

Sir John Hunt



Attendance Policy

Policy Adopted: October 2021
 Policy Reviewed: December 2022
 Policy Next Review: October 2024

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Introduction

Sir John Hunt CSC is a place for high quality learning and teaching. Students will only fully benefit from this educational provision if they attend school every day on time. This policy sets out our expectations to ensure this can happen.

Sir John Hunt Attendance Principles

We believe that low absence from College is essential for:

- students to make good progress and achieve their academic ambitions
- students to benefit socially by interacting with their peers
- teachers to be able to teach and build on student's previous knowledge without spending undue time teaching students what they have missed

College Values

Our expectations with respect to attendance are informed by our College values, which are:

Ambition

- we are determined to achieve success
- we expect the best from ourselves and each other
- we believe there are no limits to what we can achieve

Endeavour

- we work hard, always
- we strive for excellence
- we do not give up

Respect

- we respect ourselves and each other
- we are considerate of others
- we are responsible for our actions

Purpose of our Attendance Policy

This policy abides by the legislation and statutory guidance as listed in appendix A and ensures that we establish systems and practices which:

- ensure all our students, parents, carers, staff and governors are aware of the high expectations of Sir John Hunt CSC through defining what we consider to be acceptable and unacceptable attendance and absence levels
- creates an ethos in which high attendance and low absence is promoted and is the norm
- maintains a safe, secure environment where students feel valued and welcome, thereby positively encouraging attendance
- raises student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance in achieving their ambitions
- celebrates excellent school attendance
- acts early to address patterns of absence by supporting students and families who experience difficulties

The importance of school attendance

The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

The Department for Education (DfE) reported that in Year 11, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in GCSE English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance at school is also an important protective factor. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school; 90% of young offenders had been persistently absent from school.

Persistent absence is defined by the DfE as absence of 10% or higher. 10% absence is equivalent to 1 day off school every 2 weeks, across the whole school year. This equates to approximately 95 hours of learning that is lost.

Students with an absence of 50% or more are classed by the DfE as severely absent and are referred to the Local Authority as a “Child Missing Out on Education” (CMOOE).

	Attendance %	Days of school attended	Days of absence	Approximate learning hours lost
Role model student	100%	190	0	0
	99%	188	2	10
	98%	186	4	20
Good student	97%	184	6	30
	96%	182.5	7.5	37.5
	95%	180.5	9.5	47.5
Underachieving student	94%	179	11	55
	93%	177	13	65
	92%	175	15	75
	91%	173	17	85
	90%	171	19	95
Student causing most concern	89%	169	21	105
	88%	167	23	115
	87%	165	25	125
	86%	163	27	135
	85%	161.5	28.5	142.5
	84%	159.5	30.5	152.5
	83%	158	32	160
	82%	156	34	170
	81%	154	36	180
80%	152	38	190	
Child Missing Out on Education	50%	95	95	475

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

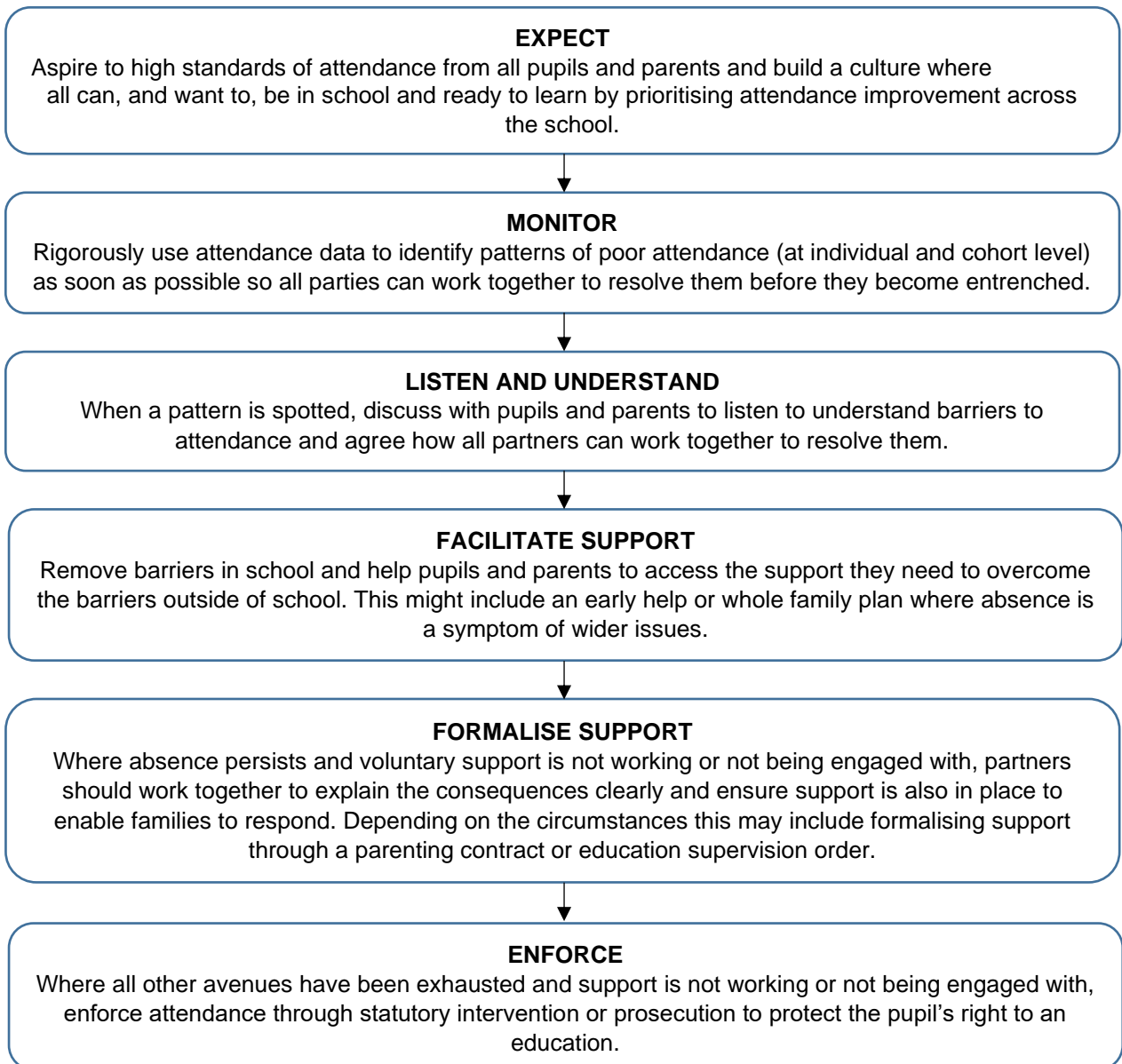
The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the responsibility of every

parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, requires schools and local partners to work with families to:



Key College Contacts for Absence & Attendance

Key contacts can be found on our College Website: www.sjhcsc.co.uk/parents/absence

Overview of Expectations

Local Authority

- have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline local authority services

- have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove barriers to attendance
- Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice
- work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders

Governing Body

- review and approve this policy every 3 years
- take an active role in attendance improvement, support the College to prioritise attendance, and work together with the Principal and senior leadership team to set whole school cultures
- ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- ensure school staff receive training on attendance
- regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it

Principal

- review and approve this policy and make recommendations to governors every 3 years
- develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence to achieve attendance targets
- ensure appropriate resources are in place to support the effective implementation of the policy

Senior Leader responsible for attendance

- develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence to achieve attendance targets
- work with the Attendance Officer and Pastoral/Admin teams to ensure they have the time and resources to implement the policy effectively and consistently
- ensure the policy and processes for registration, monitoring, tracking and intervening to prevent absence are implemented and are fit for purpose
- meet with the Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team regularly

Attendance Officer

- to lead and manage the implementation of this policy and underpinning processes
- maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence to achieve attendance targets
- monitor and analyse attendance and absence data
- monitor the timely and accurate recording of registers, report to Senior Leader for accountability and escalation of interventions as required
- identify exemplary attendance and celebrate individual, tutor and year group achievements
- identify absence and punctuality trends and prepare strategic reports to inform strategies to help lower/improve student absence and punctuality
- support and challenge parents around issues to help lower and improve student punctuality and absence
- ensure reasons for absence are identified and resolved with appropriate interventions
- facilitate support for students & parents to overcome barriers to attendance
- formalise support for students & parents following guidance from the local authority
- enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution, by referring cases to the local authority
- meet with the Pastoral Team and Senior Leader regularly to support them to fulfil their duties

Pastoral Team

- maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence
- consistently implement the attendance policy
- facilitate support for students & parents to overcome barriers to attendance
- ensure year group attendance targets are met
- promote and incentivise high attendance/low absence
- celebrate individual, tutor and year group attendance achievements

- track cohorts and groups/individuals for patterns of non-attendance on a year group attendance action plan
- ensure students catch up on missed learning
- meet with the Senior Leader and Attendance Officer regularly

College Teachers & Tutors

- maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence
- complete registers accurately for attendance and punctually during roll call and at the beginning of every lesson
- assist the Attendance Officer & Pastoral Team in following up any unexplained absence
- monitor absence and be alert to early signs of disaffection and patterns of absence - report these concerns as soon as possible to the Attendance Officer & Pastoral Team
- encourage and reinforce the message that high attendance/low absence rates equate to a greater chance of academic progress and success
- welcome students who have been absent back into their lessons, providing additional support as required.

College Admin Team

- maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance/low absence
- to take calls and emails from parents about absence and record it accurately on the school management information system
- contact parents to obtain specific reasons for unexplained absence
- provide concise and accurate record keeping
- share key information with the right people in a timely manner

Parents*

- must encourage regular school attendance and punctuality and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- should work with the school and local authority to understand their child's barriers to attendance
- proactively check and respond to communications from the College with regards to absence.
- proactively engage with any informal or formal support offered by the school or local authority
- must ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and appropriately prepared for the school day
- must notify the school as soon as possible when their child is unexpectedly absent and provide a specific reason for the absence
- only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance by completing an absence request form (available at www.sjhcsc.co.uk/parents/absence)
- should book all routine GP, dental and optician appointments, outside of the school day to minimise the disruption to their child's education
 - if an appointment must be made that would impact on the school day, parents should inform us in advance and provide a copy of the letter/email confirming the appointment
 - if no evidence of the appointment is provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised
 - their child will be expected to be in school either side of any appointment and should not be absent from school all day
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- should provide medical evidence for periods of absence from school of 4 days or more, or the absence will be coded as unauthorised
- should provide medical evidence to support the reason for their child's absence, if their child is on the medical evidence register
 - This evidence could include copies of medical appointment cards, letters from medical professionals, copy of prescriptions or clearly labelled medication

* For this policy, the definition of parent is defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person

- *any person who has care** of a child or young person*

***A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.*

Students

- aspire to high standards of attendance and low absence rates
- attend school every day
- be punctual for the school day and every lesson
- be appropriately prepared for the day's learning

Attendance Register

The College will use a management information system (MIS) to keep an attendance register and will place all pupils onto this register.

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

- present
- attending an approved off-site educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Parents can check their child's attendance every day using the SIMS Parent App and will also receive their child's attendance figures on their termly report.

The College will also take an attendance register every lesson to ensure we are safeguarding our students, so that we know they are in the right place at the right time and are not late to lessons.

Responding to Absence

Student attendance is monitored by the Attendance Officer. An overview of the process for monitoring and responding to absence is outlined below.

When a student does not attend, the College will respond in the following manner:

- if no communication is received from the parent/carer, the Admin Team will send truancy notifications. The system will text or call the parent/carer contact numbers
- if a reply is received the attendance register will be updated.
 - absence due to specified illness will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or if the student has been placed on the medical evidence requirement register
 - absence that remains unexplained due to a non-specific reason being provided will be challenged
- in the event of no response to truancy being received, an email will be sent to parents/carers. If no response is received within 5 working days of the date of the email, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Students on the medical evidence register will be required to provide evidence of the reason for their absence. This evidence could include copies of medical appointment cards, letters from medical professionals, copy of prescriptions or clearly labelled medication.
- for periods of absence from school of 4 days or more we will require medical evidence to be provided or the absence will be coded as unauthorised
- All evidence provided should be uploaded to student file in the MIS
- continued failure to contact the school to report a child's absence may result in home visits for a welfare check
- all absence greater than 10% will involve further scrutiny by the Attendance Officer
- should absence levels continue to increase the College may consider further action by either the issuing of a Penalty Notice, or court prosecution

Punctuality

Punctuality is an important part of self-discipline and essential to good time management. Students must always make an effort to arrive promptly for school and to every lesson.

1. Bells ring at 08:25 to signal that it is time to move to Roll Call.
2. Students must be in their Roll Call base to register with their tutor by the time the second bell rings at 08:30 in the morning and register at the start of every lesson.
3. If a student arrives late to Roll Call, they must report to the Attendance Officer to sign in and receive a sanction.
4. If a student arrives after Roll Call has finished, they must register at Student Reception to sign in and receive a sanction.
5. The morning register is open from 08:30 to 09:00. Any student arriving after 09:00 will be marked absent.

Timings of the School Day	
Roll Call, Registration & Tutor Reading/Assembly	08:30 – 09:00
Period 1	09:00 – 09:50
Period 2	09:50 – 10:40
Break	10:40 – 11:00
Period 3	11:00 – 11:50
Period 4	11:50 – 12:40
Lunch	12:40 – 13:20
Period 5	13:20 – 14:10
Period 6	14:10 – 15:00
Period 7 (compulsory for Years 11, 12 and 13)	15:00 – 16:00

Sanctions for late arrival without good reason will result in a one hour after school detention after school.

If students are identified as being persistently late, the parent/carer will be sent a 'Punctuality Concern Letter' and invited in to discuss lateness. Students will be placed on a Punctuality Report.

Sixth Form Attendance

The attendance register will be taken once in Period 0 and at the start of the first PM session of each school day. As well as registers for each timetabled Sixth Form lesson, Supported Study and Period 7 sessions, registers will also be taken for all off-site sessions delivered at Training Providers or at Partner schools.

If a Sixth Form student is absent, their parent/carer should inform their Home School by telephone or text no later than 08.30am. Vocational students should also contact their Training Provider to inform them of their absence.

When a sixth form student is absent

- they will be expected to work from home

- their taxis/transport should be cancelled if they study off-site
- sixth form admin will contact home if there is no reason for an absence given

Bursary Payments for Sixth Form

- All students in receipt of the 16-19 Bursary will have reductions made to their payments based on their attendance. It is vital that absences are kept to a minimum and that any absences are communicated to the college.

Absence Requests

The College adheres to the statutory guidance issued by the DfE and is only able to authorise absence under exceptional circumstances.

In all cases, a Sir John Hunt absence request form must be completed **prior to the absence** (form available on our website; www.sjhsc.co.uk/parents/absence) and where appropriate, evidence should be provided to support the request e.g. medical appointment card

The following is a guide outlining what might be considered exceptional circumstances to authorise absence:

- genuine illness
- medical appointments: routine medical/dental check-ups should be made out of school hours whenever possible. Your child is expected to attend school before and/or after the appointment (evidence of appointment is required)
- days of religious observance (you'll need authorisation from the school at least four weeks before the event)
- transport that wasn't provided by the Local Authority when it should have been
- unavoidable cause
- a specified, limited period for an immediate family member's bereavement, crisis, or serious illness
- a funeral of an immediate family member
- a specified, limited period for children of service personnel about to go on deployment (evidence is required)
- a one-off sporting event/performing arts competition if your child is participating and is at county standard or above (evidence is required)

Examples of reasons for absence that the school is unable to authorise include:

- caring for other family members
- birthdays
- to interpret for family members
- having no school uniform
- having no school shoes
- bullying
- friendship problems
- head lice or nits
- learning difficulties
- family holiday
- weddings abroad (even if it's immediate family)
- family anniversaries
- death of a pet
- travel problems
- attending immigration interviews with parents or guardian
- moving house
- school refusal
- lateness after the school's registration period ends (Sir John Hunt registers close at 09:00)

The immediate family is a defined group of relations, used in rules or laws to determine which members of a family are affected by those rules. It normally includes a person's parents, spouses, siblings and children. It can contain others connected by birth, adoption, marriage, civil partnership or cohabitation such as grandparents, grandchildren, siblings-in-law, half-siblings, adopted children and step-parents/step-children and cohabiting partners (Plymouth City Council Education Welfare Service 2014)

Holidays during term time

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance, and it is essential that parents/carers take their family holidays during the school holidays.

Under the direction of the Department for Education, the College is not able to authorise absence during term time for holidays and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents **must** complete an absence request form in advance. We recognise that there may be occasions where a parent feels there are extenuating reasons for requesting leave during term time, in such circumstances we advise parents to outline the reasons in detail on the absence request form. We will inform you of the College's decision in writing. Prolonged unauthorised absences may put your child's place at Sir John Hunt at risk.

If parents take their children on holiday during term time without authorisation, the College will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. Failure to pay can result in a referral to Court. Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school (see definition of a parent on page 7-8 of this policy).

Students may also be referred to the Local Authority as their attendance may warrant them being recorded as a "Child Missing Out on Education" (CMOOE).

Penalty Notices and Legal Intervention

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, but which seeks to improve a student's attendance. A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with the Education Welfare team.

Where attendance has fallen below 85% or there are more than 10 unauthorised sessions during a sixth month period (with the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time), parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued (see definition of a parent on page 7-8 of this policy).

Appendix A: Legislation, Statutory Requirements & Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

Relevant legislation

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Children Act 1989](#)

[The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

[The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Sentencing Act 2020](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

Relevant government guidance

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

[Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour](#)

[Children missing education](#)

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

[Elective home education](#)

[Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)

[Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying](#)

Relevant local authority guidance

[School attendance and absence](#)

[Penalty notices for absence from school](#)

[Bullying in schools](#)

[Equality and inclusion for minority ethnic children](#)

[Psychological support for children and young people](#)

[Children excluded from school](#)