

All Saints C.E. Junior Academy



Attendance Policy 2025-2026



All Saints CE Junior Academy Vision

All Saints C.E Junior Academy is a caring and inclusive Church Academy – with extremely high standards of personal behaviour and a strong Christian ethos. We believe that our school vision and values should underpin every aspect of school life.

Our Academy Assertion is: ***With God, nothing is impossible Luke 1:37***

The values we aim to foster have been chosen by the whole school community, with each value supporting us in realising our school assertion. The values are Generosity, Respect, Hope, Resilience and Kindness.

GENEROSITY- makes things possible as it guides us to give to others those things which they need.

RESPECT- makes things possible as it creates an environment in which we feel safe and valued enabling us to do our best.

HOPE- makes things possible as it fosters positivity and creativity.

RESILIENCE- makes things possible as it allows us to see failures and barriers as temporary.

KINDNESS- makes things possible as it allows us to support and encourage others when they face difficulties.

Through God's grace and example, we are supported to develop and enact these values within our school and our community both locally and globally.

Overview

The staff and governors of All Saints CE Junior Academy have taken account of the guidance offered by both the East Sussex Local Authority (LA) and the DfE (Department for Education) in formulating this policy. It aims to set out the strategies in place within the school to encourage all parents/carers to fulfil their responsibilities and work in partnership with the school to ensure the highest possible attendance of all our pupils.

We are also proud to be a part of the Hastings Opportunity Area Attendance Charter (Appendix 2), to address historically low levels of attendance within the area and to give our children the very best start in life.

Introduction

The single most important principle, as stated in the DfE guidance, is that:

'Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly.'

It is a parents/carers responsibility to ensure that there are suitable arrangements for their child to travel to and from the academy safely. Similarly, it is a parents/carers responsibility to contact the academy if their child is unable to attend for any reason.

Existing Local Authority guidance states that schools and academies must respond to the non-arrival of a pupil at their place of education. It is important that parents/carers appreciate that if a pupil does not arrive at the academy, teachers have no way of knowing whether that non-arrival is due to them not being sent, to them having had an accident on the way to the academy, or due to them being sent by parents but not arriving. Parents/carers will be advised regularly, to contact the academy on the first day that their child is absent.

Strategies adopted by the school to encourage all parents/carers to fulfil their responsibilities and work in partnership with the school

In line with LA recommendations, the academy has adopted a pro-active approach to encourage all parents/carers to make contact with the academy early on the first day of their child's absence.

This includes:-

- Sending letters, that explain briefly the expectations placed on parents/carers, that have failed to notify the academy of a reason for a child's absence.
- Sending individual attendance data to each parent/carer in the child's end of year report.
- Sending termly notifications via Class Dojo to all parents reminding them of their responsibility to:-
 - a) Contact the academy as early as possible if they know their child will be absent. This can be done on the dedicated answer phone (01424 421397)
 - b) Provide an up-to-date contact number that can be used at any time during the school day, and an additional back-up contact number. Mobile phone numbers are used to call and text parents regarding absences.
- Reminding parents regularly of their responsibility to inform the academy if there has been a change to contact numbers or arrangements.
- Sending written follow-up to parents who have failed to contact the school on the first day of absence as a matter of urgency.
- Celebrating success with parents and the whole school in Celebration Assembly when children's attendance is good. The class with the highest attendance percentage receives an award at the end of each term (6x a year)

Key Stage 2 Pupils

It is the expectation of the academy that pupils in Years 3 and 4 will continue to be accompanied to the academy by a responsible adult, since it is ROSPA'S (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) advice that children under 9 years of age are not normally competent in judging distances and are therefore more at risk in crossing roads.

As older pupils increase in their independence, parents/carers may allow their child to make their own way to the academy without direct supervision. This can be a difficult decision and will depend on a variety of factors such as the child's maturity, local circumstances, the route to be taken, etc. If children are travelling unaccompanied to or from the academy, then parents/carers need to inform the academy of the fact in writing. If there are daily changes parents will need to inform class teachers in writing via classroom dojo.

The academy is open to accept responsibility for pupils from 8.30a.m to 3.15p.m. unless a child is attending a supervised before or after school club. Pupils attending after school clubs will need to have safe arrangements for returning home.

There may be occasions when messages from parents regarding absences of their child may be sent through a sibling or a friend. Parents will be reminded that they will need to write a note to accompany the verbal message.

In addition to regular letters reminding parents/carers of their responsibilities, the message will be reinforced through other ways:

- Information in the school prospectus.
- Discussion with parents.
- Raising pupils' awareness, such as 'stranger-danger' education, the need to return to their teacher if they are not met at the end of the day and the use of the signing in and out books at the academy office desk.

For families for whom English is a second language or for whom reading may be difficult, every effort will be made to have the relevant information made accessible to them. (This may take the form of a translation when required.)

What the school will do on the first day of absence

The academy provides an answerphone service for out of office hours (4.30 p.m. to 7.30 a.m.). Class registers are called at 8.45 a.m. and absences will be checked by the office admin staff against the answerphone messages, the names of those listed in the late arrivals book and those on authorised absence. The homes of any absent pupil for whom there is no explanation will receive a phone call in the first instance, followed by a text message if not answered to ask for clarification of the absence. If an answer can be obtained then the parent is politely reminded to contact the academy themselves in the event of the child being absent in the future. Where no answer can be obtained, a letter regarding the failure to let the school know about the absence will be emailed to the parent.

If, for example during a flu epidemic, there are a large number of absentees for whom there has been no first day contact, the academy will prioritise who they try to contact first. The text messaging service allows multiple texts to be sent at once, saving vast amounts of time.

Prioritisation - examples of children and families that will be given priority are:

- Children with a Child Protection plan.
- Looked after children.
- Known truants.
- Children known to travel to school alone, particularly those with medical conditions such as asthma, epilepsy etc.
- Specific academy concerns over a child or family.
- Children known to have had recent emotional difficulties, behavioural, friendship difficulties, bullying, history of running away from home or the academy etc.
- Children whose parents are normally fastidious in making first day contact.

- Friends absent on the same day where the academy has particular concerns that they may be truanting or absconding together.

Children who have a Child Protection Plan or are known to have active social work involvement are considered to be at high risk. If the academy is unable to contact the parent/carer then Social Services will be informed.

For other children on the priority list, the academy will try to make contact on two separate occasions during the morning, using the telephone numbers/contacts given by the parents. If this is not successful then the academy will send an email letter home stating that they have tried to make contact and asking for the parent to make contact to explain the absence and provide up to-date contact numbers where necessary.

There may be occasions when local transport conditions result in a significant number of pupils being late (e.g. a bus breakdown, weather conditions etc). In such circumstances, the academy will make a judgement as to how to modify procedures; for example, by making a member of staff available to contact parents where there are concerns over their child's non-attendance.

The academy will keep a simple log of when texts/telephone calls are made (e.g. time, number called, engaged, no answer, unavailable, message left on answer phone, contact made, reason given for absence and non-contact.) This is then transferred to the children's individual records on Arbor.

There is no expectation on the academy to make contact on the second or subsequent day of absence. However, a phone call or text will be made every day a child is absent if no message has been received from the parent. There will be occasions when the academy will wish to follow up an absence of more than one day, for example, when there is a pattern of such absences that is believed to be parentally condoned.

A telephone call from the parent/carer is expected on each day that the child is absent from the academy. In the case of a child being absent for five or more days a letter and some form of medical evidence is expected.

Late arrivals and close of registers

Pupils arriving after 8.45am must enter the academy via the main entrance, past the academy office, where they will be met by our admin staff. They will record the child's name, time of arrival and reason for their lateness. This will be recorded as L on their attendance register but is a present mark. Children arriving after the close of registers at 9.15am will be recorded as unauthorised for the whole morning session (U mark). Parents/carers of persistent late comers will be contacted by letter and expected to improve punctuality immediately. Identified families may be offered support from an attendance key worker. 10 sessions of arrival after the close of register can incur a fine.

Additional support strategies adopted by the school

The academy has appointed a Safeguarding and Attendance Officer. The Safeguarding and Attendance Officer will review attendance weekly of all pupils, review patterns of pupils absences and alert parents and staff to any concerns arising from this review. Meetings will be arranged between the academy and parents, to identify difficulties and deciding on appropriate support / ways forward in a record of contact form.

All pupils are deemed to share some responsibility in attending the academy regularly and on time. Attendance is celebrated in whole school celebration assembly at the end of the week where the class with the highest attendance is shared. At the end of each term (6x yearly) an award is given to the class with the highest attendance record for the term.

Exceptional circumstances for absence other than sickness

Authorisation in the case of a family bereavement will be considered on compassionate grounds. Written application for authorisation of the observance of religious festivals may also be considered.

Persistent absence

The academy is aware of identified children and families and tracks attendance patterns and explanations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Headteacher are pro-active in seeing families and arranging individual programmes to meet needs.

Withdrawal from learning

Some reasons given in the past for requests for absence during term time have been:

- Large family gatherings
- Cheaper holiday flights
- Surprise holidays given by other family members
- Difficulties for some parents/carers in being granted time off work during school holidays
- Visiting extended families overseas
- Cultural visits

Each of these examples has merit and has been identified by the family concerned as exceptional. Whilst we understand these difficulties, within our attendance policy we have to point out that:

- There is no entitlement for parents to remove their child from the academy for the purposes of a holiday in term time.
- It is the academy and not the parents who decide whether an absence is to be authorised.
- Any absence breaks the continuity of learning.

- The education of all children is disrupted by teachers having to give time to help children catch up on missed work.
- If children miss school regularly, they are likely to feel less confident when they are in school.
- The Team Around the School and Setting (TASS) and Attendance Support Team (AST) from the local authority support those schools and academies which follow the guidance on attendance, issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

As an academy working within East Sussex, we have agreed not to authorise withdrawal from learning absences in term time as part of our commitment to helping every child achieve their full potential. If parents/carers still plan to holiday in term time, we require the Withdrawal from Learning Application form to be completed at least 14 days before the planned absence. A member of the senior leadership team will telephone parents upon receipt of the form and record their decision. A copy of the decision is sent to the parents' home address.

Transfer to secondary school or other primary school

Pupils' attendance records are transferred to their Secondary school and between Primary schools if they move and information about unauthorised absence patterns will be shared in transition discussion between the receiving school/academies. If through family circumstance a move is necessary for the pupil to attend a different primary school, then the parents must be responsible in notifying All Saints CE Junior Academy in writing immediately, noting their intended last date of attendance, forwarding address and the names of future schools applied for. Failure to do this could result in the family being seen to support unauthorised absence.

Withdrawal from Learning Application: For Exceptional Circumstances

Did you know that across the year there are just 190 school days? That means there are already 175 days set aside for weekends, holidays, family visits and rewarding days out. We believe every school day counts to give your child the greatest opportunity of attaining a good education and to support a happy and healthy future.

With 175 days already marked out as ‘non-school-days’, you should have an exceptional reason to withdraw your child from school. The following are considered illegitimate reasons and are likely to be rejected and unauthorised:

- **Trips to visit family/friends**
 - **Your child’s birthday**
- **Cheaper family holidays**
 - **Tickets to sports/culture events**




100% is recognised as an expected level of school attendance. If your child is out of school for 3 days each term, then their attendance is below 95% and they’re spending more days out of school than in it! Should your child need time off due to illness, this figure will quickly become even lower. Because five days of school equates to 25 hours of learning, catching up with extra work out of school is unrealistic.

From a young person’s perspective, missing schools means:

- **Missing out on fun projects and school activities**
- **Struggling to catch up on work**
- **Disconnecting with school friends**

The vast majority of headteachers do not authorise any absence in term time, in fact, many schools refused 100% of requests last year.

Think twice about whether you want to proceed.

WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?					
190 days	180 days	178 days	163 days	161 days	143 days
100%	95%	94%	86%	85%	75%
Good 		Worrying 		Serious Concern 	
Only 1-2 day missed per term		Between 3-8 days missed per term		More than 9 days missed per term	

To be completed by parent/carer:

Childs Name..... Tutor Group/ Class

Date of withdrawal from learning..... Date of return to learning.....

Total number of learning days missed.....

Reason withdrawal from learning is requested:

Your child has the right to a full time education and the opportunities that this can bring. We hope that you will work in partnership with us to make sure that your child attends school every day, allowing them access to the education they deserve.

I understand that if the request is unauthorised the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the absence taken and a legal intervention may be instigated in the form of a Penalty Notice or Simple Caution. If a Penalty Notice is issued it will be to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. I understand that if I do not pay this will result in legal action.

Name of Parent/Carer
.....

Signed:..... Date:

Home Address

.....

This form will be submitted to the Headteacher for review. A senior member of staff will conduct a telephone interview with you to discuss the request and to confirm the decision.

Headteacher decision:

Name of child:..... Class..... Year Group.....

Date of telephone interview:.....

Date decision form sent home:.....

Authorised: Your request has been authorised for the following dates: /...../..... to/...../.....

Unauthorised: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates:/...../..... to/...../.....

Penalty Notice request to ESBAS attaching telephone interview log

Headteacher signature..... Date:.....

APPENDIX 1 – Hastings Opportunity Area Attendance Charter



Hastings-wide Charter for Promoting Good Attendance for Children and
Young People
2nd Edition- April 2021

HASTINGS WIDE CHARTER FOR PROMOTING
GOOD
ATTENDANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE



The revised Attendance Charter is a collaborative approach to promoting good attendance within schools across Hastings and St Leonards, so that all children and young people can fulfil their potential. The Charter takes into account the new challenges in the context of Coronavirus (COVID 19) so that all Hastings schools are confident that the approach they are taking is shared.

All those signing the Charter agree to uphold a set of joint principles and to work together to implement the Charter. East Sussex County Council have agreed to support the Charter and work together with schools to ensure a partnership approach to the Charter implementation. The Charter will seek to strengthen support from key multi agency partners and further support our shared approach to school attendance.

All Saints CE Junior Academy School Agrees To:

- 1) Elect a senior leader, an Attendance Champion responsible for implementing the attendance strategy, and elect and train a Governor responsible for overseeing attendance;
- 2) Have in place a clear attendance policy whose effectiveness is regularly monitored and reviewed by senior leadership team and reported to Governors.
- 3) Appoint a member of staff who is responsible for managing attendance across the school and liaising with appropriate safeguarding leads.
- 4) Implement a robust approach to track and monitor pupil attendance, so that action can be taken swiftly for students whose attendance is causing concern, that 'patterns' and themes in respect of student absence can be analysed and non-attendance due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) can be managed appropriately.
- 5) Implement an enriched and engaging curriculum and enrichment programme for all pupils, that inspires children to attend school every day;
- 6) Implement suitable preventative and early interventions aimed at pupils and families at risk of poor attendance, alongside monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these;
- 7) Engage and involve parents / carers and the community in the developing attendance approaches, particularly those parents whose children are most at risk of ongoing or persistent absence issues;
- 8) Commit to multi-agency working to address underlying issues facing families and communities; including a commitment to active engagement with wider team around the child

and whole family approaches to supporting children and families with more complex or entrenched needs.

9) Share and implement 'best and emerging practice' in respect of what is working to improve attendance particularly in the context of Coronavirus (Covid- 19) for those children and families most at risk of persistent absence.

10) Review the ESCC Attendance Guidance, taking note of the best practice recommendations around safeguarding pupils and following leavers/ deletion from role, expectations

Hastings-wide Charter for Promoting Good Attendance for Children and Young People:
School attendance is everyone's business: Together we can make a difference



Schools agree to also implement the following common practices:

- Take their attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (morning) and once during the second session (in the afternoon). They will record if the pupil is:
 - Present;
 - Attending an approved educational activity;
 - Absent due to illness/medical appointment;
 - Absent – unauthorised; or
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances;
 - Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19).

- Contact pupil's parents/carers on a pupil's first day of absence, to establish the reasons for absence and mark the attendance register accordingly. Then contact the pupil every day that there are subsequent unexplained absences.

- Close their register 30 minutes after the start of the school day. All pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked with the code U or with another absence code such as I or M. Pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded in line with current guidance.

- Headteachers across all Hastings schools will not authorise any holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers will also commit to communicate effectively with families in respect of planned absences, withdrawal from learning and quarantine periods, which may then impact a pupil's term time attendance.

- Monitor patterns of late arrival amongst pupils. Those pupils who are persistently late (late more than once a week for a period of a month) will be contacted and a plan put in place to address this;

- Monitor and track the attendance of all pupils on weekly basis.

- Where pupils have a concerning decline in attendance, over one term and/or have had 10 sessions of absence (unauthorised and/or authorised absence over a 6 school week

period), schools will contact parents/carers and will consider holding an attendance meeting to review their child's attendance with them and that will set clear targets for improvement.

- Liaise with schools where children from the same/linked families attend, so that there is a shared approach to promoting good attendance and in respect of
- sanctions for families whose attendance is a concern.

- Where a pupil has had two sickness absences in a half term or has a sickness absence of three consecutive days, and if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide
- medical evidence to support illness. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.
- For the school year 2020 to 2021 ensure the highest level of engagement with the national effort to track the effect of COVID 19 on educational settings. Complete and return the daily record of attendance in the educational settings status form. Hastings-wide Charter for Promoting Good Attendance for Children and Young People:
- School attendance is everyone's business: Together we can make a difference

East Sussex County Council agrees to work proactively with schools on a core basis, through the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS), to build capacity around supporting and managing attendance. This work will include supporting schools to:

- prioritise attendance and put appropriate staff in place with dedicated time and training to do the role
- identify attendance issues early through data analysis
- take a holistic view of attendance issues and adopt an early intervention approach
- have challenging conversations to tackle attendance issues
- review communications about attendance, to make them as effective as possible
- use legal intervention as a last resort.

In addition, referrals for individual learners can be made through the ISEND Front Door and, where the core criteria for attendance support is met, ESBAS will allocate a practitioner to take forward the 10-week core attendance support.




Schools may also buy in bespoke early intervention attendance support for individual learners through the traded services available to all schools.

Schools can continue to request penalty notices where appropriate for:

- term time holidays (minimum of 10 sessions in total - 5 school days)
- persistent unauthorised absence (minimum of 10 unauthorised absences during a 10 school week period)
- persistent lateness (minimum of 10 unauthorised late absences within a 10 school week period)

Hastings Opportunity Area will support schools to share their learning from implementation of the Charter to enhance our town wide approach to improving attendance. Hastings

Opportunity Area will continue to work to resolve any barriers to implementation and will seek to enhance a multi-agency approach to improving attendance.

<p>Signed</p>  <p>Your Name Ms Katharine Hurd Head Teacher All Saints CE Junior Academy</p>	<p>Signed</p>  <p>Iona Wooderson Senior Manager Intervention and Support Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (ISEND) ESCC</p>	<p>Signed</p>  <p>Richard Meddings Independent Chair Hastings Opportunity Area</p>
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