

John O'Gaunt School
Attendance Policy

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Approved by: Local Governing Board
Signed by LGB Chair:
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John O'Gaunt believes good attendance and punctuality gives students a better opportunity for success academically and personally thus helping towards developing their skills for life. All students deserve to be able to make the most of the opportunities available to them at John O'Gaunt. Good attendance and punctuality are essential now and, in the future, allowing students to maximise their educational potential.

Aims

John O'Gaunt values all pupils. We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

John O'Gaunt aims to meet its obligations regarding school attendance by:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality
- Reduce absence in school which includes persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013)

The policy also refers to The DfE's guidance on the [school census](#) which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Procedures

Attendance registers

By law, all schools (except those where schools are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

Every entry will be preserved for 3 years

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day.

The attendance register will be taken in morning tutor-times by tutors using Lesson Monitor (SIMS). Morning registration is from 8:45 – 9:10am each day.

On assembly days, a paper register is taken and returned to the Attendance Team for manual entry.

Supply staff who are unfamiliar with 'Lesson Monitor' will be provided with a paper register to be sent promptly to the Attendance team.

Students arriving at school after 8:45am should sign in at reception using the InVentry system.



Students arriving after 9:10am will be marked as Late (after registers closed).

Subject staff should take a register in each lesson promptly, updating for any late arrivals.

In case of technical problems with SIMs, all tutors should access a folder daily, in which a paper register and any other important information are held. The paper register should be completed and returned promptly to the Attendance Team.

Students who arrive at or leave school outside normal registration times due to medical or other appointments must sign in/out at Reception using InVentry.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school with an explanation for absence at the start of the first day of unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as is practically possible. Parents must continue to contact the school, confirming their child's absence on every day that they are away from school.

Absence can be reported by:

Phone: 01488 682400

Weduc Email: attendance@johnogaunt.excalibur.org.uk

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or has been longer than 5 days the school may ask parents for medical evidence this can include a specialist letter, prescription, appointment card or another appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for this unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied by the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

Medical appointments

Medical appointments (Doctor, Dentist, and Optician) should be attempted to be made out of school hours wherever possible. If this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Advance warning is required for authorisation should the appointment need to be made during school.

Parents can inform the school of medical appointments by:

Phone: 01488 682400

Weduc

Email: attendance@johnogaunt.excalibur.org.uk



Following up absence

The Attendance team at school will follow up any absence to ascertain the reason and ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. This is completed to ensure the correct code for attendance code is used. If we do not have a reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised. We ask that you keep the school up to date with any telephone and email changes to support this.

Reporting to parents

Absence is also reported to parents in all school reports.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The school will authorise a medical absence where appropriate, noted earlier. The school may ask for evidence of an appointment. This could be in the form of an appointment card, appointment letter, letter from a professional, medication prescribed by a doctor or a copy of a prescription.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The school will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. Other authorised events include supervised sporting events or trials, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The school may request further information or evidence of an event, to support your request, before confirming authorised/unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless a parent has provided a satisfactory explanation. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping
- Having a haircut
- Birthdays (pupil or family member)
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Sibling is unwell

Reluctance to attend school

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school or be very anxious about leaving home. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence.



If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way. Please contact the school as soon as possible to speak to the student welfare team who will also discuss this with the relevant progress leader.

Legal sanctions

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually. The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold, currently 20 unauthorised sessions in 10 school week period, for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.)
2. Prosecution.
3. Education Supervision Order through the Family Courts

Strategies for Improving and Maintaining Good Attendance

- Annual whole school and Year Group targets set and monitored on a termly basis.
- On-going attendance tracker information published and monitored.
- Students shown their attendance and discussed with tutors.
- The importance of good attendance will be emphasised at each phase transfer (KS2 to 3 and KS3 to 4) by the Progress Leaders.
- Attendance and punctuality audits to be carried out on a regular basis by the Attendance Team and Assistant Vice Principal who will liaise with Progress Leaders to target appropriate students.

Monitoring attendance

- The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis
- Parents are expected to call the school on the day of absence and any subsequent day after. All contact numbers are to be updated when needed.
- If after contacting parents attendance continues to drop, we may consider involving the Local Authority.
- The persistence absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- Pupil absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DFE's school absence national statistics releases. We compare our data to the national average, and this is shared with governors.
- The Attendance Policy to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

- have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- have a responsibility to ensure that their child is dressed in correct uniform, has the correct equipment for their lessons, have been adequately fed and received an appropriate amount of sleep.



- need to work with the school in order to ensure that their children gain an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- should avoid removing their child for absences that will not be authorised (e.g. family holidays) and are responsible for keeping the school fully informed about any actual or potential absences.
- have a responsibility to work with the school by taking an active interest in their child's education.
- have a responsibility to work with the school to resolve problems relating to non-attendance and punctuality which might have a negative impact on their child's attendance.

Students

- have a responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually in order to achieve their full potential.

The Tutor

- is responsible for making sure the register is taken accurately; for ensuring (in conjunction with the attendance team) that notes for each absence are received and recorded; for coding absences correctly on the absence report as required; for contacting parents as appropriate and setting targets for individual students and liaising with the Progress Leader and Attendance Team over any concerns.
- Tutors should also intervene to improve students who are not punctual

The Class Teacher

- is responsible for taking a register at the beginning of each lesson, adjusting for latecomers as required and taking regard of notes flagged next to individual student names.
- is responsible for alerting by emailing urgently if there are any suspicious absences from their classrooms.

Progress Leader

- is responsible for reinforcing the importance of regular attendance and punctuality for the Year Group through assemblies and meetings with Tutors and regularly reviewing and helping to update the spreadsheet at risk of persistent non-attendance (below 90%).
- monitoring registration procedures in the Year Group; setting targets across the Year Group; liaison with school's Attendance Team and organising School Attendance Meetings with parents.

Assistant Vice Principal (Behaviour and Attendance)

- will report to SLT on all aspects of attendance and punctuality.
- will establish annual attendance targets for the whole school and individual Year Groups.
- will regularly review Attendance and Punctuality data through the spreadsheet in consultation with Attendance Team and Progress Leaders.
- will monitor the effectiveness of all interventions to improve attendance and punctuality of individual students and Year Groups.

Attendance Officer/Team

- monitors attendance data at the school and at an individual pupil level.
- will provide weekly spreadsheet with attendance data.
- will support Progress Leaders in their liaison with parents making them aware of their responsibilities as listed below.
- conducts attendance meetings and liaises with the Education Welfare Officer.
- gathers necessary evidence for meetings, issuing fixed penalty notices.
- has overall responsibility for supporting good attendance and punctuality.



Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed annually and at every review, the policy will be shared with governing board.

Links with other policies

The policy is linked to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy