



ST JAMES
Senior Girls' School

Attendance Policy

St James Senior Girls' School

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1. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that pupils, staff and parents are aware of the importance of school attendance, clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance and aware of how St James Senior Girls' School acts to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 90% attendance for all pupils, apart from those with serious health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of the concerns related to school absence, particularly safeguarding concerns.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and any relevant external agencies to enable all pupils to realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued and encourage a sense of individual responsibility amongst our pupils.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

2. Principles

- 2.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day. Parents have a duty to ensure that their daughters attend school and the School is committed to working with parents to achieve as high a level of attendance as possible.
- 2.2. A pupil should only be absent if the reason is unavoidable. Allowing a child to be absent without good reason is unlawful and, ultimately, parents could be fined by the courts.
- 2.3. Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, not the parents, as either authorised or unauthorised. Hence information about the cause of each absence is always required.
- 2.4. Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school with good reason; for illness or other unavoidable cause.
- 2.5. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes keeping a pupil off for trivial reasons, as well as truancy, absences or late arrivals which have never been properly explained.
- 2.6. Where the parental communication does not specify the reason for absence, further investigation may be necessary after consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmistress.
- 2.7. The School is obliged to notify the local authority if a pupil fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 consecutive school days.
- 2.8. If a pupil does not arrive at school, or is found to be missing during the school day, the procedures set out in the Missing Pupil Policy will be followed.

3. Procedures

- 3.1. Early morning lessons and clubs begin at 8.05 and girls are registered in this session.
- 3.2. For other pupils registration takes place in the classroom at 8.40am. If a girl arrives after morning registration, she must report to Reception where she should sign in and then register in the School Office (failure to do this may result in detention).
- 3.3. In accordance with the Missing Pupil Policy, the school will telephone parents if there is an unexplained absence of which the school has not been notified. If parents cannot be reached by phone, the school will then email parents.
- 3.4. If a girl is late on more than two occasions in any week, or regularly over a period of time, she will be issued a detention (unless there are genuine travel difficulties).
- 3.5. If their daughter is ill, parents must inform the school of her absence before 9.00am either via email: attendance@sjsg.org.uk or by calling the School Secretary on 020 7348 1752. We ask them to provide the following information: name and relationship to the pupil, pupil's full name, year group, Form Teacher, reason for absence and when they expect their daughter to return to school.
- 3.6. Requests for absence for medical /dental appointments etc should be sent to the School Secretary with appropriate notice. It is clearly in a pupil's best interests that school time is not missed for routine appointments unless absolutely unavoidable. Pupils leaving school for appointments must make sure they sign in and out with the School Secretary in the School office.
- 3.7. requests for longer periods of notice should be requested from the Headmistress, in good time, either in writing or by email. We ask that family holidays do not take place during term time. Absence without such permission will be noted as 'Unauthorised' on the pupil's record.
- 3.8. Some events on the school calendar are compulsory. Such events include the carol services, Speech Day and other whole school events. Requests for absence from these events must be sought in writing from the Headmistress.
- 3.9. Pupils who are absent for any reason are expected to complete missed work to ensure a complete record of all their courses. It is the responsibility of the pupil to obtain and complete assignments.
- 3.10. Where absence falls below 90% parents will be sent a letter and the Head of Section and Deputy Head (Pastoral) will work with the family to support improved attendance.

Related policies:

1. Missing Pupil Policy
2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Signed by:	Hugh Venables Chair of Governors
Date of adoption of this policy	June 2021
Date of last review of this policy	June 2021
Date for next review of this policy	Summer Term 2022
Policy owner (SMT)	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Governing body