



JEDDAH PREP AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Attendance and Absence Policy

Introduction

This policy should be read alongside the JPGS Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and other relevant school policies.

At Jeddah Prep and Grammar School (JPGS), we believe that every day matters. Regular attendance is essential to pupils' academic achievement, personal development, wellbeing and future opportunities. Pupils cannot benefit fully from the education, relationships, experiences and opportunities offered by the school if they are frequently absent or arrive late. We are committed to creating a culture in which excellent attendance is the norm and every pupil is supported to attend school regularly and punctually.

Our approach is based on the principles that:

- attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, pupils and parents;
- every pupil should attend school regularly and be ready to learn;
- concerns about attendance should be identified and addressed early;
- barriers to attendance should be understood and, where possible, addressed;
- appropriate support should be provided before concerns escalate;
- persistent or unreasonable absence will be challenged;
- attendance procedures will be applied fairly, consistently and proportionately;
- attendance is closely connected to safeguarding, wellbeing, behaviour and academic progress.

Our Attendance Expectations

Our expectation is that pupils attend school every day that they are required to attend, unless they are unable to do so for an acceptable and appropriately documented reason. JPGS has a whole-school attendance target of 95% or above. The 95% target is a school expectation and is used to identify pupils whose attendance may require early intervention.

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance enables pupils to:

- maintain continuity in their learning;
- develop strong academic knowledge and skills;

- establish positive habits and routines;
- build effective relationships with teachers and peers;
- participate fully in school life;
- develop resilience, independence and responsibility;
- prepare effectively for examinations and future study;
- maximise their opportunities beyond school.

JPGS recognises that attendance is not simply an administrative measure. Regular attendance supports pupils' academic progress, personal development and ability to participate fully in school life.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school every day unless they have an acceptable and authorised reason for absence;
- arrive at school on time and be ready to learn;
- attend all lessons and scheduled activities;
- move promptly between lessons;
- take responsibility for maintaining good attendance and punctuality;
- speak to a trusted member of staff if there is a difficulty affecting their attendance;
- follow the school's expectations regarding punctuality and behaviour.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and Guardians have a vital role in ensuring regular attendance.

Parents and Guardians are expected to:

- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- ensure that their child arrives at school ready to learn;
- notify the school promptly when their child is unable to attend;
- provide an appropriate reason for every absence;
- provide supporting information or evidence where requested;
- submit evidence supporting an absence within the timeframe required by the school;
- avoid arranging unnecessary appointments during the school day;
- avoid taking holidays during term time;
- work constructively with the school where attendance concerns arise;
- attend meetings or engage with attendance support where requested;
- inform the school of any circumstances that may affect their child's attendance or ability to attend regularly.

Parents and Guardians are responsible for working in partnership with the school to ensure that attendance concerns are addressed at the earliest opportunity.

The School

The school will:

- monitor attendance daily;
- identify emerging attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity;
- record attendance accurately in the approved attendance system;
- communicate attendance information regularly with parents;
- notify parents of absence and lateness in accordance with applicable requirements;
- investigate unexplained or concerning absence;
- evaluate the reason given for an absence;
- work with pupils and families to identify barriers to attendance;
- provide appropriate pastoral and academic support;
- make reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- escalate concerns where attendance does not improve;
- maintain accurate attendance records;
- respond appropriately where absence raises safeguarding concerns.

Reporting an Absence

If a pupil is unable to attend school, parents/guardian must inform the school as soon as possible and before the start of the school day.

Parents must send an email to attendance@jps.org and should provide:

- the pupil's name;
- year group/form;
- the reason for absence;
- the expected duration of the absence, where known.

The school may request additional information or evidence where necessary to determine whether an absence should be authorised.

Parents must provide appropriate evidence supporting an absence within three working days of the absence, in accordance with the requirements of the Saudi Ministry of Education.

Where no satisfactory explanation or supporting evidence is provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised absence. Parents should not assume that providing an explanation automatically means that an absence will be authorised.

The school is responsible for evaluating the circumstances and determining the appropriate attendance record in accordance with this policy and applicable Saudi Ministry of Education requirements.

Authorised Absence and Absence with an Acceptable Excuse

An absence may be accepted where the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason supported by appropriate evidence. In accordance with the Saudi Ministry of Education's current Rules of Conduct and Attendance, examples of absence that may be accepted with appropriate evidence include:

- illness or medical leave;
- visits to hospitals or health centres;
- emergencies or exceptional circumstances, such as a fire or similar event;
- the death of a relative up to the third degree;
- accompanying a first-degree relative for healthcare;
- accompanying a relative up to the third degree for healthcare, subject to the school's assessment and approval;
- official appointments with relevant authorities;
- accompanying a first-degree relative to an official appointment;
- participation in approved local or international competitions;
- other health-related circumstances assessed by the school;
- circumstances covered by applicable child protection requirements.

Appropriate supporting evidence must be provided.

The school will assess each case individually and may request further documentation where necessary.

Absence Without an Acceptable Excuse

An absence may be recorded as unauthorised absence without an acceptable excuse where:

- no satisfactory explanation has been provided;
- the reason given is not considered acceptable;
- required supporting evidence has not been provided;
- the school has not approved the absence;
- a pupil is absent without parental knowledge or permission;
- a pupil remains absent after permission has been refused;
- the pupil is absent for a reason that does not meet the requirements for an acceptable absence.

Where an absence is not accepted, the school will follow the applicable Ministry of Education procedures, including the recording of the absence and, where applicable, the impact on the pupil's attendance record and attendance mark.

Medical Appointments

Parents should make every reasonable effort to arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours.

Where this is not possible:

- appointments should be arranged for the shortest possible period;
- pupils should attend school before and/or after the appointment wherever reasonably possible;
- appropriate evidence should be provided;
- the school will record the absence in accordance with the applicable attendance requirements.

A medical appointment should not automatically result in a full day's absence where the pupil could reasonably attend school for part of the day. Medical documentation should be provided within 3 working days.

Family Holidays and Leave During Term Time

Parents are strongly discouraged from arranging holidays or other avoidable travel during term time. Term-time absence affects learning, assessment, curriculum continuity and the pupil's ability to participate fully in school life.

Requests for leave during term time will be considered in accordance with the applicable Saudi Ministry of Education requirements and the school's procedures. The fact that travel arrangements have been booked or that a holiday has already been paid for will not, in itself, constitute an acceptable reason for absence.

Where leave is taken without approval, the absence will normally be recorded as an absence without an acceptable excuse.

Unexplained Absence

The school will follow up unexplained absence promptly.

Where a pupil is absent and the school has not received an explanation, the school will contact the parent/guardian.

The Saudi Ministry of Education requires schools to notify parents of absence and lateness and to maintain appropriate records of this communication.

Where necessary, the school may:

1. contact parents by telephone or electronic communication;
2. request an explanation or supporting information;
3. investigate patterns of absence;
4. involve the Form Tutor and pastoral team;
5. escalate the concern to the relevant Head of Key Stage or senior leader;
6. consider safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

Repeated unexplained absence may be treated as a significant attendance concern.

Attendance Monitoring and Early Intervention

JPGS believes in early intervention rather than waiting for attendance to become seriously concerning. Attendance will be monitored regularly. The school will consider both the overall attendance percentage and the pattern of absence.

A pupil may require intervention even where their overall attendance remains above 95% if there is a concerning pattern of absence, repeated short absences or repeated lateness.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

Stage 1 – Attendance Below 95%

Where a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, the school may begin early intervention.

The Form Tutor may:

- speak with the pupil;
- discuss attendance with parents;
- review the attendance pattern;
- identify possible barriers;
- monitor attendance over an agreed period;
- provide appropriate pastoral support.

A pupil may also be placed under closer monitoring where attendance is above 95% but there is a concerning pattern, such as repeated absence on particular days, frequent short absences or repeated lateness.

Stage 2 – Continued Concern

Where attendance does not improve, the concern may be escalated to the relevant pastoral team and/or Head of Key Stage.

The school may:

- arrange a meeting with parents;
- establish an attendance improvement plan;
- identify barriers to attendance;
- agree specific targets;
- increase monitoring;
- provide pastoral or academic support;
- consider whether further intervention is required.

Ministry of Education Attendance Intervention

In addition to the school's internal 95% monitoring threshold, JPGS will apply the intervention procedures required by the Saudi Ministry of Education for absence without an acceptable excuse.

The Ministry's current procedures identify specific intervention points, including:

Days of Absence Without an Acceptable Excuse

Where a pupil has accumulated three days of absence without an acceptable excuse, the school will:

- refer the pupil for appropriate student guidance and educational support;
- review the pupil's circumstances;
- provide appropriate educational and pastoral services;
- inform and engage the parent/guardian;
- monitor the pupil's attendance.

Where the absence continues, the school may require the pupil and parent/guardian to agree to an attendance improvement plan.

Days of Absence Without an Acceptable Excuse

Where absence without an acceptable excuse reaches five days, the school will:

- invite the parent/guardian to discuss the reasons for absence;
- refer the pupil to the relevant student guidance process;
- review the educational and intervention plan;
- continue to provide appropriate support and monitoring;
- inform the parent/guardian of the consequences of continued absence.

Persistent Absence

Under the UK Department for Education methodology, a pupil is classified as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions.

Furthermore, in accordance with the current Saudi Ministry of Education Rules of Conduct and Attendance, where a pupil's absence without an acceptable excuse exceeds 10% during the academic year, Jeddah Prep and Grammar School will apply the relevant Ministry requirements. Where applicable, this may affect a pupil's progression to the next academic year in accordance with Ministry regulations and the pupil's phase of education.

Consequences of Exceeding 10% Absence Without an Acceptable Excuse

Where a pupil's absence without an acceptable excuse exceeds 10% during the academic year, the school will apply the applicable Saudi Ministry of Education requirements.

The school will ensure that parents are informed of the attendance position and the potential consequences before the relevant threshold is reached wherever reasonably possible.

Severe Absence

The UK Department for Education uses the term severe absence for pupils who miss 50% or more of their possible sessions. JPGS may use this measure for internal monitoring and comparison with UK attendance data. However, the school's formal attendance procedures and consequences will be governed by the requirements of the Saudi Ministry of Education where these differ.

A pupil with very high levels of absence will receive an individualised response, with particular attention given to safeguarding, wellbeing, educational support and the circumstances contributing to the absence.

Attendance and Safeguarding

Attendance is closely linked to safeguarding.

A significant or unexplained reduction in attendance may indicate that a pupil is experiencing difficulties or may be at risk of harm.

Staff should remain alert to:

- unexplained or prolonged absence;
- sudden changes in attendance;
- repeated absence;
- repeated absence on particular days;
- a pupil appearing distressed about attending school;
- unexplained changes in behaviour;
- concerns raised by parents or pupils;
- circumstances suggesting that a pupil may be at risk.

Where appropriate, concerns will be referred through the school's safeguarding procedures. All staff are expected to follow the school's safeguarding procedures and the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where applicable to the school's UK curriculum and safeguarding framework.

The Saudi Ministry of Education's attendance rules also require appropriate action where absence may be connected to child protection or safeguarding concerns.

Punctuality

Punctuality is an essential part of good attendance and reflects the school's values of Resilience, Integrity and Knowledge.

The school day begins at 7:40 a.m. Pupils are expected to be in school and prepared for learning before this time.

The 7:43 a.m. bell marks the point at which pupils arriving afterwards will be recorded as late.

In accordance with the JPGS Behaviour Policy:

- pupils arriving after the 7:43 a.m. bell without a valid reason will receive a Level 1 behaviour log;
- they will normally be required to attend a 20-minute lunchtime detention on the same day;
- the standard detention is 12:55 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.;
- repeated lateness will be monitored and may result in further intervention;
- parents may be contacted where punctuality becomes a recurring concern.

The Blue Gate will close at 7:55 a.m.

Pupils arriving at or after 7:55 a.m. must enter through Reception and sign in. Such lateness will be recorded on Compass and dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Failure to attend an assigned detention without a valid reason will be treated as non-compliance and may result in further behavioural consequences in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Punctuality to Lessons

Pupils are expected to arrive at every lesson on time and ready to learn.

Pupils are provided with a three-minute transition period between lessons.

Pupils must arrive before the second bell.

Any pupil arriving after the second bell without a valid reason will be recorded as late to lesson.

In accordance with the Behaviour Policy:

- late arrival to a lesson will normally result in a **Level 1 behaviour incident**;
- a **20-minute after-school detention** will normally be issued for the following school day;
- repeated lateness will be monitored as persistent poor punctuality;
- parents may be invited to meet with the school where poor punctuality continues despite intervention.

These measures are designed to promote responsibility and minimise disruption to teaching and learning.

Attendance and Behaviour

Attendance and behaviour are closely connected.

Pupils are expected to demonstrate the school's values of Resilience, Integrity and Knowledge **by**:

- attending regularly;
- arriving punctually;
- attending all timetabled lessons;
- moving promptly between lessons;
- taking responsibility for their choices;
- following reasonable instructions;
- engaging positively with learning.

Persistent lateness, truancy, missing lessons without permission or failure to follow attendance-related expectations may therefore be managed through the school's Behaviour Policy.

However, attendance difficulties will not automatically be treated as misconduct.

Where attendance is affected by an underlying barrier, the school will seek to understand the circumstances and provide appropriate support before escalating behavioural consequences, where appropriate.

This reflects the Behaviour Policy's commitment to a graduated, proportionate response that combines accountability with pastoral support.

Missing Lessons and Internal Truancy

A pupil who is present in school but deliberately fails to attend a timetabled lesson without permission will be regarded as being absent from that lesson.

This may include:

- remaining in another part of the school without permission;
- deliberately avoiding a lesson;
- leaving a lesson without permission;
- failing to report to an assigned lesson;
- repeatedly arriving significantly late without a valid reason.

Such behaviour may be recorded as a behaviour incident and addressed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Saudi Ministry of Education also requires absence to be recorded at lesson level. Teachers are expected to record absence for each lesson and parents should be notified where a pupil is absent from a lesson during the school day.

Where a pattern of lesson absence emerges, the school will investigate the underlying reasons and consider whether pastoral, academic or safeguarding support is required.

Attendance Incentives and Recognition

JPGS believes that attendance should be promoted positively.

Where appropriate, pupils may be recognised for:

- excellent attendance;
- significant improvement in attendance;
- excellent punctuality;
- sustained improvement;

- demonstrating resilience in overcoming barriers to attendance.

Recognition will be applied fairly and will take individual circumstances into account.

The school will avoid approaches that disadvantage pupils whose attendance is affected by circumstances beyond their control.

This positive approach is consistent with the Saudi Ministry of Education's emphasis on promoting positive behaviour, attendance and school engagement.

Supporting Pupils with Attendance Difficulties

The school recognises that attendance difficulties can arise for a range of reasons.

Possible barriers may include:

- health difficulties;
- family circumstances;
- anxiety about school;
- friendship difficulties;
- bullying;
- difficulties with learning;
- additional educational needs;
- safeguarding concerns;
- transport or logistical difficulties;
- disengagement from learning;
- difficulties transitioning between school stages.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will seek to understand the underlying cause rather than focusing solely on the number of sessions missed.

Support may include:

- pastoral meetings;
- Form Tutor support;
- Head of Key Stage intervention;
- academic support;
- individual attendance targets;
- regular check-ins;
- parental meetings;
- adjustments or reasonable support where appropriate;
- involvement of relevant school staff or external services.

The Saudi Ministry of Education's procedures similarly require educational, pastoral and guidance services to be provided alongside attendance interventions.

Attendance Meetings

Where attendance remains a concern, parents may be invited to attend an attendance meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

1. review the pupil's attendance;
2. identify patterns and concerns;
3. understand barriers to attendance;
4. establish appropriate support;
5. agree clear expectations;
6. set measurable attendance targets;
7. establish a review date.

Parents are expected to engage constructively with attendance meetings and agreed actions. Where required by the Saudi Ministry of Education procedures, formal commitments or attendance improvement plans may be established with the pupil and parent/guardian.

Failure to Improve Attendance

Where attendance does not improve despite appropriate support, the school may escalate the response.

The response will depend on:

- the severity of the concern;
- the length and pattern of absence;
- whether absence is with or without an acceptable excuse;
- the reasons for absence;
- the pupil's individual circumstances;
- the family's engagement with support;
- any safeguarding concerns;
- the requirements of the Saudi Ministry of Education.

Where necessary, the school may take further action in accordance with applicable Saudi regulations and statutory requirements.

The school will ensure that any formal action is appropriately documented and communicated to parents.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance will be monitored at pupil, year-group and whole-school level.

The school will review:

- overall attendance;
- attendance with an acceptable excuse;
- absence without an acceptable excuse;
- persistent absence;
- severe absence;
- punctuality;
- patterns of absence;
- attendance by year group;
- attendance trends over time;
- the effectiveness of interventions.

The school will use attendance data to identify emerging concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of its attendance strategy.

Attendance information will be communicated to parents regularly.

The school will also ensure that attendance information and required actions are recorded in the approved systems required by the Ministry of Education.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headmaster

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school has effective systems for promoting and monitoring attendance and for ensuring compliance with applicable Ministry of Education requirements.

Senior Leaders

Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that attendance procedures are implemented consistently and that appropriate intervention takes place.

Pastoral Leaders / Heads of Key Stage

Pastoral leaders monitor attendance concerns, support pupils and families, and coordinate interventions where required.

Form Tutors

Form Tutors are normally the first point of contact for emerging attendance concerns and will support pupils in developing positive attendance habits.

All Staff

- All staff are responsible for:
- taking accurate registers;
- recording attendance accurately;
- recording lesson attendance where required;
- challenging unexplained absence or lateness;
- following safeguarding procedures;
- reporting concerns promptly.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually and for engaging with the school when attendance concerns arise.

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for attending school regularly, arriving punctually and engaging fully in their education.

Policy Principles

In implementing this policy, JPGS will ensure that attendance procedures are:

Consistent – expectations are clearly communicated and applied consistently.

Proportionate – responses reflect the seriousness and circumstances of the concern.

Supportive – barriers to attendance are identified and addressed wherever possible.

Early – intervention takes place before attendance concerns become entrenched.

Pastoral – pupil wellbeing and safeguarding remain central.

Accountable – pupils and parents are expected to take responsibility for regular attendance.

Data-informed – attendance information is used to identify patterns and evaluate interventions.

Compliant – the school will comply with the requirements of the Saudi Ministry of Education, with Saudi regulations taking precedence where they conflict with UK guidance.

Conclusion

At JPGS, excellent attendance is not simply about meeting a percentage target. It is about ensuring that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from every aspect of school life.

Our aim is to establish a culture in which:

- **Every pupil attends.**
- **Every pupil arrives on time.**
- **Every pupil is ready to learn.**

Every day matters.

Through a strong partnership between pupils, parents and the school, we aim to ensure that attendance remains a strength of the JPGS community and that every pupil is supported to achieve their full potential.

Date of Review: September 2026	Reviewed and approved by: Headmaster, BoG
Date of next review: August 2028	