Jewell Academy Bournemouth

an Aspirations Academy

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Reception to Year 6, including Preschool

Field	Detail	Field	Detail
Date of last review	September 2026	Review period	2 years
Date of next review	September 2028	Owner	Academy
Type of policy	Academy	SCRB or Trust approved	SCRB
Version	3.0 — full rewrite	Supersedes	Attendance Policy, September 2024

Summary of substantive changes at this review

• The academy standard has been raised from 96% to 97%, in line with the Aspirations Academies Trust attendance tiers.

• The trust's staged intervention model (Stages 1–4, School Attendance Meeting, WINE conversation framework) is now the operational spine of the policy.

• A new section on illness, minor ailments and the administration of medicines has been added, including provision for administering liquid paracetamol with parental consent so that well-enough children remain in school.

• The blanket requirement for medical evidence after four days of illness absence has been replaced with a targeted one: evidence is now required where illness is repeated, prolonged or unexplained, and a wider range of evidence is accepted.

• A substantially expanded parental engagement section has been added.

• The full national attendance code set, daily DfE data sharing, the Senior Attendance Champion role, the definition of severe absence and the Notice to Improve stage have all been incorporated.

• All BCP Council content and procedures have been retained within the body of the policy. BCP's parent-facing letter is issued to families separately rather than appended here.

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Statement of intent

Jewell Academy believes that good attendance is the foundation of everything else we do. Children thrive when they are here — in their learning, in their friendships and in their confidence — and our first aim is for every child to enjoy coming to school so much that they want to be with us every day.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some children and some families find getting to school harder than others. Illness, anxiety, health conditions, family circumstances, work patterns and the simple difficulty of a morning with young children are all real. Our starting point is always to ask what is making school hard and to work alongside families to solve it together. We will offer support before we reach for anything else.

We take a whole-school approach to attendance. We recognise that our curriculum, our pastoral and SEND support, our behaviour culture and the warmth of the welcome a child receives at the gate all shape how a child feels about being here. Building strong, trusting relationships with families is central to this policy, and we are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers rather than simply writing to them.

Our expected standard of attendance is **97%**, in line with the Aspirations Academies Trust. We have raised this from 96% because we want to be open with families about what time out of school adds up to. A child at 96% misses around eight days of learning across a year; a child at 93% misses thirteen. These are not large numbers on any single morning, which is exactly why they are easy to miss — and why we will always share attendance with parents in days as well as percentages, so that the picture is clear.

We also recognise that a standard on paper changes nothing on its own. Attendance improves when families understand what their child's figure means, when we make contact early and warmly rather than late and formally, when the barriers that keep a child at home are identified and removed and when good and improving attendance is noticed and celebrated. This policy therefore sets out not only what we expect, but what we will do.

Our commitments

- To communicate every child's attendance to their parents in days of learning lost, not only as a percentage, at least half-termly.
- To make first contact early, personally and supportively — before attendance becomes entrenched.
- To treat absence as a signal rather than a failing, and to ask what is making school hard before we ask why a child is not there.
- To make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, disabilities and health conditions, and to ensure they are never disadvantaged by our recognition systems.
- To celebrate excellent and improving attendance visibly and consistently, weekly and half-termly.
- To be consistent, transparent and fair in how we escalate, so that no family is surprised by the next step.
- To use legal intervention only where support has been offered and has either been refused or has not worked — but to use it without hesitation at that point.
- To monitor attendance data weekly and act on it within days, not weeks.

Key personnel

Role	Named person	Contact
Principal (overall responsibility)	Mrs Waddington	office@jewell-aspirations.org
Senior Attendance Champion (SLT)	Mrs Churchill	office@jewell-aspirations.org
Family Liaison and Attendance Officer	Mrs Parkhouse-Jones	office@jewell-aspirations.org
Absence line	—	01202 774830 (before 9.15am, every day of absence)

Staff, parents and pupils should contact Mrs Parkhouse-Jones, our Family Liaison and Attendance Officer, in the first instance with any query or concern about attendance. Mrs Parkhouse-Jones and Mrs Churchill together form the academy's Attendance Team, working alongside the office team and Mr Vickery.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Education Act 1996 — in particular section 7 (parental duty to secure education) and section 444 (offences)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' (statutory from 19 August 2024)
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education' (current edition)
- DfE 'Children missing education'
- DfE 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DfE 'Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools'
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2025)
- UKHSA 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education'
- BCP Council 'Education Penalty Notice — Code of Conduct' (current version)
- Aspirations Academies Trust 'Attendance Tiers' protocol

This policy operates in conjunction with the following academy and trust policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Pupils and Parents Privacy Notice

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Session	Half a school day. There are two sessions per day and 380 sessions in a standard 190-day school year. All thresholds in this policy relate to sessions unless stated otherwise.
Absence	Not attending the academy for any reason, or arrival after the register has closed.
Authorised absence	An absence for which the academy has granted leave: illness for which the academy is satisfied the child was unfit to attend; medical or dental appointments that unavoidably fall in academy hours; religious observance granted in advance; a family emergency; or exceptional leave granted in advance by the Principal.
Unauthorised absence	An absence the academy has not authorised. This includes: parents keeping a child at home unnecessarily; absence that has never been properly explained; truancy; absence for

Term	Definition
	shopping, birthdays, day trips or looking after other children; term-time holiday not agreed; and arrival after the register has closed.
Persistent absence (PA)	Attendance of 90% or below — missing 10% or more of sessions for any reason, authorised or unauthorised.
Severe absence (SA)	Attendance below 50%. Severely absent pupils are the academy's highest priority and are managed individually by the Senior Attendance Champion.
Late (before close of register)	Arrival after the register is taken but before it closes at 9.15am. Recorded as Code L. The pupil is present for that session, but lateness is recorded and monitored.
Late (after close of register)	Arrival after the register has closed at 9.15am. Recorded as Code U. This counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole session.
Children missing education (CME)	A child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school.
SAM	School Attendance Meeting — the formal, minuted meeting held at Stage 3 of the trust attendance tiers, at which an attendance action plan is agreed.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The South Coast Regional Board (SCRB) and the Trust

- Monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the academy's ethos.
- Setting attendance goals with the Principal and providing support and challenge on delivery.
- Reviewing attendance data at every meeting, including trends and the attendance of vulnerable groups.
- Ensuring all relevant staff receive attendance training appropriate to their role.
- Ensuring this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, and that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils.
- Handling complaints about this policy in line with the Complaints Policy.

The Principal

- Overall responsibility for attendance at the academy.
- Day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing a member of SLT as Senior Attendance Champion.
- Ensuring all parents understand the academy's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Deciding whether to authorise requests for leave of absence.
- Deciding, with the Senior Attendance Champion, when to issue a Notice to Improve and when to request that BCP Council issue a penalty notice.

The Senior Attendance Champion

A statutory expectation of 'Working together to improve school attendance'. The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance and a clear vision for improving it.
- Owning the academy's attendance data: weekly analysis, half-termly deep-dives and reporting to SLT and the SCRB.
- Leading Stage 3 School Attendance Meetings and Stage 4 formal meetings.
- Preparing attendance letters, reports and data for SLT and class teachers.

- Managing the caseload of persistently and severely absent pupils.
- Liaison with the BCP School Attendance Team and other external agencies.
- Ensuring escalation is timely, consistent and evidenced.

The Family Liaison and Attendance Officer

- Daily first-day calling and follow-up of all unexplained absence.
- Stage 1 and Stage 2 contact with families, using the WINE framework — I wonder…, I imagine…, I noticed…, Empathy — which opens a conversation with curiosity about how school feels for the child, rather than with the attendance figure.
- Recording all contact with families on the academy's systems, creating an accurate evidence trail.
- Arranging home visits with the pastoral team where contact cannot be established.

Class teachers

- Taking an accurate register at the start of each morning and afternoon session — a legal requirement.
- Knowing the current attendance figure for every child in their class and raising concerns promptly.
- Making warm, relational first contact with families at Stages 1 and 2 where directed, using the WINE framework.
- Greeting pupils and families at the door and noticing patterns — particular days, particular times, particular reluctance.
- Ensuring returning pupils are welcomed back positively and helped to catch up.

All staff

- Modelling and promoting the importance of attendance.
- Using professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to decide when a concern should be escalated.
- Understanding that a change in attendance may be the first visible sign of a safeguarding concern, and reporting to the DSL accordingly.

Parents and carers

Parents have a legal duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure their child receives full-time education, and under section 444 to ensure they attend regularly. In April 2017 the Supreme Court confirmed that "regularly" means in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school — that is, every day the academy requires the child to attend. Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends every day the academy is open and arrives on time.
- Contacting the absence line on 01202 774830 before 9.15am on the first day of any absence and on each subsequent day.
- Providing at least two up-to-date emergency contact numbers and telling the academy immediately if details change.
- Booking routine medical and dental appointments outside academy hours wherever possible.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and always in advance.
- Telling the academy about anything at home or in school that may be affecting their child's attendance, at the earliest point.
- Engaging proactively with support offered by the academy, the trust and BCP Council.

Pupils

- Attending every day, on time, ready to learn.
- Telling a trusted adult if something is making it hard to come to school.

4. Attendance expectations and the 97% standard

The academy standard is **97% attendance** for every pupil, and our whole-school target is the same. We also aim to reduce persistent absence below 10% and to have no pupil in severe absence.

The following table is used in all communication with parents. We do not send percentages on their own; we always translate them into days, because days are what a family recognises. It is shared as information rather than as a judgement — a figure is the starting point for a conversation about what would help.

Attendance	Days missed in a year	Lessons missed (approx.)	What this means
100%	0 days	0	Outstanding. The very best chance of success.
97%	6 days	30	The academy standard. Well done.
96%	8 days	40	Below our standard. We will make contact.
95%	10 days	50	Two working weeks lost. Attendance is now a concern.
93%	13 days	65	Attainment and progress are being affected.
90%	19 days	95	Persistent absence. Almost four weeks of school missed.
85%	29 days	145	Serious concern. Nearly half a term lost.
80%	38 days	190	Equivalent to missing an entire half term.
Below 50%	95+ days	475+	Severe absence. More time out of school than in it.

What we share with parents

A child who is off school for one day every fortnight has 90% attendance. A child who is off "just the odd day" has 95%. Neither feels like very much on any single morning, and that is exactly the point — it is only when the days are added up across a year that the picture becomes clear.

We share this openly so that families can see where their child is and how close they are to our standard. If your child's attendance is lower than you would like it to be, please talk to us. We would far rather help than send another letter.

Pupils are expected to attend every day the academy is open, for the full day and to arrive punctually. Where a pupil's attendance falls below the academy standard, the tiered response set out in section 13 is triggered automatically. No child's attendance is allowed to decline without contact from the academy.

5. Registration and the school day

Time	What happens
8.45am	Gates and doors open. Pupils go straight to class. Staff are on the gate to welcome families.
9.00am	Doors close. The morning register is taken by the class teacher.
9.00am – 9.15am	Pupils arriving in this window must enter via the main entrance and report to reception with a parent, who gives the reason for lateness. Recorded as Code L — late, present.
9.15am	The morning register closes. Pupils arriving after this time are recorded as Code U — arrived after registration closed. This is an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session.
1.00pm	The afternoon register is taken.

Time	What happens
1.15pm	The afternoon register closes.

Marking the attendance register twice daily is a legal requirement. Registers are marked by the class teacher within the first ten minutes of each session. Where a class teacher is absent, the cover teacher is responsible for the register and the Attendance Officer will check completion by 9.20am and by the close of the afternoon register.

6. Illness, minor ailments and medicines

6.1 The "well enough to attend" principle

Children do not need to be entirely free of symptoms to be in school. Many minor ailments — a cough or cold without a temperature, a mild headache, a sore throat, head lice, threadworm, conjunctivitis, a grazed knee — do not require a child to stay at home, and keeping a child at home unnecessarily costs them learning and reinforces avoidance.

Our starting position is that if a child is well enough to be up, dressed and doing things at home, they are well enough to be in school. Where parents are unsure — for example where a child has woken with a mild headache, a sore throat or general aches — we would encourage them to give their child a dose of Calpol or another age-appropriate liquid paracetamol at home, bring them in and tell a member of staff at the gate or the door that they have done so and the time it was given. This allows us to look after the child properly through the day and to know when a further dose would be due. If a child is too unwell to be in school, we will contact parents and ask them to collect their child so that they can rest at home.

The academy publishes separate guidance for parents on common childhood illnesses and whether a child should attend. This is available on the academy website and is issued to all families at the start of each academic year. It is reviewed annually against current UKHSA guidance on health protection in education settings.

6.2 Administration of medicines to keep children in school

Where a child has a minor ailment such as mild pain, teething discomfort or a headache, the academy will, with prior written parental consent, administer age-appropriate over-the-counter liquid paracetamol so that the child can remain in school rather than being collected. This is deliberate: minor discomfort should not cost a child a day of education.

This provision operates under, and is subject to, the academy's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. The following conditions apply without exception:

- Written parental consent must be held on file before any medicine is administered. Consent is sought on admission and refreshed annually. Verbal consent alone is not sufficient.
- Medicine will be administered only by a trained member of staff nominated by the Principal, and witnessed by a second member of staff.
- Medicine must be in its original packaging, in date, and — where supplied by a parent for an individual child — clearly labelled with the child's name.
- The dose given will not exceed the manufacturer's stated dose for the child's age and will not exceed the manufacturer's stated maximum in any 24-hour period.
- Parents must inform the academy office at drop-off if they have given their child any medicine that morning. Where a child has already had paracetamol at home, the academy will not administer a further dose within the interval stated on the packaging.
- The academy will never administer the first dose of any medicine a child has not taken before.
- The academy will not administer aspirin to any pupil, and asks that parents do not send aspirin into school. Aspirin is not suitable for children under 16 because of the risk of Reye's syndrome, so this applies

to every child at Jewell. The only exception is where aspirin has been specifically prescribed for an individual child by their doctor, in which case it will be handled under an Individual Healthcare Plan.

- Every administration is recorded on the academy's medicines record: child's name, medicine, dose, date, time, the reason, the member of staff administering and the member of staff witnessing.
- Parents are informed by telephone or text on the same day whenever medicine has been administered.
- Where a child requires medicine repeatedly over a short period, the Attendance Team will contact parents to discuss whether an underlying issue needs medical attention or an Individual Healthcare Plan.

This provision is not a substitute for proper care of an unwell child. Any child with a raised temperature, who is vomiting or who is otherwise genuinely unwell will be sent home. The purpose of this section is to keep well-enough children in school, not to keep unwell children in school.

6.3 Sickness and diarrhoea

Where a child has been sick or has had diarrhoea, they should not return to the academy until 48 hours after the last episode. This reduces the risk of infection to other children and adults.

Where a child has frequent or repeated bouts of sickness or diarrhoea, the academy will require medical evidence from a GP in order for further absence of this kind to be authorised, as set out at section 6.5. This is to make sure that any underlying health concern is identified and addressed, and that the child is getting the support they need.

6.4 Medical and dental appointments

- Routine and non-emergency dental and medical appointments should be made outside academy hours wherever possible.
- An appointment card, letter or text confirmation from the doctor, dentist or hospital should be provided to the office for any appointment falling within academy hours.
- Where a child must leave the academy for an appointment, they should return directly afterwards. A child should not miss a whole day for an appointment lasting an hour.
- Appointments are recorded as Code M and are authorised. Where the pattern or volume of appointment absence becomes a concern, the Attendance Team will discuss this with parents.

6.5 Medical evidence

The academy does not ask for medical evidence every time a child is unwell. For a single episode of illness we take parents at their word, and we would not want any family to feel they must trouble a GP over a stomach bug or a heavy cold.

Where illness absence becomes repeated, prolonged or where the reason given for an absence is unclear or has not been explained, the academy **will** request medical evidence in order for the absence to be authorised. This is a firm expectation and it applies consistently to every family. Where evidence is requested and is not provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Attendance Team will discuss the position with parents.

We ask for this for two reasons, and we are open with families about both. The first is that an absence can only be authorised where the academy is satisfied a child was genuinely unfit to attend, and where illness is frequent we need something beyond a phone call to reach that view. The second matters more: a pattern of repeated illness may point to an unmet health need. Asking for evidence is often the step that gets a child in front of a doctor.

What counts as evidence

The academy will accept any of the following:

- A letter, note or printed summary from the GP practice.
- An appointment card, text confirmation or appointment letter.
- A prescription, repeat prescription slip or pharmacy receipt.

- A letter, text or report from any other health professional — a nurse, health visitor, dentist, hospital clinic or mental health service.
- Sight of prescribed medication issued in the child's name.

Parents do not need to provide a diagnosis or any confidential detail about their child's health. We need only enough to confirm that the child was seen, or is under the care of, a health professional.

Where obtaining evidence is difficult

Some GP practices charge for letters and are not obliged to provide them. Where a family is told they will be charged, or is having difficulty getting an appointment, they should speak to the Attendance Team before the absence is recorded rather than afterwards. We will accept any of the alternatives listed above, and where a child has a diagnosed long-term condition we will agree a standing arrangement — normally an Individual Healthcare Plan or a single consultant or specialist letter — so that the family is not asked for fresh evidence each time that condition flares. No child will be disadvantaged, and no absence will be left unauthorised, because a family could not afford or could not obtain a GP letter when they have engaged with us in good faith.

Change from the previous policy

The 2024 policy required medical evidence for any absence of four days or more, and recorded the absence as unauthorised where none was produced. That blanket trigger has been replaced. The academy now requests evidence where illness is repeated, prolonged or unexplained — a targeted test rather than an automatic one — and accepts a wide range of evidence rather than a GP letter alone.

7. Absence procedures

7.1 Reporting an absence

Parents must telephone the absence line on 01202 774830 before 9.15am on the first day of absence, giving the reason and how long the absence is expected to last. Parents must call on each subsequent day of absence unless a longer period has been agreed with the office.

Reporting absence is a safeguarding matter as much as an attendance one. If we do not know why a child is not with us, we do not know that they are safe.

7.2 First-day response

Time	Action	Responsibility
By 9.20am	Registers checked for completion. Unexplained absences identified and coded N (reason not yet provided).	Office team
By 10.30am	Parents of every unexplained absence contacted by telephone. Text sent where no answer.	Attendance Team
By 11.00am	Where no contact is made, all emergency contacts telephoned in turn.	Attendance Team
Same day	Where the child is on a child protection plan, a child in need plan, is looked after or where there is any live safeguarding concern, the DSL is informed immediately and a same-day home visit is considered.	Attendance Team / DSL
Within 24–48 hours	Where contact still cannot be established, a home visit is undertaken by a member of SLT or the pastoral team, in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.	SLT / Pastoral
After home visit	If contact still cannot be made, Children's Social Care and/or the Police are contacted to carry out a safeguarding and welfare check.	DSL / Principal

Any absence coded N that remains unexplained after five school days will be recorded as unauthorised. N codes are reported to SLT and the Attendance Team daily and must not remain open.

7.3 Extended and repeated absence

- Where a pupil is absent for more than three consecutive school days, the Attendance Team will make contact to check on the child's wellbeing and to establish what support may be needed on return.
- Where a pupil is absent for more than 10 school days in a single term, the Senior Attendance Champion will meet the family regardless of the reason for absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, the Stage 4 process in section 13 applies.
- Where a pupil has not returned after 10 school days following an authorised absence, or has been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, section 21 applies.

8. The attendance register and national codes

The academy uses its management information system to maintain the admission and attendance registers. Designated staff take the register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session, recording whether pupils are present, absent, attending an approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The academy shares its daily attendance data with the Department for Education directly from its management information system, and uses the DfE's attendance data tools to benchmark against local and national figures.

All amendments to the attendance register record the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date and the name and role of the person making it. Every entry in the admission and attendance registers is preserved for three years from the date on which the entry was made.

National attendance codes

The academy uses the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are recorded consistently:

Code	Meaning	Code	Meaning
/	Present (morning)	C2	Part-time timetable (agreed)
\	Present (afternoon)	D	Dual registered at another school
L	Late arrival before register closed	E	Suspended or excluded, no alternative provision
U	Arrived after register closed (unauthorised)	G	Unauthorised holiday
B	Approved educational activity off site	I	Illness (not medical/dental appointment)
C	Leave of absence — exceptional circumstances	J1	Interview for employment or education
C1	Regulated performance or employment abroad	K	Education provision arranged by the LA
M	Medical or dental appointment	V	Educational visit or trip
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	W	Work experience
O	Unauthorised absence	X	Non-compulsory school age, not required to attend
P	Supervised sporting activity	Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
Q	No access arrangements (LA duty not met)	#	Planned whole-school closure
R	Religious observance	Y1	Transport normally provided unavailable
S	Study leave for a public examination	Y2	Widespread disruption to travel

Code	Meaning	Code	Meaning
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Y3	Part of school premises closed
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend per public health guidance or law	Y7	Any other unavoidable cause

Where the academy has planned in advance to be fully closed, code # is used. Pupils who are absent but receiving remote education are still recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code.

9. Punctuality and lateness

Punctuality matters as much as attendance. A child who arrives late misses the start of the day — the register, the settling routine, phonics or early maths — and often arrives flustered, having missed the social start with their friends. Persistent lateness is disruptive both to the child and to the class.

The following table is used in communication with parents:

Minutes late each day	Learning time lost across the year	Equivalent to
5 minutes	3 days	A long weekend of learning
10 minutes	6.5 days	More than a week of school
15 minutes	10 days	Two working weeks
20 minutes	13 days	Nearly three weeks
30 minutes	19 days	Almost four weeks of school

Our response to lateness

- All late arrivals are recorded at reception with the reason, given by a parent who accompanies the child.
- Lateness is reported weekly to class teachers and SLT.
- Members of staff at the gate from 8.45am each morning to welcome families and to have informal, positive conversations with those who are regularly late.
- Where lateness becomes a pattern, the Attendance Team contacts parents to understand what is making mornings difficult and to offer practical support — this may include a place at breakfast club, a staggered handover or a morning routine plan.
- Where lateness continues, it is discussed at parent consultations and at any attendance meeting and is addressed in the attendance action plan.

Penalty notice proceedings for lateness

Parents and carers may be liable for a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning from BCP Council if their child is persistently late to the academy after the registers have closed at 9.15am. Persistent is defined as a minimum of five late arrivals within five weeks. The absences do not need to be consecutive.

10. Requesting leave of absence

Following amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect on 1 September 2013, Principals may only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to term-time leave and the academy does not grant leave for family holidays.

10.1 How to request leave

- Requests must be made in advance, using the 'Request for Leave of Absence' form available from the academy office and the website.
- Requests should be submitted at least ten academy days before the requested absence.
- Parents may be asked to provide additional information or evidence, or to meet the academy to discuss the circumstances.
- Parents will be notified of the Principal's decision in writing at the earliest opportunity.
- The academy cannot grant leave retrospectively. Any absence not approved in advance will be recorded as unauthorised.

10.2 What "exceptional" means

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. 'Unavoidable' means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. As a general guide:

May be considered exceptional	Will not be considered exceptional
An immediate family member returning home from Service duty	Annual family holidays, including 'once in a lifetime' trips
Immediate family weddings or funerals — if abroad, only the actual day of the event	Educational visits arranged by family members during academy time
Occasions of religious observance	Family birthdays, anniversaries or other events
Other situations where a compassionate element applies	Parents' profession or place of work making it difficult to coincide academy and work holidays
A significant family crisis or bereavement	Cheaper travel outside school holiday periods

The Principal will additionally take into account the pupil's current attendance record. Leave will not normally be granted where a pupil's attendance is already below the academy standard of 97%, or where there is existing unauthorised absence on the record.

10.3 Religious observance

Parents should request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance. The academy will accept requests for days exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body — that is, a day on which the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment. The academy may seek advice from the religious body where there is doubt.

The academy will authorise a maximum of three days of absence for religious observance in any rolling 12-month period. Requests beyond this will be considered under the leave of absence arrangements at section 10.2.

10.4 Parents travelling for occupational purposes

Where a pupil is travelling with a parent as a result of the parent's trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the academy will satisfy itself that this is a genuine reason and will use Code T. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt. Parents will be encouraged to arrange dual registration at a school in the area they are travelling to.

10.5 Performances and activities

Pupils engaging in performances or activities requiring absence from school, whether paid or unpaid, must obtain a licence from the local authority. Where a licence specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the academy. Where it does not, it is at the Principal's discretion to authorise each day. Where no licence has been obtained, the Principal will not authorise the absence.

10.6 If leave is refused

If the circumstances are not considered exceptional, the absence cannot be authorised and the academy may request that BCP Council issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. In considering whether to request one, the academy will have due regard to the current version of the BCP Council 'Education Penalty Notice — Code of Conduct'.

It is important for parents to note that once Jewell Academy has requested that BCP Council issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for a period of unauthorised leave in term time, the matter passes to BCP Council and there is no opportunity to discuss it further with the academy. Any queries or discussion should therefore take place before, or at the time of, requesting the leave.

11. SEND and health-related absence

The academy recognises that pupils with SEND, disabilities and health conditions, including mental health difficulties, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. We hold the same high expectations for these pupils, and we recognise that meeting them may require more support and reasonable adjustment rather than more pressure.

In line with the SEND Policy and the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the academy will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plan or Individual Healthcare Plan in place. Where a pupil's absence is disability-related, the academy will consider whether an adjustment to how this policy is applied to that pupil is a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.

11.1 Mental health and emotionally based school avoidance

Where the academy has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to anxiety or mental health, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and any contributory factors. Support is put in place quickly and reviewed. Where staff have a mental health concern that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

The academy's position is that a graduated return is almost always better than an extended absence. We will work with families to keep a child connected to school — through a reduced or phased timetable, a soft start, a nominated key adult or a safe base — rather than accepting extended absence from home.

11.2 Support the academy will consider

- Termly meetings to evaluate implemented reasonable adjustments.
- A pastoral support plan and a named key adult who greets the child each morning.
- A strengths and difficulties questionnaire, or assessment of unmet need.
- Involvement of an internal or external specialist.
- A temporary reduced or part-time timetable, agreed in advance, time-limited and regularly reviewed.
- Somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break, and a card system allowing a pupil to leave the classroom when they need to.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- A phased return following a long absence, with small-group or one-to-one catch-up.

11.3 Long-term absence for health reasons

If a pupil is unable to attend for a long period due to health, the academy will inform the local authority if the pupil is likely to be away for more than 15 school days, provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs and programme of work, help the pupil reintegrate on return, keep them informed about academy events and encourage contact with classmates during the absence.

12. Preschool and Early Years attendance

The expectations in this policy apply from the point a child joins the academy, including in Preschool. While children below compulsory school age are not subject to the same statutory attendance duties, the habits

formed in Preschool and Reception are the habits that persist, and we set the same expectation of 97% from the outset.

12.1 Statutory duties under the EYFS

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which came into force in September 2025, requires early years providers to follow up on absences. In line with that duty:

- Where a child does not attend a session as expected, the academy will contact parents on the same day to establish the reason and to be satisfied that the child is safe and well.
- Where an absence is prolonged, repeated or unexplained, the academy will make further enquiries and consider whether a home visit or a safeguarding referral is required.
- Reasons for absence are recorded, and patterns of absence in Early Years are monitored by the Senior Attendance Champion in the same way as for the rest of the academy.

12.2 Government-funded sessions

Where children are in receipt of government-funded education sessions and are absent, the academy is required to inform the local education authority when:

- the absence is continued or recurring;
- the absence is for a period longer than three weeks.

Where a child is absent for three weeks or more, the local education authority will review the funding of that placement and may decide to remove it. Parents are informed of this at the point of admission and again if absence approaches this threshold.

12.3 Reception

Children in Reception are registered pupils and are included on the attendance register from the first day of admission. All sections of this policy, including the tiered response, apply to Reception pupils. Attendance expectations are covered explicitly at Reception induction and in the home–academy agreement signed by parents on entry.

13. Attendance tiers and staged intervention

The academy applies the Aspirations Academies Trust attendance tiers. Thresholds relate to sessions, not days — two sessions equal one day. A pupil meets a stage when they reach the percentage threshold — or the absence threshold — or the unauthorised absence threshold. Whichever is reached first triggers the stage.

Escalation is automatic and is not a matter of individual judgement. The Attendance Team runs the tiers report every Monday and actions are initiated within three school days.

Tier	Trigger	Academy response	Who
Recognise	97%+	Positive messaging: text home, postcard, conversation at the gate, named in celebration assembly, half-termly certificate.	Class teacher / SLT
Watch	96% – 96.9%	Early positive contact. A short, warm text or doorstep conversation noting that attendance has dipped below the academy standard of 97%, with the days-lost figure. No letter at this stage.	Class teacher
Stage 1	Below 96%, or 10 absences, or 4 unauthorised sessions	Conversation — a WINE-framed phone call or gate conversation. Curious and supportive in tone. Barriers identified and logged. Any practical support offered on the spot.	Attendance Team / class teacher
Stage 2 — YELLOW	95% – 93%, or 15 absences, or 8 unauthorised sessions	Letter and call. The letter states the current percentage, the days lost and the projected end-of-year figure if the pattern continues. The call follows within two days and is a conversation, not a notification.	Class teacher / Attendance Team
Stage 3 — AMBER	92%, or 30 absences, or 10 unauthorised sessions	Letter and phone call to arrange a School Attendance Meeting (SAM). A written attendance action plan is agreed at the SAM with specific, measurable targets, named support and a review date. Minuted; copy to parents.	Senior Attendance Champion
Stage 4 — RED	90%, or 40 absences, or further unauthorised absence after the SAM, or more than 10 unauthorised sessions	Letter and formal meeting. Review of why the action plan has not brought about the improvement needed. Parents are informed of the local authority procedures that will follow if there is no improvement. A further plan is agreed. Consideration of a Notice to Improve.	Principal / Senior Attendance Champion
Below 90%	Persistent absence	Local authority attendance processes are followed, led by the SLT Attendance Champion, including referral to the BCP School Attendance Team.	Senior Attendance Champion

13.1 The School Attendance Meeting (SAM)

The SAM is the pivot point of the whole system. It is not a telling-off; it is a problem-solving meeting. It is held in person wherever possible, chaired by the Senior Attendance Champion, and attended by the class teacher and, where relevant, the SENCo or DSL. The meeting:

- Establishes what is actually getting in the way — morning routines, anxiety, illness, transport, work patterns, sibling needs, housing, finance, a specific fear about school.
- Agrees what the academy will do, with names and dates attached.
- Agrees what the family will do, with names and dates attached.
- Sets a specific attendance target and a review date, normally four weeks.
- Is recorded in writing, with a copy given to parents before they leave.

13.2 Tone

Every stage below Stage 4 is a conversation before it is a letter. The evidence on improving attendance is consistent: relationships change behaviour, and letters alone do not. Staff use the WINE framework for these conversations — I wonder…, I imagine…, I noticed… and Empathy — opening with curiosity about how school feels for the child rather than with the attendance figure. The purpose of an early conversation is to find out what is happening, not to remind a family of a rule they already know. Every conversation is logged: date, who spoke to whom, the barrier identified and what was offered. These logs form the barriers audit at section 14.5 and the evidence base for any later formal action.

14. Working with parents: our engagement strategy

The academy recognises that improving attendance requires changing what attendance means to families, not simply telling them what the rules are. This section sets out what the academy will do, at three levels.

14.1 Universal — for every family

What	When	Detail
Attendance figure sent home	Half-termly	Every child's attendance percentage, days lost to date and projected end-of-year figure. Never a percentage on its own.
Attendance at parent consultations	Each round	Attendance is the first item discussed at every consultation, for every child, with the figure in front of the parent.
Weekly class attendance	Weekly	Announced in celebration assembly, class reward given, published in the newsletter.
Year group figures	Monthly	Published in the academy newsletter (retained from the previous policy).
'Attendance Matters' communication	Termly	A short parent-facing bulletin: the days-lost table, the illness guidance and one family story or piece of practical advice.
Induction and admission	On entry	Attendance expectations are covered at Reception induction and at every mid-year admission meeting, with the home–academy agreement signed.
Website	Continuous	This policy, term dates, the leave of absence form and the 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance.
Term dates published early	Annually, a year ahead	To remove the 'we had already booked it' conversation.

14.2 Targeted — where attendance is slipping

- Personalised letters that show days lost and the projected end-of-year figure, not a bare percentage.
- WINE-framed conversations at the gate or by phone, made by an adult the family already knows.
- A termly attendance drop-in, held at a time that works for working parents, where families can talk to the Attendance Team informally without a formal meeting.
- A morning meet-and-greet for named pupils, with a familiar adult at the gate.
- A breakfast club place offered where lateness or morning routine is the barrier.
- Practical problem-solving: uniform, transport, sibling drop-off timings, food, laundry, equipment. Many attendance barriers are logistical, and we will remove them where we can.
- Home visits by the pastoral team where families are hard to reach, offered as support rather than enforcement.
- Catch-up support on return, so that a child who has been absent is not returning to work they cannot access — which is itself a driver of further absence.
- Students may be placed on a Jewell Rockets Attendance card where rewards are given for streaks of attendance over a period of time.

14.3 Intensive — where attendance is entrenched

- A School Attendance Meeting with a written action plan and a named academy lead.
- Early Help assessment or Team Around the Family where wider family needs are contributing.
- Referral to the BCP School Attendance Team.
- A parenting contract, and where appropriate the FAST TRACK process.

- A Notice to Improve as the final opportunity before a penalty notice is requested.
- Where absence is severe and support has not been engaged with, escalation as a safeguarding concern — the academy recognises that severe persistent absence following intervention may in itself constitute neglect.

14.4 Recognition and celebration

Building a culture in which attendance is valued requires that good and improving attendance is seen and named:

- A weekly class attendance reward, presented in celebration assembly.
- Half-termly certificates for pupils at 97% and above, and postcards home.
- A 'most improved attendance' award each half term, at class and individual level.
- Personal contact home — a text or a call — when a child's attendance improves. Positive contact from school is unusual enough to be memorable.
- Recognition of families, not only pupils, where a family has worked with the academy to turn attendance around.

Fairness in recognition

Reward systems must not disadvantage pupils whose absence is disability- or health-related. Pupils with a disability, long-term health condition or EHC plan will have individualised attendance targets agreed with parents and will be recognised against those targets. Blanket prize draws restricted to 100% attendance will not be used, as they penalise children for circumstances outside their control and risk breaching the Equality Act 2010.

14.5 Listening to parents

- An attendance question is included in the annual parent survey.
- The Senior Attendance Champion carries out a barriers audit each year, drawing on Stage 1 conversation logs, to identify the recurring practical obstacles families face and what the academy can change.
- Findings are reported to the SCRB annually and inform the following year's strategy.

15. Persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is attendance of 90% or below. Severe absence is attendance below 50%. Both are tracked individually by the Senior Attendance Champion and reported to SLT weekly and to the SCRB at every meeting.

Some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to high absence and persistent absence, and their attendance is monitored specifically:

- Children with a social worker — children in need and children subject to a child protection plan
- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children
- Young carers
- Pupils eligible for free school meals and pupil premium
- Pupils with SEND, an EHC plan or a health condition
- Pupils with English as an additional language
- Pupils who have experienced bullying or discrimination

For pupils at risk of, or in, persistent absence the academy will: meet the pupil and their parents to discuss patterns, barriers and any other difficulties; establish a plan to remove barriers and provide additional support; offer catch-up support to rebuild confidence and bridge gaps; hold weekly check-ins to review progress; assess whether an EHC plan or Individual Healthcare Plan may be appropriate; and make regular contact with parents to discuss progress.

The academy will focus particularly on pupils whose absence exceeds 50% and will work with BCP Council and other partners to engage every service needed to identify and address the wider barriers those pupils face.

Where a pupil at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the academy will work with children's social care and other relevant authorities. The academy is clear that the continuation of severe persistent absence following intervention may itself constitute neglect and will escalate accordingly under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

16. Penalty notices and legal intervention

The academy's approach is support first. Legal intervention is used where support has been offered and has not been engaged with, or has been engaged with and has not worked. It is not a first resort — but where that point is reached, the academy will act without delay.

16.1 The support-first sequence

1. Attendance tiers Stages 1 to 4 as set out in section 13, including a School Attendance Meeting and a written action plan.
2. A formal meeting with parents and the academy's point of contact in the BCP School Attendance Team.
3. Working with BCP Council to put a parenting contract in place, and the FAST TRACK process where appropriate.
4. Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.
5. A Notice to Improve, issued by the Principal as a final opportunity for parents to engage with support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

16.2 Penalty notices

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the academy will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case is considered individually. The academy will have due regard to the current BCP Council 'Education Penalty Notice — Code of Conduct' and to DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance'.

Under the national framework introduced in August 2024:

- The fine is £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days.
- Where a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, it is charged at the higher rate of £160.
- Fines are capped at two per parent, per child, within any three-year period. Once that limit is reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution is considered.
- Money raised through fines is used by the local authority only to cover the cost of administering the system and to fund attendance support; any surplus is returned to government.

16.3 Prosecution

Where attendance does not improve following a penalty notice, the academy will work with BCP Council to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort. If a registered pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, the parent may be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. There are two offences:

- Section 444(1) — if the child is absent without authorisation, the parent is guilty of an offence. This is a strict liability offence: all that need be shown is a lack of regular attendance. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £1,000.
- Section 444(1A) — an aggravated offence. If the child is absent without authorisation and the parent knew about the absence and failed to act, the parent is guilty of an offence. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to three months.

16.4 Education Supervision Orders

Where interventions have not been successful, an Education Supervision Order can provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the local

authority a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve attendance. Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority decides the actions or requirements, which may include requiring parents to attend support meetings or a parenting programme, to access support services or to agree to an assessment by an educational psychologist, with review meetings every three months.

17. Children missing education

If a family moves away from the area, or wishes to transfer their child to another school, the Principal must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from the academy roll until the academy has been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted.

Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from the academy roll. They are reported to the local authority Attendance Service, and the academy will make and record reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts jointly with the local authority. Where a child is missing from education, BCP Council guidance and the academy's Children Missing Education Policy will be followed.

18. Pupils absent from the academy site during the day

Pupils are not permitted to leave the academy premises during the school day. Any pupil with permission to leave must be signed out by a parent or carer at the academy office and signed back in on return. Where a pupil is found to be missing on site, the following procedure applies:

6. The member of staff who notices the pupil is missing informs the Principal immediately.
7. The office is informed and acts as the point of contact for the search.
8. A member of staff stays with the class; all other available staff conduct a thorough search as directed by the Principal.
9. The following are searched systematically: all classrooms, all toilets, changing areas, the library, any outbuildings and the academy grounds.
10. Available staff begin a search of the area immediately outside the premises, taking a mobile phone so they can be contacted.
11. If the pupil has not been found within 10 minutes, parents are notified using the emergency contact numbers held.
12. If parents have had no contact from the pupil and the emergency contact list has been exhausted, the Police are contacted.
13. The class teacher completes an incident form describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
14. If the pupil has an allocated social worker, is looked after or has SEND, the appropriate personnel are informed.
15. When the pupil is located, staff care for and talk with the pupil to ensure they are safe and well. Parents and any other agencies are informed immediately.

The Principal will ensure a full investigation is carried out and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report is produced and procedures reviewed where necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

19. Monitoring and analysing attendance

Frequency	What is analysed	By whom	Reported to
Daily	Unexplained absence, N codes, safeguarding-flagged pupils	Attendance Team	SLT, DSL
Weekly	Whole-school and class attendance, tier movements, lateness, new PA risk	Attendance Team	SLT, class teachers

Frequency	What is analysed	By whom	Reported to
Half-termly	Group analysis, code patterns, days of the week, PA and SA cohorts, impact of interventions	Attendance Team	SLT, SCRB
Termly	Benchmarking against local, regional and national data; trend analysis; strategy review	Senior Attendance Champion / Principal	SCRB, Trust
Annually	Full-year review, barriers audit, parent survey findings, policy effectiveness	Principal	SCRB, Trust

Data is analysed for the academy cohort as a whole, by year group, by class, for individual pupils and for demographic and vulnerable groups — including pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, looked-after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils with English as an additional language. Analysis identifies patterns in the use of particular codes, particular days of poor attendance, historic trends and recurring barriers.

The SCRB regularly reviews attendance data, including recent and historic trends and supports the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus. The board of trustees ensures that staff from different academies within the trust share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

20. Training of staff

All staff receive attendance training as part of induction and refresher training. Training covers at least:

- The importance of good attendance and its link to outcomes.
- That absence is almost invariably a symptom of wider circumstances.
- The legal requirements on schools, including the keeping of registers and the correct use of national codes.
- This policy, the trust attendance tiers and the academy's escalation procedures.
- The WINE conversation framework and how to hold a supportive early conversation with a parent.
- The academy's procedures for multi-agency working.
- That increased absence may indicate a safeguarding concern and how such concerns should be raised.

The Senior Attendance Champion and the Family Liaison and Attendance Officer receive enhanced training, including on interpreting and analysing attendance data and on supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

21. Deletion of names from the admission register

The academy will only delete a name from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason, and the academy is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

Where a pupil has not returned to the academy for 10 school days following an authorised absence, or has been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the academy will remove the pupil from the admission register only where the academy and the local authority have jointly failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries.

The academy will make returns to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, providing: full name; address; the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with; at least one emergency telephone number; the pupil's future address and the parent they will live with and the date they will start living there, if applicable; the name of the pupil's new school and the date they began or will begin, if applicable; and the ground under which the name has been deleted.

Names are never retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register. Both registers remain an accurate record of who was a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Attendance is recorded up to the date the name is deleted.

22. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality are monitored throughout the year. The academy's attendance target is 97%. Full details of the academy's absence levels are published on the academy website.

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Principal, or sooner where statutory guidance, the trust protocol or the BCP Council Code of Conduct changes. The next scheduled review is September 2028. Any changes will be communicated to all staff, parents and the SCRB.

Further information for parents

- https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence
- BCP Council school attendance information
- The academy office — 01202 774830

Appendix — Attendance monitoring procedures

When	Action	Who
Daily, 9.20am	Registers checked for completion. Unexplained absences coded N and listed.	Office team
Daily, by 10.00am	All unexplained absences telephoned. N codes reported to SLT and the Senior Attendance Champion.	Attendance Team
Daily	Safeguarding-flagged pupils cross-checked against the absence list and reported to the DSL.	Attendance Team / DSL
Daily, within 5 days	Any N code not resolved within five school days is converted to unauthorised absence.	Attendance Team
Weekly, Monday	Tiers report run. Every pupil crossing a threshold is identified and actions allocated. Actions initiated within three school days.	Attendance Team
Weekly	Class attendance published; reward given in celebration assembly; figures in newsletter.	SLT
Weekly	Lateness report to class teachers and SLT.	Attendance Team
Fortnightly	Review of all pupils on an attendance action plan against their agreed target.	Attendance Team
Half-termly	Individual attendance figures, days lost and projected end-of-year figure sent to every family.	Attendance Team
Half-termly	Certificates and postcards issued for 97%+ and for most improved.	SLT
Half-termly	Deep-dive analysis: groups, codes, days of the week, PA and SA cohorts, intervention impact.	Attendance Team
Termly	Attendance report to the SCRB. Benchmarking against local and national data.	Principal
Termly	‘Attendance Matters’ parent bulletin issued.	SLT
Annually	Barriers audit, parent survey analysis, strategy review.	Principal / Senior Attendance Champion