

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

February 2020



THE JO RICHARDSON
— **SUCCESS FOR ALL** —
C O M M U N I T Y S C H O O L
— **ACHIEVE** —

Section 1: Rationale and objectives

JRCS is committed to ensuring every student reaches their full potential. Students will be supported, encouraged and helped to do this. One of the main barriers to achievement and personal development is absence. If a student misses school, they miss out on enrichment and experiences within the school community. If the absence becomes persistent, they reduce their chances of achieving the qualifications they deserve and the opportunities they are entitled to. We recognise the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality. School staff and parents need to work together to ensure students value the education provided and feel secure in their relationships with staff and each other.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this policy has been written to reflect these and the guidance produced by the Department of Education principally that:

- The School promotes good attendance and reduces absence, including persistent absence;
- Parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly as section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states;
- All pupils with poor attendance are highlighted as vulnerable, principles enshrined in the Education Act 1996, the Children's Act 1989/2004 and other associated pieces of legislation.

"Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind."

Source:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

This policy aims to:

- ensure students attend school every day unless their non-attendance has been authorised;
- clarify key members of staff and parents'/carers' responsibilities for attendance;
- support safeguarding by formalising the systems that are in place;
- ensure all students are given the opportunity to thrive and flourish in a supported environment.

Our objectives are to:

- educate students about the importance of attendance and the link to life choices;
- to safeguard every student and ensure we spot signs which suggest they may need support;
- formalise the policies and procedures for consistency so that every student and family are treated fairly;
- raise understanding about the impact of holidays during term time;
- identify trends early to ensure that students do not become persistent absentees;
- work with all key partners to provide a quick and responsive approach to whole school attendance and punctuality.

Section 2: Clarification and key roles

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably fall in school time), emergencies or other unavoidable causes. For absence to be authorised, it is key that the school is informed (via the absence number or prior to the absence) and a note is provided.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been granted.

This includes:

- Holidays during term time
- Shopping / visiting family member
- Excessive medical illness without a doctor's note
- Taking siblings to school or other caring duties
- Parents providing inappropriate reasons for the absence
- Failure to attend alternative provisions
- Significant lateness once the register has closed
- Birthdays

- Truancy

Absence Codes

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved educational activity where school take responsibility for safeguarding
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (ie, pupil attending other establishment such as the PRU)	Approved educational activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before registers closed). This occurs before 8:40am	Present
M	Medical/dental appointments (emergency only)	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Source:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

Categories of attendance

If your child's attendance is:

- **95%** it means they have lost half a day every 2 weeks
- **90%** it means they have lost a day every 2 weeks
- **85%** it means they have lost a day and a half every 2 weeks
- **80%** means they have lost a whole day every week

The following is a guide to our expectations.

Classed as	%	Action
Excellent attendance	98-100%	Letter home and a certificate issued by the Pastoral Deputy
Average attendance	95-97%	Tutors start to monitor
Attendance of concern	91-94%	Heads of Year monitor
Unsatisfactory attendance	90% and below	School Attendance Meeting (SAM) process activates (see Appendix A). This is an escalating series of meetings with parents when no improvement is maintained. Parents may be cautioned with warning of legal action.
		If attendance continues to drop, legal action will be taken by the LA and the Governing Body will play an active role in meetings with the Headteacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of parents/carers

JRCS and the Government expect parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly. In addition to this, parents need to:

- support students with their organisation so barriers to punctual arrival are removed;
- make sure students arrive at school ready for a calm start at 8:30am;
- make appointments outside of school time;
- avoid booking holidays or trips in school time;
- encourage a good work ethic and support the school's policies and procedures;
- communicate problems with school in a timely manner so they can be addressed;
- work with the school and any external agencies if a problem is identified.

Role of students

Students need to take responsibility and:

- attend school on time every day;
- record key information in their planners and bring the correct equipment;
- hand notes from parents to their tutor;
- highlight if they are going to be absent from school;
- co-operate if problems occur and engage with the support that is put in place;
- manage their time in school effectively so they are punctual to every lesson.

Role of the Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team of this school will:

- create an environment which is safe and stimulating;
- monitor student behaviour and attitudes towards school;
- work closely with parents and external agencies to safeguard students;
- support the pastoral and attendance team so every student is given every possible opportunity to do their best.

Role of the Head of Year/Deputy Directors of Sixth Form

- Attendance and punctuality are key parts of the job description for Heads of Year/Deputy Directors of Sixth Form. They are ultimately responsible for the levels of student attendance in their year groups and need to be pro-active with their tutor teams in ensuring school policies and procedures are being followed.
- Heads of Year are also responsible for referring cases to the school's Attendance Manager. This can occur outside of the SAM process.

Role of the Form Tutor

- Form Tutors should actively monitor/review all students' attendance using the pastoral monitoring sheets that are provided on 4-5 week cycle;
- They are the first point of contact and they should collect notes following a period of non-attendance;
- Students will be alerted if their attendance drops 95%;
- Students dropping under 93% attendance will be placed on Form Tutor Attendance Report available from the Attendance Team. This will highlight the case with the Attendance Team. The Form Tutor will also call home and warn parents about the attendance issue;
- If attendance does not improve or students drop below 90%, they will be referred to the Head of Year and the SAM process will be activated (please see flow chart in Appendix A for progression).

Role of the Attendance Manager

The Attendance Manager will:

- Respond to individual attendance concerns and advise on policy and guidance relating to attendance management;
- Prepare all the information to ensure the Form Tutors and Heads of Year can effectively carry out their role;
- **Liaise with parents and external agencies.**

Role of the Attendance Governor

- There will be a named Governor responsible for attendance. The Attendance Manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure information is shared. The named Governor will sit on the Attendance Panel.
- The Panel will be convened as appropriate to meet with students and their parents to discuss particular attendance concerns. The panel is made up of the Attendance Governor, Headteacher, Head of Year (where appropriate) and the school's Attendance Manager.
- In certain circumstances, the Panel may decide that a student's poor attendance means their educational needs are best met by repeating a year at school or by being referred to an alternative setting. The Attendance Governor will also be consulted by the school, as appropriate, when decisions are made about agreeing to holidays during term time.

Section 3: Absence Procedures

Absence from school

- Parents are requested to ring the absence line (020 8724 1531) on the first day and every subsequent day of absence. The Attendance Team are responsible for amending the roll call and entering the required absence code.
- If no notification of absence is received, the process of 'chasing up' absentees will be co-ordinated by the Student Services Department on the first day of absence.
- If no contact can be made, an automated text will be sent to contact numbers provided by parents.
- If contact is still unsuccessful, the student will be referred to the Safeguarding Team because the absence will be viewed as suspicious.
- On return from absence, a note should be given to the tutor who will then place this in the register folder and the reason will be recorded by the Attendance Team. This is required to authorise the absence.
- Home visits may be made by the Attendance Manager as required.

Medical Appointments

- A student's visit to a clinic, hospital, dentist, or doctor, etc, counts as non-attendance.
- Parents must provide the student with an appointment card, where possible, to enable the school to authorise the absence. Regular medical appointments will need a letter from a consultant or other professional.
- Form Tutors should send students to the School Office during morning registration to receive their exit mark.
- Parents of students with poor attendance will be required to supply a medical card for repeat appointments.
- Parents are asked to do everything possible to avoid making appointments during school time.

Long term absence (more than three days)

In most cases of long-term absence, the Attendance Manager will request medical authorisation for the absence, especially where poor attendance is a pattern. The Planner has a page for medical authorisation which can be completed by a GP confirming that the student is unfit for school. Alternatively, an authorised medical letter is acceptable.

Parents/carers of students who are likely to be absent for a lengthy period of time due to a medical condition should provide the requested documentation from the consultant so that the school can organise work to be sent home or, in some circumstances, request home tuition from the Local Authority. Heads of Year will co-ordinate this in liaison with the Attendance Manager.

Students who are medically unfit for school will be reported to the Local Authority and their case will be monitored by the Attendance Manager in consultation with the School Nurse and the Safeguarding Team.

Truancy

Truancy and leaving school without permission is a Standard 3 behaviour and will, in most cases, lead to a student being excluded from lessons, with additional time after school in exclusion to make up the time missed. If a student leaves the site during the school day parents will be called immediately. If the student does not make contact with the parents within 30 minutes the case will be referred to the police. This is to be actioned by the Safeguarding member of staff on call or the Attendance Manager .

Leave during term time

The school will not authorise students to take leave during term-time and we will follow the Local Authority guidance and issue fines to parents / carers who do this. However, there are some circumstances where leave may be granted. Only the Headteacher and/or Governors can make this decision.

Special Circumstances

Leave during term time will be considered in the case of students who do not attend school due to family bereavement, court appearances, competitions, authorised performances, sporting representation, travel circumstances beyond their control, religious observance and other factors at the Headteacher's/Governors' discretion.

The needs of particular groups of students will also be taken into consideration when granting authorised absence. These groups may include children of travellers, children in care and children with special educational needs or medical conditions.

In order for this to occur, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence request form. This can be obtained from the School Office or printed from Appendix C.

In deciding whether to agree to the request, the following factors are relevant:

- The purpose and length of the leave requested;
- The student's overall pattern and level of attendance;
- Whether the holiday falls during a key examination year.

When parents do not follow the correct procedures or fail to gain approved leave of absence but still remove their child, then the absence is classed as unauthorised. In addition, students lose the right to attend any non-curricular school trips or take part in any clubs for a period of up to six months from the day they return to school.

In emergency situations, parents will be asked to provide evidence that the trip was booked with very short notice, ie, **date of purchase**.

The school will closely monitor holiday absence across year groups.

Penalty notices and legal action

Good school attendance is an essential contribution towards a child's education, and future employment prospects. Conversely, poor attendance severely impacts on a child's educational growth and their future prospects may be significantly restricted. Therefore, ensuring regular school attendance is crucial for the long-term benefit of children.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to:

- (a) his age, ability and aptitude;
- (b) any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Schools are required to ensure that children on their roll are educated in accordance with the national curriculum, and any special educational needs that a child may have.

The key consideration in deciding whether to issue a penalty notice will be that:

- 1) the offence relating to irregular school attendance has occurred; or,
- 2) the child has incurred five days or more of unauthorised leave of absence in the last eight weeks.
- 3) the parent has not fully engaged with voluntary or supportive measures to help improve regular school attendance;
- 4) it is believed that issuing a penalty notice will either help improve the child's school attendance, or prevent further absences caused by unauthorised leave.

Section 4: Punctuality

Registration

- Registration will be completed electronically at 8.35am and then within the first 15 minutes of every lesson after that using the school's MIS.
- Tutors must collect their registers for every registration. These registers carry all communication between the Office and students.

- Paper registers should be used when students attend their twice weekly assemblies and should be returned to the register station in the egg immediately after the registration period has finished. These registers should also be completed by staff if they are covering a registration and are unable to access the school's MIS. Student Services Department have responsibility for transferring this attendance data on to the school's MIS when the registers are returned to the School Office.
- Registration should be seen as a formal occasion by both staff and students and sets the tone for the subsequent activities. To this end, outdoor coats should be removed (by both staff and students), students should sit quietly at their desks and remain in silence while the register and other formalities are completed.

Lateness and Punctuality

- A student is late if the register has been called before he or she arrives in the room.
- The morning register should be called at 8.35am. If a student arrives late for morning registration, they should be issued with a late sticker by their Tutor. This means they have to attend a late detention at the end of the school day with their Pastoral Assistant (please see Appendix B).

Lateness to lessons

- if a student arrives late for a lesson, it is the responsibility of the subject teacher to impose the appropriate sanctions (please see Appendix B).

Section 5: Summary

Staff responsible for school attendance and punctuality

Miss A Howe (Pastoral Deputy) and Mrs L O'Keefe (Student Services and Attendance Manager).

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this policy has been written to reflect these and the guidance produced by the Department of Education principally that:

- Providing a full-time education is a child's legal requirement;
- Parents and Carers have a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school;
- Regular attendance at school safeguards children not in the care of their parents;
- All students with poor attendance at JRCS will be treated as vulnerable, principles enshrined in the Education Act 1996, the Children's Act 1989/2004 and other associated pieces of legislation.

Other legislation considered

These requirements are contained in:

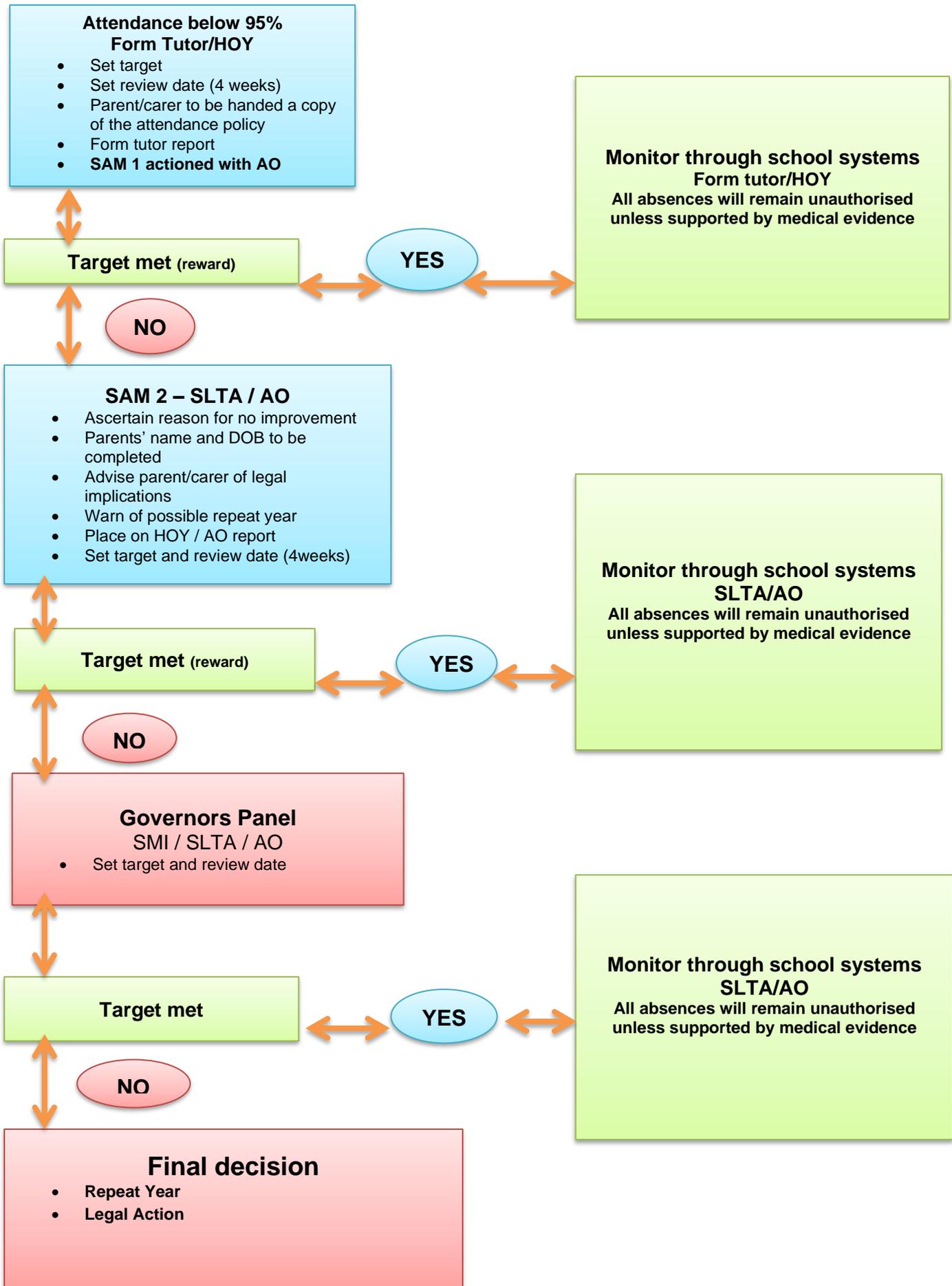
- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

LBBB Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for Irregular School Attendance:

<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/The-penalty-notice-code-of-conduct-2020.pdf>

Appendix A - SAM Process



Appendix B - Late procedures

Late to school

Late to school (after 8:35am) Sticker in Planner.



A

Late detention 20 minutes with Pastoral Assistant. (Standard 1)



B

Late x 2 per half-term or failure to attend detention

Pastoral Assistant sends text to parents and assigns a CFC to HoY.
1 hour HOY detention issued. (Standard 2)



C

Late x 3 per half-term or failure to attend detention

HoY actions CFC letter home and forwards to SLT for 2 hour SLT detention.

Placed on report for punctuality by SLT.....(Standard 3)

If students fail to attend this detention,
they will be issued with a Saturday detention.



D

Late x 4 per half-term

Excluded next level and SLT call parents.

Late to form (without a sticker)

Students arrive to form after the bell (8:35am) without a sticker.



Tutor issues a late sticker and marks the students with an **L** on the register.



Student Services run and share a report with the Pastoral Assistants to highlight late students. This will include the late to school list.



A

Late detention 20 minutes with Pastoral Assistant. (Standard 1)



B

Late x 2 per half-term or failure to attend detention
Pastoral Assistant sends text to parents and assigns a CFC to HoY.
1 hour HOY detention issued. (Standard 2)



C

Late x 3 per half-term or failure to attend detention
HoY actions CFC letter home and forwards to SLT for 2 hour SLT detention.

Placed on report for punctuality by SLT. (Standard 3)

If students fail to attend this detention,
they will be issued with a Saturday detention.



D

Late x 4 per half-term
Excluded next level and SLT call parents.

Late to Lessons

A

Arrives to the classroom door after the bell
Late detention 20 minutes with Class Teacher. (Standard 1)



B

Late x 2 per half-term or missed detention
Teacher creates the CFC and sends it to the HoD.
1 hour HoD detention, CFC Home. (Standard 2)



C

Late x 3 per half-term or missed detention
Phone call home to parents. CFC sent to Assistant Headteacher
requesting a 2 hour SLT detention. (Standard 3)

If students fail to attend this detention,
they will be issued with a Saturday detention.

Late to Lines

A
Late to lines
Late detention 20 minutes with Pastoral Assistant (Standard 1)
Sticker issued in planner.



B
Late x 2 per half-term or missed detention –, Pastoral Assistant creates a CFC and requests 1 hour HOY detention. (Standard 2)



C
Late x 3 per half-term or failure to attend detention
HoY actions CFC letter home and forwards to SLT for 2 hour SLT detention.

Placed on report for punctuality by SLT.... (Standard 3)

If students fail to attend this detention,
they will be issues with a Saturday detention.



D
Late x 4 per half-term
Excluded and meeting with parent.

Appendix C – Application for holidays in term time (special consideration)

Dear Parent/Carer

Leave during term-time

Thank you for your enquiry about your son/daughter taking leave during term-time.

The school will not usually authorise families to take leave during school time. The Local Authority has a clear policy on this which the Governors have agreed to adopt.

However, there are some special circumstances where leave may be considered. In these instances, you will be required to provide further information as to why your application should be considered. These may include clearly dated travel documents that have been booked in an emergency or certificates proving illness while abroad preventing the student's return. Failure to provide this information may result in your application being rejected.

In deciding whether to agree to the request, the following factors are relevant:

- The purpose and length of the leave requested;
- The student's overall pattern and level of attendance;
- Whether the holiday falls during a key examination year.

Parents should not assume that they have a right to expect that the Governors will approve holidays during term-time. The impact on a student's education has to be the overriding factor.

Yours faithfully

G Smith
Headteacher

Request for student leave of absence



All applications must be made by the parent/carer that the student lives with.

Please ensure that you have read the reverse of this form before completing. Once completed, please return to the Student Services Department preferably two weeks before the proposed absence. Please supply copies of information that will support your application, ie, confirmation of date of booking, medical certificates, etc. We regret that any absence which has not been authorised will result with a fine being issued by the Local Authority. Your child will also be banned from extra-curricular school trips and clubs for a period of six months from the date of return. This does not include the whole-school ACHIEVE Days.

Student's name: Form

Leave of absence dates: From To

Destination:

Number of days of school to be missed:

Are you the person that this child lives with? YES / NO

Have you ever been granted leave of absence at JRCS before? YES / NO

Please give the reasons below why this request should be considered: *(must be completed)*

Have you supplied any documentation to support your request YES / NO

Parent/Carer's signature: Date:

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY:

Attendance Officer to log application then pass information to relevant staff.

Level of attendance during current academic year:; last academic year:

Previous application Yes/No Dates.....

Circulate to: MUR3/HAR4 → OKE → SMI/KEA → OKE → Student file