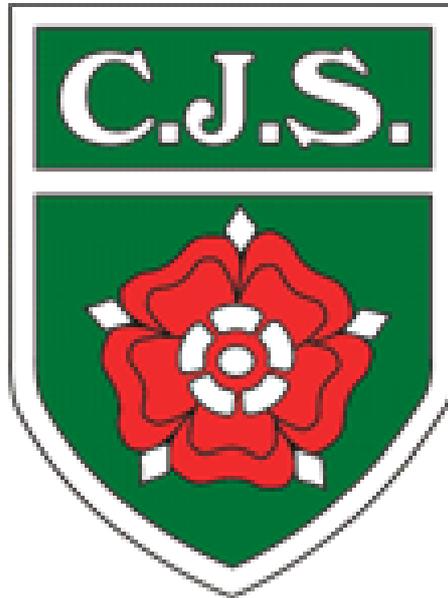


## ***Policy & Procedure***



# **Attendance Policy**

## **2020-2021**

This policy is reviewed every year and was agreed by the Governing Body of Chellaston Junior School in Spring 2020 **and will be reviewed again in Spring 2021**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Statutory Policy***

# 1. Aims

At CJS, we believe there is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement. We aim for every child to “Step to Success” and achieve their very best and attendance is a vital ingredient to help all pupils fulfill their potential. The school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting excellent attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attendance at school
- Setting a target of 97% attendance for all pupils at CJS
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Service

## Chellaston Junior School



“Together we are **stepping to success**. Together we are **working to achieve our best**.”



**Our aim** In striving to become an outstanding school, at CJS we will help ALL pupils to be:

- **Successful Learners** who enjoy learning, make excellent progress and achieve very high standards across the curriculum
- **Confident Individuals** who are able to lead happy, safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- **Responsible Citizens** who make a positive contribution to British and the global society

# 2. 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 statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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

### 3. School procedures

#### 3.1 Attendance register

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

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Pupils must arrive in school between 8.45am and 8.50am on each school day (the school gates open at 8.45am).

#### 3.2 Registration period:

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.20pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

#### 3.3 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on each day of an unplanned absence and explain the reason for the absence by 9.20am or as soon as practically possible (see also Section 6).

Parents are asked to contact the school office and leave a message, as directed, or preferably speak directly to a member of staff.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or the attendance of the child is so low (below 90%) that the EWO advises that medical evidence is required.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, or the attendance is very low (below 90%), the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

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

### 3.4 Medical or dental appointments

We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and return to school as soon as possible after the appointment.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence.

Advance notice is required for authorising medical or dental absences. Parents are asked to contact the school via telephone, email, letter or the home-school diary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in Section 4.

### 3.5 Collecting Pupils during the school day

If a pupil needs to be collected during the school day by a parent/carer, they need to be signed out of school at the school office, recording the time of collection and the reason for absence.

### 3.4 Lateness

The school gates are closed at 8.55, after which time pupils are required to enter school via the main reception.

- If a child arrives after the registration period, but before 9.20am, he/she will be marked as Late (L)
- If a child arrives after 9.20am, this will be recorded as U for 'arrival after registration'.

Any child arriving late to school, should enter via the main reception with their parent (or the adult dropping them off), where staff will record the attendance before the pupils goes to the classroom.

Concerns regarding the punctuality of pupils will be communicated to parents as necessary, so that we can discuss a way forward to help the punctuality to improve so the child does not miss out on important learning at school.

### 3.5 Following up absence (FIRST DAY CONTACT)

The school will follow up **all** absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Parents are expected to inform the school regarding the reason for absence by **9.20am** on the day of absence.

The school will contact, **by text**, all parents who have not provided a reason for absence, by 10.00am.

**If the school have still not received a reason for absence by 10.30am the office staff will telephone the parent(s) and attempt to make direct contact. If there is still no contact**

made by 11am, the matter will be referred to the Learning Mentor, Senior Leaders or Head teacher, as appropriate, so that further efforts to make direct contact with parents can be made.

If the school have still not received contact with parents regarding a reason for absence by 1.00pm, then the school may contact the EWO and discuss whether a home visit is required.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

The school reports attendance for the academic year so far to parents as part of the end of year reports in July each year and in mid-year reports in February. This will be reported as percentage for the whole year to date.

### **3.7 Known/long term medical conditions**

If a child has or develops a condition which is likely to impact upon their attendance at school, parents should contact the Head teacher. The Head teacher will arrange a meeting with the relevant staff and parents, and other agencies where appropriate, to ensure that child is supported to manage their condition at school. Parents will be required to provide appropriate medical evidence. This approach will ensure that everyone is working together to ensure absences are minimised.

In some cases, if a condition is serious or long term, a care plan may be produced which formalises the agreed approach between all parties. The plan may include: the agreed approach to communication with parents; the suitability of a reduced timetable; the involvement of health care professionals; the appropriateness of work being sent home or the need for medical home tuition.

If a child has been absent for 5 consecutive days, the school will contact parents to ensure that there is ongoing communication between home and school. In cases of long term absence, there should be ongoing weekly communication between school and parents. Details of this contact will be formally recorded on the child's file.

### **3.8 Dual Registration**

Where a child is dual registered with another educational establishment for a defined period of time, the child's attendance at that school will be monitored and an agreed plan of communication with parents and the other educational establishments will be agreed.

## **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

The school encourages all parents/carers to limit any absence during term-time to the absolute minimum. Any absence will disrupt a child's routine, affect their learning and have a negative impact on progress at school.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Certain educational activities that involve pupils developing their talents in curriculum areas such as music, drama and sport.

If a parent is requesting leave of absence during term time, they are expected to put the request in writing to the Head teacher, at least 4 weeks in advance, if possible. They must use the school's 'Request for Leave of Absence' form (see Appendix 1).

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head teacher's discretion.

The Head teacher will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless the request is considered to be 'exceptional circumstances'. "Exceptional circumstances" do not include having access to cheaper holidays or cheap travel arrangements. "Exceptional circumstances" include a short period of time for family bereavements, funerals and celebrations such as family weddings. It is unlikely that absences longer than 5 days will be authorised.

If a request for term-time absence is refused, the Head teacher will write to the parent to explain the decision and urge the parent/carer to re-consider the absence. The letter will include information that a Fixed Penalty Notice may be imposed if the absence occurs. See appendix 1 for request for leave of absence form and the guidance for parents

## 4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can request the Local Authority to issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

A Fixed Penalty equates to £60 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 per parent per child, if paid within 28 days.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head teacher, following the advice from Derby City Council. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, Derby City Council will decide whether to prosecute the parent, which may lead to Court proceedings.

## **5. Missing Children**

The school will follow the Runaway, Missing from Home or Care Policy guidelines from Derby City and Derbyshire Local Authority. This follows the guidance set out in "Children Missing from Education" DFE 2016. The Attendance policy links to the school policy on Runaway, Missing from Home or Care Policy **as well as the safeguarding policy**.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

The school aims to promote, celebrate and reward good attendance by:

- Celebrating high attendance in each year group, each week in assembly.
- Promoting high attendance each week in assembly and reminding pupils "The more we attend school, the more we achieve".
- Rewarding pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the summer term.
- Rewarding the class with the highest attendance in each year group at the end of each half term
- Working in partnership with parents, communicating regularly to encourage high attendance.
- Raising awareness with parents via school newsletters
- Providing breakfast club at school if appropriate and other strategies to promote attendance

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

The administration team and the attendance officer monitor pupil absence on a daily basis. (see section 3)

Parents are expected to contact the school in the morning or leave a message with the school if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents are expected to notify the school regarding the length of absence or, if needed, each day a child is absent.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If, after contacting parents, a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer, school nurse or other appropriate support.

The persistent 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. The school will monitor the attendance of all pupils considered a persistent absentee and keep a record of their attendance.

If there are serious concerns regarding the attendance of any pupil, whether on a specific day or over a period of time, the school may refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO may do a home visit and discuss a plan of action to

improve attendance. If serious concerns remain, the EWO may follow the relevant legal procedures with reference to the documents outlined in Section 2.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level in line with the DfE school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

The school monitors attendance of all pupils each half term and meets with the Education Welfare Officer to clarify actions needed. Attendance of pupils is collected to track the attendance of different groups, including gender, SEND, Pupil premium and Ethnicity. Attendance is tracked each half term and a record kept for senior staff to analyse and implement any actions with pupils and parents as necessary.

Parents may be contacted by telephone or letter regarding concerns about attendance. The school expects parents to work together in partnership and meet with relevant staff at school to agree a way forward to improve attendance.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The Governing Board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis. It also holds the Head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **8.2 The Head teacher**

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **8.3 Class Teachers**

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office, both for morning and afternoon sessions

### **8.4 Administration Staff**

Administration staff are expected to:

- take calls from parents about absence, implement the 'First Day Contact' system (see paragraph 3.5), record attendance on the school system and inform the relevant staff.
- Report concerns about attendance to Learning Mentor and SLT and follow the actions required regarding recording the absence, contacting parents and keeping key staff updated
- Provide the data on attendance to report to Governors each term

- Providing data on attendance for teachers' reports to parents

## 8.5 The Learning Mentor

The Learning Mentor

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Contacts parents to discuss concerns, offer support and agree a way forward
- Meets with the EWO each half term to monitor attendance
- Advises the Head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Engages the Head teacher when absence has become enough of a concern for further letters and contact to be made with parents.

## 8.6 SLT (Attendance Senior Leader)

A member of the SLT:

- Is responsible for the implementation of the Attendance Policy
- Meets with the EWO each half term to monitor attendance
- Monitors attendance alongside the Learning Mentor and agrees a plan of action
- Liaises with the Learning Mentor and Head teacher to follow up any communication with parents
- Reports to the Governors each term as part of the Head teacher's Report

## 8.7 The Head teacher

Is responsible for:

- Reviewing the Attendance Policy on an annual basis
- Working with all staff to implement the policy consistently
- Monitoring attendance alongside the Attendance Team
- Liaising with the Learning Mentor and SLT to keep up to date with attendance issues
- Reporting to the Governors each term as part of the Head teacher's Report
- Contacting/meeting with parents to discuss attendance issues (after any meetings and efforts at improving attendance or punctuality have been exhausted by the Learning Mentor)

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by SLT and Governors

### **Inclusion**

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.

### **Equality Statement**

At Chellaston Junior School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristic:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- age;
- civil partnerships;
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.

## Appendix 1: attendance codes – Internal use only

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

# Chellaston Junior School **REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM**



Please **complete all shaded boxes on this form**

Name of Child(ren)	Class

Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)	Date(s) of Proposed Absence	No. of school days child(ren) would miss

Please list the names of <b>any siblings at Chellaston Academy and/or Chellaston Infant School</b> for whom you will also be making a request for leave of absence. Please note, you will need to follow each school's procedure and make your request to each school individually.	Other siblings at Chellaston Academy	Other siblings at Chellaston Infant School

Please indicate the reasons for this absence. If this is for a holiday, please indicate why this holiday could not take place in the course of the normal holiday pattern (please see the attached – guide for parents before writing your reasons)

<b>Signature</b> of Parents/Carers with <b>Legal Responsibility for the Child</b> (please use an electronic signature where possible – we will send this back to you for signing if not)	Date	If this request is for a term time holiday, I confirm that the holiday has been...	
		booked	Not booked

**Please return this form to school before any booking is made if this is for a holiday to be taken during term time**

for office use only ✂-----

Child(ren)'s name(s)	Attendance percentage(s) over last 12 months

Dates Requested

	Authorised	Not Authorised	Subject to further information from parents
THIS <u>ABSENCE REQUEST</u> IS			

**Reasons** for the decision\*

	Name	Signed	Date
<b>Head teacher</b>			

\*please refer to the 'Guide for Parents'

## Chellaston Junior School Term-time requests for absence – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Term-time holidays are intended for children whose parents are unable to take holiday at any other time.

Chellaston Junior School will consider every application individually; its policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended holiday.

The law states that schools should not authorise leave of absence unless:

- ✓ An application has been made **in advance** by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides AND
- ✓ The Head teacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Chellaston Junior School will consider authorising holidays for (exceptional circumstances):

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

Requests for holidays for the following reasons will not be authorised:

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

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

Chellaston Junior School will NOT authorise a holiday during periods of national tests ie: SATs examinations.

### 6. Extended leave of absence

In considering absence for extended trips overseas Chellaston Junior School will take account of the following:

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