ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Scope

This policy applies to John Lyon School, which comprises the 'Senior School' and the 'Prep School'. All references to 'the School' refer to John Lyon School except where otherwise specified.

This policy outlines the School's approach to adhering to the guidance set out in Working Together To Improve School Attendance (WTISA August 2024). This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Children Missing Education Policy.

Aims

All staff are responsible for improving pupil attendance. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with School being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that John Lyon is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend School and therefore we will work in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with the school's efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

As laid out in WTISA 2024, the School will work collaboratively with local partners and families to successfully treat the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly. The School will work with local partners and families to:

- Expect and aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils;
- Monitor attendance to identify early patterns of poor attendance;
- Listen to pupils and parents to understand the barriers and work together to resolve them;
- Facilitate support, such as an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues;
- Formalise support, where voluntary support is unsuccessful. This may involve an attendance contract or education supervision order;
- Enforce attendance through statutory intervention where all other avenues have been exhausted, to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcome for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and is therefore everybody's responsibility in school. This starts with the School's Senior

Leadership Attendance Champion, Jonathan Rowe (Deputy Head Wellbeing, DSL & Head of Sixth Form), but includes all school staff.

The School aims to manage and improve attendance effectively by:

- Building strong relationships and working jointly with families to remove barriers to attendance;
- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture which promotes the benefits of high attendance;
- Accurately completing admission and attendance registers, and by having effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence;
- Closely monitoring individual and cohort absence levels and intervening with strategies where patterns of absences have been identified;
- Sharing information with families and local partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming severe;
- Being mindful of pupils absent from School due to physical or mental ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, providing them with additional support.

Expectations of Parents

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 legal 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. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Expectations of Pupils

Pupils are expected to be punctual and attend school on every day that it is in session (assuming they are fit and healthy enough to do so). Pupils should:

- Attend all lessons and all relevant activities when at school;
- Be punctual and arrive at lessons on time;
- Be organised with the right equipment and ready to learn;
- Inform their parents/carers if unwell, who should in turn contact the school;
- Follow the protocols in place for late arrival;
- Inform a member of staff if they feel uncomfortable attending school for any other reason.

Morning Registration

Senior School

- The bell sounds at 8.25am to summon pupils to Tutor time, which runs until 8.50am;
- Form Tutors and pupils should be in their form rooms no later than 8.30am;
- Form Tutors should register the form at 8.30am;
- Pupils who arrive after 8.30am should be marked as 'Late' – but still registered;
- Pupils arriving after the Tutor time has finished should report immediately to Reception and sign-in using the electronic registration system **before** going to their first lesson;
- Tutors should check their emails for messages to be given out during tutor time. All notices/letters/messages should be given out by 8.35am;

- If registration is recorded by hard copy, the register must be returned to the School Office for processing, by 9.00am;

Pupils should leave their form rooms punctually at 8.50am for a prompt start to the first lesson of the day;

Prep School

- Staff on duty summon pupils to Form time at 8.25am; form time runs until 9.00am;
- Form tutors should be in their classrooms no later than 8.20am;
- Form tutors should register their class at 8.30am;
- Pupils who arrive after 8.30am should be marked as 'Late' – but still registered;

Pupils arriving after 8.30am are registered at Reception by signing in using the electronic registration system **before** going to their classroom;

- If registration is recorded by hard copy, the register must be returned to the School Office for processing, by 9.00am;

Pupils should leave their form rooms in time for an assembly which starts at 8.40am; on Tuesday and Friday for Year 3-Year 6 and on Wednesday and Thursday for N-Y2;
In the event of a class teacher being absent, the Cover Teacher should arrange for the register to be completed.

Pre-Prep & EYFS

- At 8.25am, pupils are summoned to class;

Form tutors should be in their classrooms no later than 8.20am;
Form tutors should register their class at 8.30am;

- Pupils who arrive after 8.30am should be marked as 'Late' – but still registered;

Pupils arriving after 8.30am are registered at Reception by signing in using the electronic registration system **before** going to their classroom;

- If registration is recorded by hard copy, the register must be returned to the School Office for processing, by 9.00am;

In the event of a class teacher being absent, the Cover Teacher should arrange for the register to be completed.

Registration during Assemblies

Senior School: Staff are required to register their form group as the pupils assemble, using their devices. During assemblies, Form Tutors should sit with their tutor groups. Pupils arriving late should sign in at Reception before attending the assembly.

Prep School: There is no need for registration during assemblies in the Prep School

Absence

A written absence note is required for all pupil absence. The easiest method is via the Parent Portal either by the 'Leave Request' link for planned absence or the 'Absence' link for unplanned absence or alternatively by email to (absence@johnlyon.org). Tutors will only mark a pupil present, absent or late as applicable. The Central Administration Team (CAT) will record the reason for absence.

Planned Absence

Planned absence should be applied for using the 'Leave Request' link on the Parent Portal.

Applications for missing part of and up to one day need to be made at least 24 hours in advance of the absence and can be granted by the Head of Year at Senior School and by the Deputy Head (Prep) at Prep

School. If an application is being made within 24 hours of the absence, the application will have to be made directly via email to the Head of Year with a copy sent to absence@johnlyon.org for Senior School and to the Deputy Head (Prep) for Prep School.

Planned absence for longer than one day requires the consent of the Head and therefore requests must be made at least 7 days in advance via the same link in the Parent Portal.

Unplanned Absence

When a pupil is absent without prior notification e.g. through illness, parents are requested to send a written message, either via the Parent Portal 'Absence' link or by email (absence@johnlyon.org) **before 8.30am** on each day of absence. If a pupil is absent from registration and the School has received no communication from parents, the School will contact parents by telephone to establish the pupil's whereabouts. This will be followed up by an email if the school fails to contact the parent via phone. The School will keep trying to contact parents via all contacts submitted by the parents including emergency contacts, if needed.

For long-term absence any communication should be received within the first three days of absence. This covers the government's regulations relating to truancy and the School's responsibility for pupils in its care.

It should be borne in mind that whilst parents may explain absence, only the School may authorise it. A list of absences/lates should be compiled by 10.30am and circulated by email to:

Head, Deputy Heads, DSL, Head of Pastoral Care (KS3 & KS4), Heads of Year, Form Tutors, the CAT, Head's EA, Head's Office Administrator and Senior School Nurse.

The Deputy Head (Prep), PSL, the CAT, and Prep School Nurse.

Afternoon Registration

Senior School

- Form Tutors and pupils should be in their form rooms no later than 3.50pm;

Form Tutors should register their forms at 3.50pm;

- Pupils who arrive after 3.50pm should be marked as 'Late';

Pupils arriving after the Tutor time has finished should report immediately to Reception and register using the electronic registration system before leaving School;
All notices/letters/messages should be given out by 3.55pm;
Pupils should be dismissed at 4pm;

- If registration is recorded by hard copy, the register return should be returned to the School Office for processing by 4.15pm;

If a pupil is marked present in the morning but absent for afternoon registration, CAT should be informed and parents contacted. Parents will be contacted after consultation with the Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care, Deputy Head of Sixth Form and/or a Deputy Head.

Prep School

- Class teachers and pupils should be in their form rooms no later than 1pm (Early Years and Pre-Prep) or 1.30pm (Prep);
- Form Tutors should register their forms at 1.35pm;
- Pupils who arrive after 1.40pm should be marked as 'Late';

- Year groups who have last lunch on the rota have until 1.45pm to be registered;

Lessons should start promptly at 1.45pm;
Pupils arriving after the form time has finished should report immediately to Reception and sign in using the electronic registration system **before** going to their first lesson after lunch;

- If registration is recorded by hard copy the register should be returned to the School Office for processing by 1.50pm;

If a pupil is marked present in the morning but absent for afternoon registration the CAT should be informed. CAT will check if they are in class (or in Welfare). If a pupil/'s whereabouts is unknown the Missing Child policy should be followed. The DSL and PSL will be notified immediately.

Games Registration

Senior School

All registration for Years 7-9 will be done by the Games department prior to departure for Sudbury.

Years 7, 8 and 9 will be transported to Sudbury after they have been registered. All pupils are dismissed from Sudbury. Pupils who use the School Coach Service will be transported back to School in time to catch the coach.

Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form will be registered at the location of their sporting activity. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form will walk to the location of their Games session in time for registration. They will be registered at the location of their session no later than 2.10pm. Pupils will be dismissed from the location of their activity at the end of the session.

Absences must be reported to the School Office immediately. The CAT will follow this up with the Head of Year if required.

Missing games without permission is treated as an act of truancy and will be dealt with according to the School's Behaviour Policy.

Prep School

All registration for Years 3-6 will be completed by a member of the Games department before departure from Prep School, to our various sites to conduct PE/Games, including the Senior School, Sudbury Playing Fields and away fixture venues.

Additional Notes on Registration

Senior School

Form Tutors should mark unknown absences as 'N', the Office staff will then alter them to the appropriate code after their whereabouts is established and will only be marked as unauthorised after speaking with Heads of Year, Heads of Pastoral Care (KS3&4) or Deputy Head of Sixth Form.

Form Tutors will be advised by email if no registration has been completed and will be asked to complete registration for their form. CAT must be informed when this has been done. Form Tutors must take seriously the legal importance of registration and that it is a professional duty to ensure it is done.

To ensure we are monitoring pupil attendance throughout the school day, lesson registers must be taken via iSAMs promptly for each lesson.

Pupils arriving at lessons with no AM or PM registration mark should be sent to the School office to sign in.

Sixth Formers who have no lessons after lunch have the option to leave the School site. The earliest they can leave site is 1.50pm and they must sign out at Reception before leaving.

Prep School

Form Tutors should mark unknown absences as 'N', the Office staff will then alter them to the appropriate code after their whereabouts is established and will only be marked as unauthorised after speaking with the Deputy Head (Prep).

Form Tutors will be advised by email or phone if no registration has been completed and will be asked to complete registration for their form. CAT must be informed when this has been done. Form Tutors must realise the legal importance of registration and that it is a professional duty to ensure it is done. Registers must be taken via iSAMs.

Protocols to improve School Attendance

When attendance drops below 97%, the following protocols are enacted:

Attendance of 95-97%	Cause of concern	**Senior:** Head of Year 7-11 speaks with parents and reports to Head of Pastoral Care / Deputy Head of Sixth Form speaks with parents and reports to Head of Sixth Form. **Prep:** Phase Lead speaks with parents and reports to Deputy Head (Prep).
Attendance of 90%-95%	Cause for concern	**Senior:** Deputy Head of Sixth Form / Head of Year 7-11 writes to parents, alerting Head of Pastoral Care, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head (Wellbeing & DSL). **Prep:** Phase Lead write to parents, alerting Deputy Head (Prep).
Attendance of 80%-90%	Serious cause for concern	**Senior**: Head of Pastoral Care / Deputy Head of Sixth Form collaborates with pupil and parents to put action plan in place if required – details of intervention are recorded on file and copied to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Deputy Head (Wellbeing & DSL). **Prep**: Phase Lead collaborates with pupil and parents to put action plan in place if required – details of intervention are recorded on file and copied to the Deputy Head (Prep).
Attendance of less than 80%	Unacceptable attendance	**Senior**: Deputy Head (Pastoral) meets with Deputy Head (Wellbeing & DSL) to address individual cases and agree on next interventions, which may involve formalising support. **Prep**: Phase Lead meets with relevant staff to address individual cases and agree on next interventions, which may involve formalising support.

In the event that the School were to be concerned about a pupil's attendance and were unable to ascertain information which explained persistent absence, the School would make a referral to the relevant

borough's Education Welfare Service or Children's Service. The recommended threshold for referral for vulnerable children is 80-90%, hence the School's protocols for all pupils stated above, using the professional judgement of the pastoral team based on the weekly analysis of attendance registers carried out by Heads of Year (Senior) or Deputy Head (Prep).

The School will make a return to the local authority (an 'attendance return') where a pupil of compulsory school age has failed to attend school regularly. The DSL will use their professional judgement when deciding whether or not to make the referral.

The School will make an 'attendance return' to the local authority where a pupil has missed 10 consecutive school days or more with their absence being recorded as unauthorised.

The School will make a 'sickness return' to the local authority where a pupil has been/or is likely to be absent from School because of illness for at least 15 days during the School year, whether consecutive or not.

In the Senior School, Heads of Year are responsible for monitoring pupil attendance and alerting the DSL where a pupil has been/or is likely to absent from School for 15 days, and where a pupil has ten consecutive days or more of unauthorised absence.

In the Prep School, the Deputy Head (Prep)/PSL is responsible for monitoring pupil attendance with the support of the CAT team. Absences are monitored and systems are in place to identify where a pupil has been/or is likely to absent from School for 15 days, and where a pupil has ten consecutive days or more of unauthorised absence.

See Appendix 1 for further information regarding the School's approach to managing and improving attendance.

Protocols to improve School Punctuality

WTISA 2024 states: 'Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival.' The document also notes that '6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks' can be regarded as 'unauthorised absence'

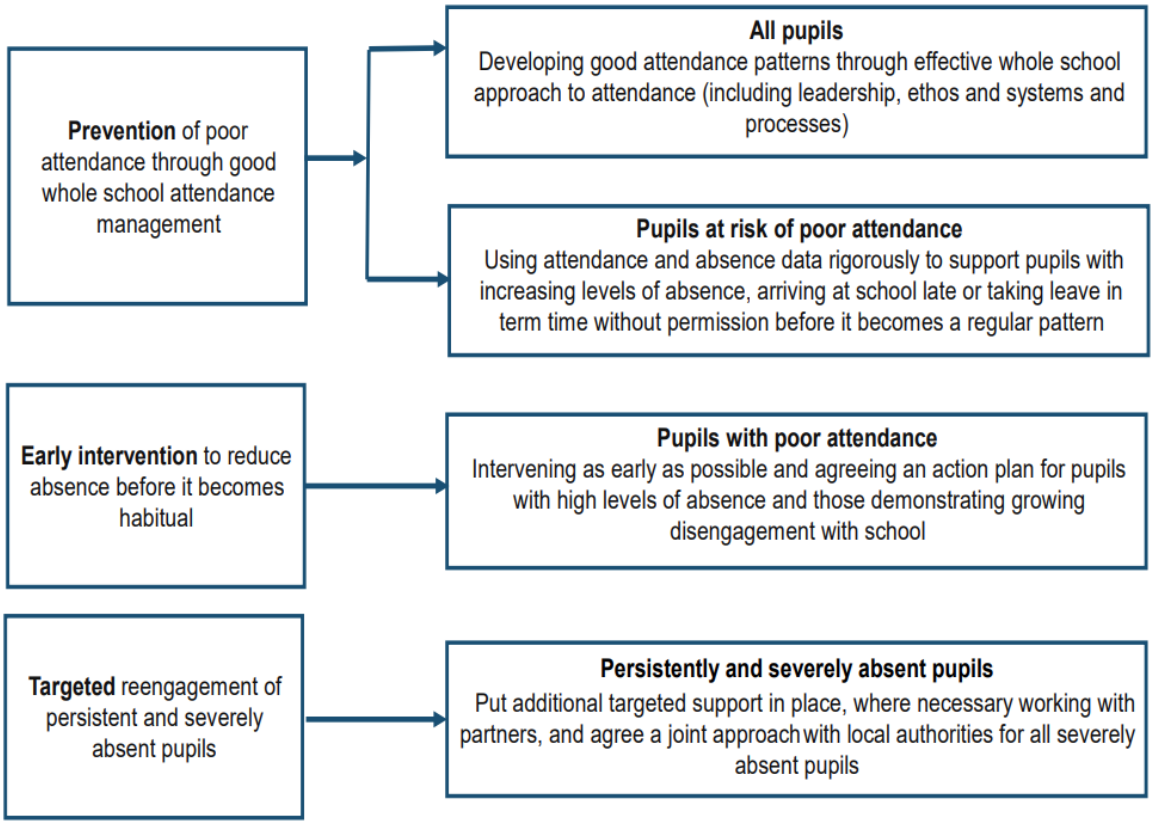
When pupils' punctuality falls below expected standards the following protocols are enacted:

5+ minutes late to School	**Concern**	**Action**
First time		Conversation with tutor in PM registration
Second time	Cause for concern	Conversation with HoY in PM registration. Lunchtime detention issued.
Third time in week OR repeatedly 1-2 times a week over three weeks	Serious cause for concern	Early Registration enacted – meet with tutor at 8:15am for 1 week. Tutor will contact home.
Subsequent instances	Unacceptable level of lateness	Early Registration Re-enacted – meet with HoY at 8:15am for 1 week. HoY will contact home.
Continued lateness		Pastoral Detention and letter sent home. Escalate to SLT Detention
Persistent lateness across the half term		HoY meet with parents

Children under statutory school age

While children under statutory school age are not legally required to attend School, regular attendance is crucial for their social-emotional development and preparation for future education. Therefore, all of the School's safeguarding policies, which includes the Attendance and Punctuality Policy, apply to all pupils in the School, including those not of statutory school age.

Reviewed by: Deputy Head Wellbeing, DSL & Sixth Form
Implemented: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

Appendix 1

Effective school attendance improvement and management