

Journey Independent School Attendance Policy

September 2025



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy extends past school to Post 16 and will be reviewed in line with the changing curriculum and current needs of the pupils.

Where in the policy it says Journey Independent School, we are referring to Journey Independent School and Post 16.

Our school day:

School day begins at 9.30am

*School day ends at 3.30pm **Monday - Friday***

School is open a total of 30 hours

Introduction

1.1. We expect all pupils on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the pupils to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor 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 pupils. We will reward those pupils whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those pupils who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations, the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

1. Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a pupil has been unwell, the parent/carer contacts the school to explain the absence.
- Only school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent/carer takes a pupil out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent/carer.

- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a pupil is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

2. If a pupil is absent

3.1 When a pupil is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or carer.

3.2 When the pupil returns to school, if no contact by parent/carer has been made a note should be brought from a parent or carer to explain the absence or parents and carers must update school via email to admin@journeyeducationgroup.co.uk. If no note is received the class teacher or school office will phone, email or write to the parent/carer for confirmation.

3.3 A note or email should be sent to the school prior to the absence for any pre-arranged appointments, e.g. if a pupil has a medical appointment, with evidence supporting the arrangement.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a pupil, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or carer, in order to check on the safety of the pupil.

3. Requests for leave of absence

4.1 We will follow DfE guidelines concerning religious observance and other exceptional circumstances. Please see link to DfE guidelines on the school website.

[Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England](#) - DfE Parent Guidance

[School+attendance+letter+-+Feb+2023+\(1\).pdf](#) - Parent/Carer guide to school attendance

[Should I keep my child off school checklist poster](#) - NHS Guidance

Please see appendix 7 for absence from school, exceptional circumstances request form

4. Long-term absence

5.1 When pupils have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that pupils can keep up with their school work. Please see the Remote Learning Plan.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the pupil to be given some tuition outside school.

5. Repeated unauthorised absences

6.1 The school has safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of our pupils, and as part of this we will investigate any unexplained absences. 6.2 The school will contact the parent or carer of any pupil who has an unauthorised absence.

6.2 If a pupil has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be contacted by the school mentor and asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If unauthorised absence continues the following will be actioned:

- If attendance is 90% or below, Attendance Letter 1 (Appendix 1) will be sent to the parents or carers.
- When attendance is 85% or below, Attendance Letter 2 (Appendix 2) will be sent to parents or carers advising them that no further absences will be authorised.
- Should attendance not improve at this stage, parents or carers will be invited into school to discuss an attendance support plan (Appendix 3) to action improved attendance. The Deputy Head will actively support the actions agreed.
- Failure to follow the attendance support plan within an agreed period will result in an attendance audit [Appendix 5] conducted with the parents/carers, and the issuing of Letter 3 advising parents and carers of fine (at the discretion of the headteacher and chair of governors).
- If attendance does not improve following the above support, the school will consider referral for support via Early Help. The school will also inform the Local Authority SEN Team due to the needs of pupils at Journey Independent School.
- In addition to Bullet 4 above, school will contact the LA support services such as the CME [Child Missing in Education] team, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation [Appendix 6].

6.3 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their pupils to school on a regular basis.

6.4 Any unexplained absence of a child who is subject to a child protection plan will be treated as the highest priority and the City of Doncaster Council will be advised.

7 Rewards for good attendance

7.1 These will be determined based on pupil attendance and reasons for absence, in consultation with pupils and staff.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year in line with DfE guidelines. These are agreed by the governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are advised to the LA.
- 8.2 Attendance targets according to the DfE are displayed on Appendix 4.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in Middle Management and Senior Leadership Team meetings. These will also be reported to the City of Doncaster Council every half term for monitoring purposes.
- 9.4 The Pupil Data Manager will be responsible for monitoring attendance in the school and for following up absences in the appropriate way.
- 9.5 If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular pupil, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or carers. This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Appendix 1

LETTER 1

Our Ref: AP/L11.0

Your Ref:

Name:

Email:

Direct Dial:

Date:

Dear

RE:

DOB:

At Journey Independent School we are committed to providing high quality education and improving outcomes for all our pupils. In order for a child to reach their full potential, we expect a high level of school attendance, so they are able to maximise their learning and achievement.

I enclose a copy of _____ attendance record which shows an attendance of ____%. As has fallen below the school target of ____%, we are expressing our initial concerns. It is appreciated young people sometimes become unwell, but as parents or carers it is important to be aware of the level of your child's school attendance, as it may have a detrimental effect on their educational attainment.

I have enclosed current NHS Guidance on when to keep your child off school and there is further support available on the government website available through this link: [Children and young people settings: tools and resources - GOV.UK](#)

I will continue to monitor attendance and, with your co-operation, I would anticipate an improvement. I may take the opportunity to speak with your child in school should I feel this is an appropriate action in raising attendance.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, or are experiencing any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Position in School

Enc.

C.C.



UK Health
Security
Agency



Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

Appendix 3

ATTENDANCE PLAN

PUPIL:

CLASS/YEAR GROUP:

STAFF SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE:

DATE PLAN AGREED:

CONTEXT:

[Discussion in meeting/telephone conversation with parent/carer]

ATTENDANCE HISTORY - REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

[Official Attendance Data]

AUDIT:

Barriers to Attendance:

Attendance Support Strategies

SCHOOL: **Green**

PARENT: **YELLOW**

PUPIL: **BLUE**

TARGETS	MILESTONES	DATE ACHIEVED

FOR REVIEW: [Date]

SIGNED Parent/Carer:

SIGNED Staff:

Appendix 4

All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Practical Thresholds:

94% → Early monitoring trigger (internal school threshold)

92–93% → Early intervention contact with family

<90% → Persistently absent → safeguarding concern logged, attendance plan may be required, dependent on individual circumstances.

Attendance audit and plan for persistent absence

<50% → Severely absent → statutory CME escalation to LA [safeguarding], multi-agency collaboration with SEND at DMBC - EHCP review for additional support required to remove barriers to attendance

Working together to improve school attendance, August 2024

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

Appendix 5

Attendance Audit Template available on request from School Office



 **Individual Attendance Audit**

- This fully editable document provides a template to support schools with identifying the possible barriers to a pupil's attendance. You are free to add, amend or delete sections to allow you to address the needs of your individual school and pupils.
- The suggestions of potential barriers are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Staff are encouraged to add any additional factors at the end of the relevant section.

Name of pupil			
Date of audit			
Audit carried out by			
Potential barrier to attendance	Has this been explored?	Could this be a factor in the pupil's poor attendance?	Notes
Health-related issues			
Medical problems	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor medical care	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Disability	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor mental health	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poorly controlled medical issue(s)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Pregnancy	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potential substance abuse	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	

Appendix 6

If a student falls into severe absence >50% attendance, review Attendance Plan, revisit Attendance Audit with parent/carer and pupil, and escalate to CME team:

Escalation Process to CME Team

1. Internal Monitoring and Threshold Check

- Track attendance daily and flag pupils whose attendance falls below 90% (persistent absence) and especially below 50% (severe absence).
- Ensure interventions have been attempted: phone calls, letters, meetings with parents, Early Help referral if appropriate.
- Record all actions taken, dates, and responses from parents/carers.

2. Formal School Escalation

- If absence is severe and safeguarding concerns arise (e.g. child not seen, no engagement, risk indicators), escalate beyond school attendance procedures.
- Complete the **local authority CME referral form** (each LA has its own template—Doncaster LA uses the DSCP CME referral pathway).
- childrenmissingeducation@doncaster.gov.uk or [Children missing education report - City of Doncaster Council](#)
- Attach evidence: registers, contact logs, letters, home visit notes, safeguarding chronology.

3. Referral to CME Team

- Submit the referral securely to the CME team via the LA portal or designated email. Clearly state:
 - Pupil details (name, DOB, address, school, year group).
 - Attendance percentage and dates of absence.
 - Actions already taken by school.
 - Any safeguarding concerns (e.g. unknown whereabouts, risk of exploitation, neglect).
- Once received, the CME team will investigate, liaise with other agencies, and may initiate statutory action (School Attendance Order, Education Supervision Order, or safeguarding referral).

Key Safeguarding Notes

- **Immediate risk:** If you believe the child is at risk of harm, escalate directly to **Children's Social Care** as well as CME.
- **Legal duty:** Schools must inform the LA if a pupil is missing education or removed from roll without a known destination.
- **Inspection readiness:** Keep a clear chronology of interventions and referrals—Ofsted will expect to see evidence of CME escalation.

Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

****Please Note all sections of this form require completing in order for your request to be considered.**

Child(ren)'s Name(s)	DOB	School Name	Year/Class

Please add all children to one form

Parental Full Name	Parents Tel	Parental DOB

Home Address of parent(s) responsible for this absence	Email address

I request permission for my child/ren to be absent from school between:	Date of first day of school absence		Date to of return to school		Total of days absent from school	

All requests should be discussed with the Headteacher prior to submitting this form. Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Headteacher will not be able to consider your request without your supporting documents. *Please read carefully the attendance policy for Journey Independent School.*

¹Parent's Declaration:

*I have read the Attendance Policy for Journey Independent School and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. **Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.***

¹ Parent: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

(a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or (b) who has care of him. (*Education Act 1996 sec.576*)

Full Name: _____	Full Name: _____
Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer 1)	Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer 2)
Date: _____	Date: _____

Please note:

- We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.
- Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting this request to your child's school.

For School Use Only

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows: -					
Number of Authorised Sessions:		Number of Unauthorised Sessions:		Number of Unauthorised sessions to date:	
Signed:				Date:	
Position:					

Original signed and completed forms to be retained with pupil's records.

Copy should be returned to the parent/carer of the pupil to confirm authorised or unauthorised absence prior to the intended absence period.