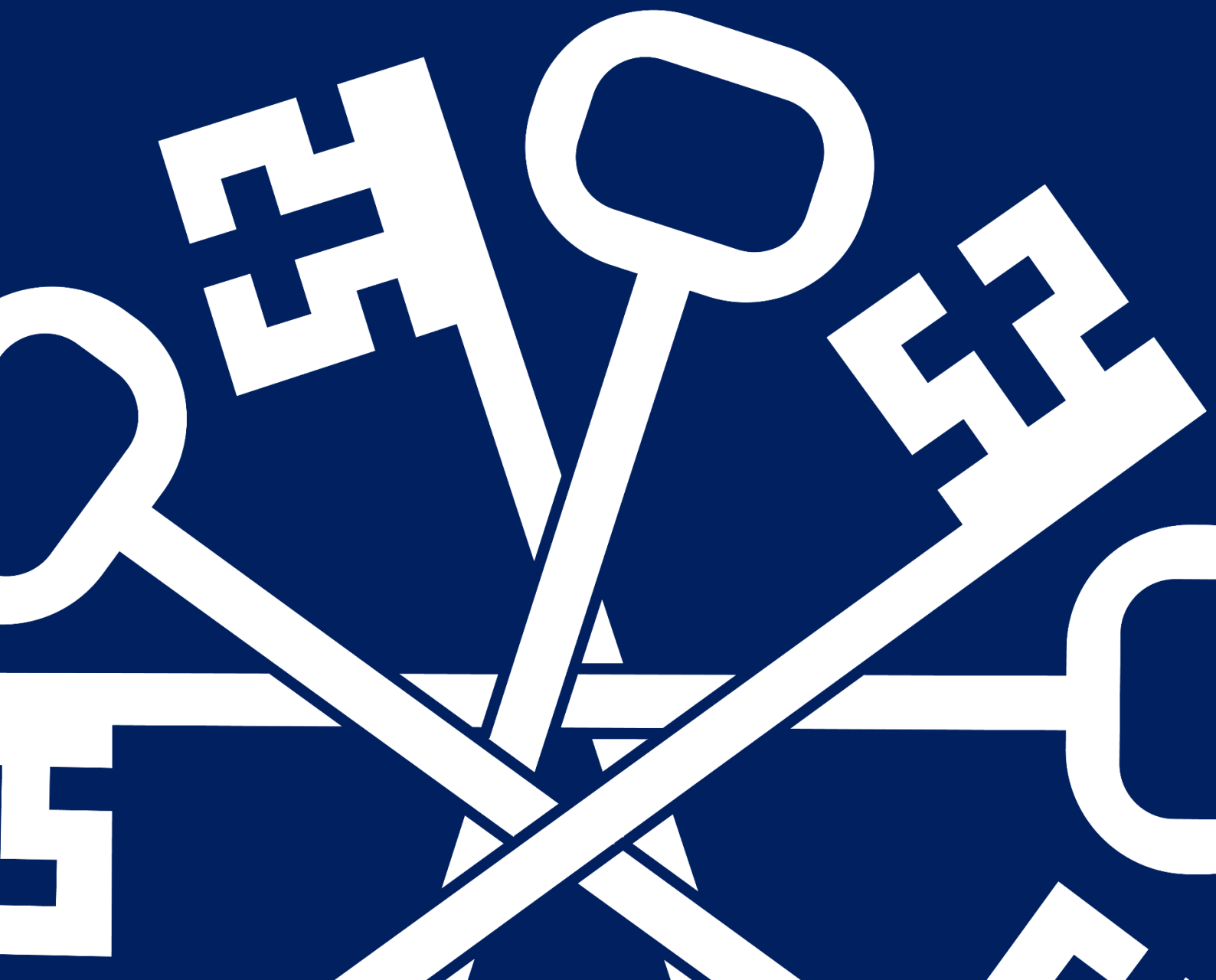
KEYS ACADEMIES TRUST

Attendance Policy
Version 1.1



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1. Policy Statement

1.1. At the heart of our mission is the belief that every individual has untapped potential waiting to be unlocked. By fostering an environment that challenges and supports growth, we want to create pathways for social mobility. By providing the right tools, guidance, and opportunities, we enable each person to overcome barriers and reach their fullest potential.

1.2. We want our schools to not only places of learning but vibrant communities where every person feels they truly belong. Within this students, teachers, and support staff alike should feel they are developing and succeeding. This success should be an achievable reality for all, irrespective of background or circumstance. It may be quite different for each of us, but the key is the feeling of pride in doing well and enjoyment of the journey.

1.3. We are committed to building inclusive environments where the uniqueness of every individual is celebrated, and where collective growth is the norm.

2. Change Summary

2.1. This is the first policy iteration.

3. Introduction

3.1. At Jack Hunt Academy, we recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most from their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a wide range of evidence illustrating the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education.

3.2. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

3.3. The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our Academy Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance including the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing education or absent from the Academy.

3.4. This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our Academy ethos to:

a) Work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

b) Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.

c) Ensure every pupil has access to the suitable, full-time education to which they are entitled.

d) Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at the Academy

e) Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities whilst at the Academy and beyond.

3.5. Our policy outlines the Academy's commitment to attendance. Our policy aims to provide clear guidance to all staff, parents & carers, pupils and governors/trustees about the responsibilities and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

3.6. Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

a) Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.

b) Raising and maintaining a whole Academy awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

c) Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

3.7. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the Academy is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

4. Promoting regular attendance

4.1. At Jack Hunt Academy, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our Academy's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

4.2. Mrs W Gooding, Assistant Headteacher, is the Senior Attendance Champion at Jack Hunt Academy and leads the Academy in its approach to attendance. Other key members of the Attendance Team are listed below:

Role	Name	Contact details
Attendance Officer Years 7, 10, 11	TBC	attendance@jha.keystrust.org

Attendance Officer Years 8, 9	Ms R Adcock	radcock@jha.keystrust.org
Attendance Administrative Assistant	Ms D Bark	dbark@jha.keystrust.org
Attendance Administrative Assistant	Mrs F Dobbing	fdobbing@jha.keystrust.org
Named Trust Education Committee for Attendance	TBC	

4.3. Improving attendance at Jack Hunt Academy is everyone's business, it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all Academy staff, parents, pupils, and the wider Academy community. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of Academy staff.

4.4. To help us all to focus on this, we will:

a) Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.

b) Give parents/carers information about attendance in our newsletters.

c) Promote the benefits of high attendance.

d) Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.

e) Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.

f) Reward good attendance and punctuality though half termly prize draws.

g) Enable parents/carers to constantly track their child's attendance

h) Regularly remind parents/carers of the positive correlation between Academy attendance and attainment

i) Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance become a cause for concern

j) Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. The Academy Committee and Trust Education Committee of Jack Hunt Academy recognises the importance of attendance and promotes it across the Academy's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

a) Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend Jack Hunt Academy every day and are safeguarded from harm.

b) Identifying a member of the Academy Committee to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior attendance champion.

c) Ensuring Academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the Academy's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.

d) Ensuring the Academy engages and works effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to attendance.

e) Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping Academy leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

f) Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker or youth justice worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.

g) Ensuring all Academy staff receive adequate training on attendance

h) Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required.

i) Reviewing the Academy's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis.

5.2. The Senior Leadership Team at Jack Hunt Academy will:

a) Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to **all** pupils and their parents.

b) Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.

c) Ensure that there is a whole Academy approach which reinforces good attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.

d) Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.

e) Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.

f) Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.

g) Ensure that there is a named senior attendance champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.

h) Return attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required.

i) Report the Academy's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Trust Education Committee.

j) Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.

k) Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.

l) Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

m) Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

n) Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

5.3. All staff at Jack Hunt Academy will:

a) Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to **all** pupils and their parents.

b) Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.

c) Contribute to a whole Academy approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.

d) Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.

e) Follow systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.

f) Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.

g) Contribute to the evaluation of Academy strategies and interventions.

h) Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

5.4. The Academy Attendance Team, working with the Student Support Officers, will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. They will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

a) Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.

b) Attend weekly meetings with relevant staff to discuss data and necessary responses

c) Implementing strategies for promoting excellent attendance across the Academy

d) Implementing strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.

e) Managing individual pupil casework files.

f) Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of a attendance contract.

g) Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from the Academy without contact from parents.

h) Taking an active lead in delivering whole Academy initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.

i) Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

5.5. Jack Hunt Academy requests that parents:

a) Ask the Academy for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life so that support can be offered at the earliest opportunity.

b) Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.

c) Ensure their child has regular attendance at the Academy.

d) Instil the value of education and regular Academy attendance within the home environment.

e) Contact the Academy each day their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.

f) Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of Academy hours.

g) Inform the Academy of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

h) Support the Academy by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with the Academy, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both the Academy and home.

i) Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.

j) Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

5.6. Pupils will:

a) Be aware of the Academy's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to pupils by Academy staff, parents and through the Academy timetable.

b) Speak to their tutor or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at the Academy or at home which may impact on their attendance.

c) Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate equipment and be on time for all lessons.

d) Follow the Academy procedure should they arrive late.

6. Understanding types of absence

6.1. Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of other pupils. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at the Academy is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from the Academy, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

6.2. Every half-day absence has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

6.3. For the purpose of this policy, the Academy defines:

a) "Absence" as:

i. Arrival at the Academy after the register has closed

ii. Not attending the Academy for any reason

b) "Regular" attendance as:

i. Attendance at every session the Academy is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

c) **Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from the Academy for a genuine reason such as:

i. An absence for sickness for which the Academy has granted leave

ii. Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the Academy day, for which the Academy has granted leave

iii. Religious or cultural observances for which the Academy has granted leave

iv. An absence, authorized by the Academy for a family emergency or unavoidable cause

d) **Unauthorised absences** are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted such as:

i. Parents keeping children away from the Academy unnecessarily or without reason e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;

ii. Absences which have never been properly explained

iii. Arrival at the Academy after the register has closed

iv. Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

v. Day trips and holidays taken during term-time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.

vi. Leaving the Academy for no reason during the day.

vii. Any other absence in term time which has not been agreed.

This type of absence can lead to the Academy referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

7. Persistent and severe absence

7.1. A pupil is defined by the Government as a **'persistent absentee' (PA)** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Over a full academic year this would be 19 school days, 38 sessions, 104.5 hours of learning missed. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

7.2. A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent' (SA)**. Jack Hunt Academy will work with families to understand the barriers to attendance for these pupils and will be keen to work with these pupils and their parents/carers to support a return to full time education.

7.3. The attendance of all pupils at our Academy is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are risk of becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

7.4. If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice for parentally condoned absence, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

7.5. Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

8. Leave of absence

8.1. We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there may be times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances'. At Jack Hunt Academy, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

8.2. Generally the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

8.3. Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must submit a completed 'Leave of Absence Request Form' at least one month before the planned leave (see Appendix 2). Jack Hunt Academy will treat each application individually and will respond to all applications in writing.

8.4. If a Leave of Absence Request Form is not completed and the leave is taken, it will be marked as unauthorised. Retrospective requests will not be considered and will also result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the Academy may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

8.5. When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, the Academy will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

9. Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

9.1. Parents should try to make appointments outside of Academy hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the Academy in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of lessons for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the Academy day, they will be required to show evidence of the appointment before being allowed to leave the Academy site.

9.2. In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the Academy's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence. In line with DfE guidance, if there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns. If the Academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

9.3. Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. Parents will be invited to attend an attendance meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, the Academy may liaise with the child's healthcare professional.[1]

9.4. Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, the Academy will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school'.

10. Pupil absence for the purposes of religious observance

10.1. Jack Hunt Academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the Academy will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the Academy.

11. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils

11.1. In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) Jack Hunt Academy will authorise the absence of a pupil who is a mobile child[2] and is unable to attend the Academy because the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place.

11.2. To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and Jack Hunt Academy.

11.3. Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance falls below an acceptable level, consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.

11.4. To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

a) Advise Jack Hunt Academy of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and

b) Inform Jack Hunt Academy regarding proposed return dates.

12. Jack Hunt Academy procedures

12.1. Register keeping and recording

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

At Jack Hunt Academy the AM register is taken at 8.40am and closes at 9.10am. The PM registration is taken at 12.30pm.

The register records whether pupils are present or absent using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes.

12.2. Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from Jack Hunt Academy, parents must contact the Academy **before 8.30am on each day of absence**, identifying a **detailed reason** for absence and the expected date of return.

Tel: 01733 263526

Email: attendance@jha.keystrust.org

If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

Should parents wish to share more details re. their child's absence or to seek further support for their child, they should contact their child's Student Support Officer:

Year	Name	Email
7	Mrs W Ellis	wellis@jha.keystrust.org
8	Mrs H Yeoman	hyeoman@jha.keystrust.org
9	Ms B Adama	badams@jha.keystrust.org
10	Ms J Teta	JTETA-KAZANTZIDI@jha.keystrust.org

[1] This is in accordance with the NSCP Joint Protocol between Health Services & Schools in respect of the management of pupil absence from school when medical reasons are cited

[2] A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

11	Mr K Cliff	kcliff@jha.keystrust.org
12/13	Ms R Innes	rinnes@jha.keystrust.org

If your child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the Academy:

i. The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in the Academy after close of register at 9.10am and where no reason for absence is known. You will receive notification from truancy call that your child is not in the Academy. Parents should respond to the truancy call message using the contact details above to inform the Academy of the reason for absence.

ii. If we do not receive a reason for absence or have concerns re. a student's absence, a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding.

We will also inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from the Academy in line with statutory requirements.

12.3. Late arrival at Jack Hunt Academy

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can lead to irregular attendance patterns. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their tutor and/or Head of Year.

At Jack Hunt Academy all pupils are expected to arrive by 8.40am when the Academy day begins. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this – the Academy gates open at 8.20am. The Academy gates close at 8.40am and all pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main reception. If their arrival is before 9.10 it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

Jack Hunt Academy operates a same day detention system for late arrivals. Unless there is an exceptional reason for lateness, authorized by the Academy, a same day late detention is issued to late arrivals. Parents are notified of this by a text message during the day. The length of these detentions is determined as outlined below:

Number of lates to Academy within the half term	Length of detention
1 - 4	30 minutes
5 - 10	60 minutes
11 +	90 minutes
*for all unauthorised late arrivals after 9.10 a 60 minute on the day detention is given.	

The Academy register will officially close at 9.10am. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Unauthorised lateness could result in XXX Academy referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our pupils.

12.4. Support systems

At Jack Hunt Academy we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in the Academy. Parents are encouraged to inform the Academy of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour during the Academy day, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the Academy identify any additional support that may be required. Please share any such concerns with your child's SSO.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The Academy will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies which may be used to support you include:

i. Write to you if your child's attendance and/or punctuality is causing a concern

ii. Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with your child's SSO

iii. Arrange a further meeting so that you may discuss the situation with your child's SSO, Attendance Officer and where appropriate School Attendance Champion

iv. Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child

v. Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate or undertake an Early Help Assessment with you

vi. Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate)

vii. Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions

It is of upmost importance for pupils and parents/carers to attend scheduled meetings. Jack Hunt Academy wants to be able to work with students and parents/carers to offer appropriate support to improve attendance.

12.5. Attendance rewards & interventions

Whatever a student's percentage attendance, for each two-week period for which they have 100% attendance and no lates, they receive an entry into the half-termly prize attendance draw.

% Attendance	Category	Action may include

100 - 92	All good	Bronze, Silver, Gold & Platinum certificates
< 92%	At risk of becoming PA	A1 sent
< 90%	PA	A2 sent inviting parents/carers in for SAM Student tab set up on 'concerns' log and regularly updated by SSO Whilst < 90%, SSO should aim to communicate with home at least fortnightly to either congratulate on improved attendance or to discuss on-going concerns
< 90%	PA and parent/carer did not attend SAM	A2Na sent offering parents/carers a further opportunity to attend SAM
< 90%	PA and parent/carer did not attend either of SAMs	A2Nb sent
< 87%	At risk of PN for PA	A3 sent inviting parents/carers to meet with SSO and SAO. Attendance contract agreed
< 85%		A4 sent inviting to PNWM
< 85% and > 9 sessions absent in last 10 weeks	Action PN for PA.	Action PN
< 50%	Severely absent	Agree a joint approach involving support from LA. May include: Whole family plan EHCP AP Children's social care services

12.6. Part-time timetables

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to implement a temporary, reduced timetable where a pupil's individual needs indicate they cannot currently access a full-time education and it would not be in their best interest to do so. Part-time timetables cannot be used to manage a pupil's behaviour and will not be treated as a long-term solution. There will be a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. Parents/carers will always be consulted before a part-time timetable is agreed and there will be a written agreement with them. Part-time timetables will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

Peterborough City Council guidance, will be followed when issuing all part-time timetables.

13. School attendance and the law

13.1. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

13.2. Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

13.3. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

14. National Framework for Penalty Notices

14.1. There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

14.2. Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

14.3. For further information see the Peterborough City Council Code of Conduct for issuing fixed penalties regarding school attendance.

14.4. Jack Hunt Academy will work with parents and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, support will be formalised and where necessary, working with the LA, legal measures will be used.

15. Deletions from the register

15.1. At Jack Hunt Academy we will add and delete pupils from our Academy roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. Should parents be planning to remove their child from Jack Hunt Academy, they should inform their child's SSO at their earliest convenience to enable the Academy to support in the transition process. Parents will be asked for the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

15.2. We follow Peterborough City Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will inform the Peterborough City Council weekly of students who have been removed from the Academy roll.

15.3. Should parents/carers decide to home educate their child, they must inform XXX Academy in writing. Jack Hunt Academy will aim to make contact with parents/carers to ensure that the implications of home education are fully understood. If parents/carers still wish to home educate, the pupil will then be de-registered and Peterborough City Council will be informed.

15.4. Jack Hunt Academy will follow Peterborough City Council's Children Missing Education procedures when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, the Academy will carry out joint enquiries with Peterborough City Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

16. Statutory framework

16.1. This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

a) Working together to improve school attendance, DfE (August 2024)

b) The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

c) School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE (January 2015)

d) Children missing education, DfE (September 2016)

e) Keeping children safe in education, DfE (September 2023)

f) Working together to safeguard children, DfE (December 2023)

17. Version History

VERSION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE

18. Appendix 1: Guidance for Parents

Peterborough City Council: Penalty Notices regarding school absence - Guidance for parents

18.1. Regular school attendance and parent's legal responsibilities

At Jack Hunt Academy our aim is to collaborate with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This guidance is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

18.2. The important legal information – New from August 19th, 2024

The Government have introduced a single national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This threshold is 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

In line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents have taken several term time holidays below the national threshold. The LA also retains the discretion to consider going straight to prosecution where appropriate.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices per parent, per child can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. This period will start from the issue of the 1st penalty notice. The national framework also sets out the escalation process which applies to such penalty notices. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool should be used. In Peterborough, where a pupil's attendance has met the national threshold for a third time within 3 years and the parent/s have already been issued with 2 penalty notices within that period, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent/s with day-to-day responsibility for the child's attendance or the parent/s who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

The first penalty notice issued to a parent for a child will be charged at £160 to be paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice, the second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first offence, is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days.

18.3. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable, and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice. There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice.

18.4. Requests for leave of absence

Working together to improve school attendance advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government 'does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.'

Requests for leave must be made in advance, otherwise schools will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

18.5. Support with ensuring regular school attendance

If you require any support with ensuring your child's attendance, please contact your child's SSO in the first instance.

19. Appendix 2: Leave of absence request form

Dear Headteacher,

I would like to request permission for leave of absence for my child, a pupil registered at your school for the reasons detailed below *(further information can be attached if required).*

Pupil's full name	
Pupil's Date of Birth	
Year Group	
Class / Registration	
Pupil's full address and postcode	

First date of absence	
Last date of absence	
Date of return to school	
Number of school days absent	

Please be aware, as per our school's attendance policy and the Peterborough Local Authority's published Code of Conduct relating to school attendance, that the law requires parents to seek permission from the head teacher to take their child out of school during term time. The law states permission can only be granted if:

1. **An application has been made in advance by the parent the child normally lives with; and**
2. **There are exceptional circumstances.**

Please also note that, if on the rare occasion circumstances are deemed exceptional by the head teacher, the duration your child is permitted to be away from school may only be determined by the head teacher.

Reason for request including why you believe your circumstances to be exceptional (Further details may be attached to this form)

If you have a child/ren at another school/s, please detail their name/s and which school/s they attend below
Pupil's name, name of school and school telephone number:

Full name of person making request (note requests must be made by a parent who the pupil normally lives with)	
Relationship to child	
Full address and postcode (if different from child's above)	
Signature	
Date	

20. Appendix 3: Leave of Absence general guidance

Dear Applicant,

All schools **by law** must follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance relating to school attendance. They must use the appropriate national attendance or absence code, and follow the criteria set out within the guidance. The statutory guidance states:

- A leave of absence **must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance**
- A leave of absence must be requested **in advance** by a parent who the pupil normally lives with
- Schools must judge **each application individually**, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request
- Where a leave of absence is granted, **the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school**
- **A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance**
- A school **cannot** grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, the leave of absence should not be granted
- Where this guidance refers to a parent, the school and/or local authority will need to decide which adult(s) is most appropriate. Generally, parents include:
    - All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
    - All those who have parental responsibility
    - Those who have day to day responsibility for the child

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to their educational progress. If the absence is not authorised and the leave is taken, schools may refer to the Local Authority for legal action. Please find attached information regarding Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance.

21. Appendix 4: Understanding Penalty Notice Fines

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance

From 19 August 2024, there is a National Framework for Penalty Notice Fines being issued for unauthorised absences recorded by schools

National Threshold
A single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by ALL schools in England, this is: • 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period • These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence • For example, a 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet the national threshold • The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years

Who may be fined?
• Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent without authorisation from school • For example, 3 siblings absent for unauthorised leave during term-time would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines

First Offence
The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, the fine amount will be: • £80 per parent, per child if paid **within 21 days** • If **not paid within 21 days**, the fine will increase to **£160 per parent, per child**, payable between the 22nd and 28th day

Second Offence (within 3 years)
The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available. The amount therefore will be: • £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued, and the case will be presented **straight to the Magistrate's Court**

- **Prosecution** can result in **criminal records** and **fines of up to £2,500**
- Cases found **guilty** in a **Magistrates Court** can show on the parent's future DBS certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) due to a **'failure to safeguard a child's education'**