must make sure that their children receive efficient full time education in school or elsewhere.
- Once a child is registered at school, the parent must make sure that the child attends regularly.
- Parents should inform the school of the reasons for any unavoidable absence on the first day.

- Parents may request term time absence only in special or exceptional circumstances; this should be made in writing to the head teacher.
- Giving as much notice as possible.

At what age do children have to start school and when can they leave?

Children must receive full-time education from the **start of the school term after their fifth birthday** until the **end of June in the school year in which they turn 16**.

What is unauthorised absence?

Only the headteacher can decide if the reason given for absence is acceptable. If the head teacher decides that the reason given for absence is unacceptable, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Parents can face legal and financial sanctions if their child fails to attend school

- Fixed Penalty Notices to the amount of £ 120, this amount will reduce to £ 60 if paid within 21 days.
- An Education Supervision Order issued by the family court.
- Prosecution in a Magistrates' court.

EXAMPLE RAGG LETTER WORDING

Educational research conducted by the Department for Education tells us that children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age group.
- Develop good habits, maintain friendships and important life skills.
- Gain better qualifications and have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.

At St James' C of E Junior School we are committed to providing a safe and exciting learning environment and raising children and young people's school attendance to ensure they have the opportunity to get the best from their education and a good start in life. For more information about our Attendance Policy and procedures, please visit our school website or the school office.

Our whole school attendance target is 96%. Each term, you will receive a RAG letter (Red, lower Amber, upper Amber, lower Green, or upper Green) to highlight your child's individual percentage of attendance.

Well done (Upper Green – 100%)

I am very pleased to tell you that [[firstname]]'s attendance this year so far is 100%, which is an excellent achievement. Congratulations and thank you for your strong support on school attendance. Please share with [[firstname]] how pleased we are and encourage them to keep up the good work so we can send another "Green" letter next term.

Well done (Green – 99.99-96%)

I am very pleased to tell you that [[firstname]]'s attendance this school year so far is [[percent]], which is an excellent achievement. Congratulations and thank you for your strong support on school attendance. Please share with [[firstname]] how pleased we are and encourage them to keep up the good work aiming for 100% so we can send another "Green" letter next term.

Upper Amber (95.9 – 92%)

[[firstname]]'s attendance for this school year so far is [[percent]]%, which is below our school target set for all pupils. We understand that childhood illnesses and other exceptional family circumstances can be unpredictable and unavoidable, and we appreciate it when you let us know promptly that your child will be absent from school, however, we would ask you to encourage your child to aim for full attendance for the rest of the year. We monitor attendance on a weekly basis and ask for the support of all parents and carers in helping children achieve their attendance targets. We are keen to work with families to address school attendance issues in partnership together.

Lower Amber (91.9-90%)

[[firstname]]'s attendance so far this school year is [[percent]]%, which is below our school target set for all pupils. This is very close to the Red category (attendance of 90% or lower) which is well below our whole school attendance target and would raise concerns about persistent absenteeism.

We understand that childhood illnesses and other exceptional family circumstances can be unpredictable and unavoidable, and we appreciate it when you let us know promptly that your child will be absent from school. However, we are becoming concerned about the amount of learning and time with their peers that your child is missing so, we would ask you to encourage your child to aim for 100% attendance for the next term. This will ensure they do not fall into the Red category, where concerns may need to be raised formally.

We monitor attendance on a weekly basis and ask for the support of all parents and carers in helping children achieve their attendance targets. We are keen to work with families to address school attendance issues in partnership together.

Red school attendance notification – (Below 90%)

[[firstname]]'s attendance this year so far is [[percent]]%, which is well below our school target set for all pupils and raises concerns about persistent absenteeism.

We appreciate that [[firstname]]'s high rate of absence from school has been due to [unforeseen/repeated/ongoing illness/health/medical issues/another exceptional family circumstances which may need stating] and we will continue to work with you and your child to ensure their low school attendance has the minimum impact we can achieve on their learning and wellbeing.

EXAMPLE LETTER WORDING FOR EXCESSIVE BOUTS OF ABSENCE OR UNUSUAL PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

Excessive Bouts of Absence –

Upon a regular review of attendance, absence records show that whilst your child's attendance currently stands at **%, he/she has so far this school year, had 5 bouts of

absence. Whilst we appreciate that childhood illnesses are unpredictable and there is no specific threshold for what acceptable or normal for one child compared to another, it is our policy to contact parents at this stage to ensure that you are mindful of further absence now that we have made you aware of the situation. If there is a specific medical reason for the absences, which we are not aware of, then we would encourage you to speak to us so that we may better understand the pattern of absences. We will continue to monitor attendance, and as such, it is our policy to not authorise any further illness absence without medical proof. Thank you for your understanding.

Unusual Patterns of Absence –

Upon a regular review of attendance, absence records show that whilst your child's attendance currently stands at **%, we have identified an unusual pattern to absences which we wanted to make you aware of. The pattern is ***** (include relevant details about the absence pattern). Whilst we appreciate that childhood illnesses are unpredictable, it is our policy to contact parents at this stage to ensure that you are mindful of further absence now that we have made you aware of the situation. If there is a specific medical reason for the absences, which we are not aware of, then we would encourage you to speak to us so that we may better understand the pattern of absences. We will continue to monitor attendance, and as such, it is our policy to not authorise any further illness absence without medical proof. Thank you for your understanding.

St James C of E Junior School

Attendance Action Plan

STUDENT: D.O.B:

CONCERN: Currently Persistent absent. 8 separate bouts of absence this year. 1 bout of holiday taken during term time.

DATE OF ACTION PLAN:
To run for 4 weeks from
% attendance for year – 85.2%

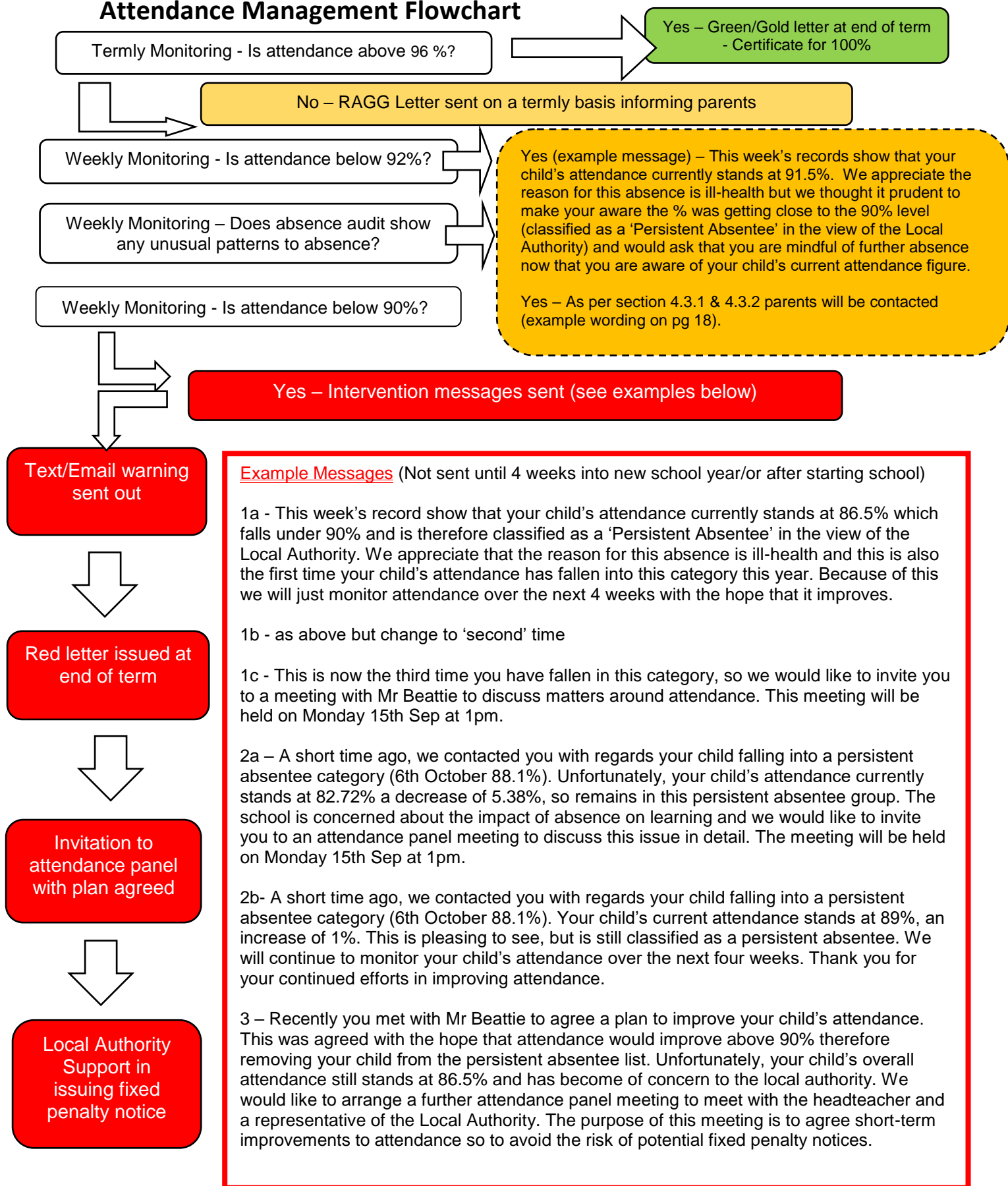
Date of review – 22/4/24
% attendance at review -

% ATTENDANCE: 85.2 Target - 90% in next 12 weeks. (17th June)

AIM: To increase attendance

AGREEMENT	ACTION	TIMESCALE	OUTCOME - Completed in review ****
PUPIL	To attend school every day on time. To speak to someone in school if there are any difficulties.	Immediately	
PARENT/CARER	To encourage and ensure **** attends school every day. ***** needs to attend school on time. To contact school on 1 st day of every absence before 9 a.m. To provide medical support for all absences. This can be a doctors note, appointment card or letter, copy of a prescription or sight of medication showing date prescribed and child's name, screen shot from the doctors computer detailing the visit. To attend all meetings and respond to calls and texts. To not have further holiday taken during term time.	Immediately Immediately As required As required As required Immediately	
SCHOOL	To support ***** in school If ***** is absent and there is no contact from home by 9.15 a.m. school to ring to ascertain reason. A home visit may be undertaken if deemed necessary. School to keep accurate attendance records. School to only authorise absence when there is confirmation that there was a genuine reason for absence from medical personnel.	Immediately Immediately Immediately	
OTHER			

Attendance Management Flowchart



Yes (example message) – This week’s records show that your child’s attendance currently stands at 91.5%. We appreciate the reason for this absence is ill-health but we thought it prudent to make you aware the % was getting close to the 90% level (classified as a ‘Persistent Absentee’ in the view of the Local Authority) and would ask that you are mindful of further absence now that you are aware of your child’s current attendance figure.

Yes – As per section 4.3.1 & 4.3.2 parents will be contacted (example wording on pg 18).

Example Messages (Not sent until 4 weeks into new school year/or after starting school)

1a - This week’s record show that your child’s attendance currently stands at 86.5% which falls under 90% and is therefore classified as a ‘Persistent Absentee’ in the view of the Local Authority. We appreciate that the reason for this absence is ill-health and this is also the first time your child’s attendance has fallen into this category this year. Because of this we will just monitor attendance over the next 4 weeks with the hope that it improves.

1b - as above but change to ‘second’ time

1c - This is now the third time you have fallen in this category, so we would like to invite you to a meeting with Mr Beattie to discuss matters around attendance. This meeting will be held on Monday 15th Sep at 1pm.

2a – A short time ago, we contacted you with regards your child falling into a persistent absentee category (6th October 88.1%). Unfortunately, your child’s attendance currently stands at 82.72% a decrease of 5.38%, so remains in this persistent absentee group. The school is concerned about the impact of absence on learning and we would like to invite you to an attendance panel meeting to discuss this issue in detail. The meeting will be held on Monday 15th Sep at 1pm.

2b- A short time ago, we contacted you with regards your child falling into a persistent absentee category (6th October 88.1%). Your child’s current attendance stands at 89%, an increase of 1%. This is pleasing to see, but is still classified as a persistent absentee. We will continue to monitor your child’s attendance over the next four weeks. Thank you for your continued efforts in improving attendance.

3 – Recently you met with Mr Beattie to agree a plan to improve your child’s attendance. This was agreed with the hope that attendance would improve above 90% therefore removing your child from the persistent absentee list. Unfortunately, your child’s overall attendance still stands at 86.5% and has become of concern to the local authority. We would like to arrange a further attendance panel meeting to meet with the headteacher and a representative of the Local Authority. The purpose of this meeting is to agree short-term improvements to attendance so to avoid the risk of potential fixed penalty notices.

4 - Good afternoon, on the 25th Dec we wrote to you detailing that your child had an attendance figure of 86.5% which fell below 90% and therefore was classified as a Persistent Absentee in the view of the local authority. I write with positive news that your child’s attendance currently stands at 95% and therefore is no longer on our Persistent Absentee list. Thank you for your support in this and I am delighted to share such positive news with you.

17. Dropping off and picking up before and after school

(Based on KAHSC v1)

Safeguarding policies and procedures

Schools have a duty to safeguard children in their care. An important part of this is considering how to ensure that pupils arrive and leave premises safely.

The following information details our policies and procedures about children being dropped off and collected to and from the school site, as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities. These policies and procedures reflect the age of our pupils.

This policy is shared with parents and carers when a child joins the school and we will ask parents and carers to acknowledge that they have understood the policy and agree to follow it when they complete admissions forms upon entrance to the school.

Who is dropping off and who is picking up children?

A vital part of keeping children safe is ensuring the school knows who is responsible for dropping off and picking up a child.

Gathering information from parents or carers

On enrolment to the school, we ask parents and carers to provide the following information for each child:

- the names and full addresses of parents and carers (including confirmation of parental responsibility or private fostering arrangements and any relevant paperwork)
- home, work and mobile phone numbers
- email addresses where appropriate
- two authorised adult contacts who may be called in the event of the parents or carers being unobtainable or in the case of an emergency
- information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child (with copies of any relevant legal documents).

The school uses a secure system to store this information and update it on an annual basis.

Children travelling to and from school without adult supervision

As a school, we advise parents and carers with children in Year 3 and 4 to make sure they are accompanied by an adult. Children in Year 5 and 6 may enter and leave the site without adult supervision, but only once we have received notification from parents/carers that this is what they want to happen.

There is no law that states what age children may travel to and from school unsupervised.

Parents and carers should make their decision based on their child's maturity, ability and the safety and distance of the route to school. To help parents and carers decide whether their child is ready to either stay at home or go out alone NSPCC have the following guidance -

[Home or out alone guide.](#)

Older siblings accompanying a child to or from school on a parent or carer's behalf

There is no law determining the age at which a sibling can accompany a child to school. It is ultimately up to parents and carers to decide whether they feel this is appropriate.

Factors that parents and carers should take into account include:

- the maturity of all the children involved;
- the length and nature of the journey home;
- the behaviour of all the children involved;
- the relationship between the children collecting or being collected.

As a school, we prefer not to send a child home with a sibling unless the sibling is aged 14 or older.

What happens with late pick-ups, or if no one turns up?

Being late for pick up or not turning up at all can be a cause for concern, so procedures are in place to deal with this.

What happens if parents or carers are late to collect their child?

Late Collection Procedure

In the event of lateness for collection the school will:

- contact parents or carers;
- call emergency contacts if parents and carers cannot be reached so an authorised adult can come and collect the child;
- keep records of late collections;
- after 3.30 p.m. children will be put into the schools after-school club for safety until they are collected (and maybe charged for this service – usually not until the second instance of lateness).

If parents and carers have authorised someone else to collect the child, they may not always be aware the child is being collected late, so it's important we keep them informed if this happens.

In the case of persistent lateness, the school will contact parents or carers outlining possible concerns and record such as a possible safeguarding concern using the school's safeguarding procedures.

What happens if parents and carers cannot collect the child?

If parents, carers or other authorised people are not able to collect the child and have arranged for someone else to come instead, the parents or carers must notify the school as soon as possible.

If nobody comes to collect the child (after 5.15 p.m.), the school will make every effort to contact the parents, carers or authorised person whose details have been supplied. Until the child is collected, they should stay at school in the care members of staff who have undergone the appropriate vetting and barring checks.

School staff will never:

- take the child home with them
- transport the child home
- go in search of parents/carers.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a full written report of an incidents of lateness past 5.15 p.m. This report should be added to the child's safeguarding file. If appropriate, this report should also be shared with children's social care.

Unless contacted or arrangements agreed between the school and parents, after 5.45 p.m. the school will apply child protection procedures and contact children's social care.

What happens if someone else comes to collect a child?

As a school, we will not allow children to go with any unauthorised person without first getting permission from parents or carers.

If a child's social worker is planning to collect them from school, this should be agreed in advance by the child's parents and carers.

If an unauthorised person arrives to collect the child, the school will contact the child's legal guardian. If the school is unable to make contact with the child's legal guardian, or the legal guardian does not give their permission, the school will explain that they are unable to release the child to anyone else without authorisation from the child's legal guardian.

If an unauthorised person refuses to leave the premises, becomes aggressive or violent or attempts an unauthorised removal of the child then it may be necessary to contact the police. This should be recorded as a safeguarding concern using the school's usual safeguarding procedures.

Who else needs to be involved?

Sometimes other external organisations are involved in drop off or pick up from school.

Activities on school premises

The school's procedures for dropping off and collecting pupils applies to after school clubs on the school premises.

When the school allows other organisations for activities or events, such as Whitehaven Harbour Youth Project, we ensure that we ask them to share their safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures with you and check that these are adequate.

What else do we need to consider?

Other Important Policies (which should be read in conjunction with this policy) –

- Child Protection Policy
- Overarching Safeguarding Statement
- Whole School Behaviour Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- School Traffic Management Plan 2023
- Complaints Procedure
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Vetting Policy Procedures
- Equality Policy