



Lateness

Good attendance doesn't just involve being present in school – it also involves punctuality. You also have a responsibility to ensure that your child/ward arrives to school on time and stays in school during the day.

All pupils are expected to be in school for the beginning of the school day at **8.50 a.m.** If pupils arrive after **9.20 a.m.**, they will receive an unauthorised late mark ('U' mark).

How can I help?

You can help in the following ways:

- Encourage good attendance by making sure your child goes to school regularly
- Take an interest in your child's school work
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of absence from school
- Inform us on the first day of your child/ward's absence, and keep us up-dated daily throughout the absence period either by telephone or Parentmail
- Provide us with more than one emergency contact for your child/ward, to ensure that if we do not receive a response from the first contact number, we can try the others that you have provided

- Cooperate with our school to make sure your child overcomes any attendance problems
- Discuss planned absences with the headteacher and apply for permission well in advance
- Only take your child out of school during term time where the absence has been **authorised**.

Don't underestimate the importance of 100% attendance. Even one day missed can have an effect on learning:

- **98%** attendance means **4** school days missed
- **95%** attendance means **10** school days missed
- **90%** attendance means **19** school days missed
- **80%** attendance means **38** school days missed
- **5 minutes** late each day means **3** school days missed

If you would like further information regarding attendance at our school, please see our **Attendance Policy** – downloadable from the school website or ask in the school office for a paper copy.



St. John's Catholic **Junior School**

**School attendance:
what parents need to know**



Why is good attendance important?

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school, and to establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success.

Through regular attendance, pupils can:

- Achieve their full potential.
- Engage in essential learning and other school social events.
- Develop life skills.
- Minimise the risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and becoming victims or perpetrators of crime.



All parents should promote good attendance and work in partnership with their child's school to provide a cohesive approach.

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What does the law say?

All children of compulsory school age – between 5-16 – must receive a suitable full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring that this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making appropriate alternative arrangements.

Once you have registered your child at a school, you are also legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. If you fail to do this – even if your child misses school without you knowing – legal action can be taken against you by the LA. It is a legal offence to fail to ensure your child attends school regularly.



Legal action can involve a penalty notice or being taken to court.

Parents also face the risk of imprisonment and parenting orders. Parenting orders involve attending a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

A penalty notice of £60 may be issued as an alternative to prosecution, but this will rise to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay a penalty notice will usually lead to **prosecution**.



Can my child ever be absent?

When a pupil is absent from school, this will be classified as either **'authorised'** or **'unauthorised'**.

The governing body and headteacher decide which absences are granted as authorised. Authorised absences are only permitted for valid reasons such as:

- Illness.
- Medical or dental appointments.
- Religious observances.
- Family bereavement.

Regular attendance is every day that school requires your child to attend school.

Wherever possible, parents should always try to arrange medical and dental appointments during school holidays or after school hours.



What are unauthorised absences?

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable.

Unauthorised absences can include:

- Forgetting school term dates.
- Oversleeping.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Arriving at school after the register has closed.
- Leaving school for no valid reason during the day.

Holidays during term time

The school **cannot** be expected to authorise an absence for a holiday during term time.

Taking holidays during term time means that pupils miss important school time – both educationally and for other school activities. It will be difficult for pupils to catch up on work when they return to school.

Exceptional circumstances do not include cheaper costs, family availability or weather conditions.

You can be fined if you take your child on holiday during term time without permission from the headteacher.



Requesting absences

All absences, including holidays, must be requested as far in advance as possible.

Holiday Request Forms are available from the website or school office. Please complete and return the form to either your child/ward's class teacher or hand it into the school office.