



**Laughton Junior & Infant School**

# **JMAT Attendance Strategy**

**September 2024**



# 'Improving attendance is everyone's business'

## The JMAT vision

Our vision is that our schools are child-centred and distinctive, delivering excellence in education, sharing best practice and building aspiration. As part of this vision, we view attendance as an essential foundation for all our pupils to achieve positive outcomes, including their safety and welfare.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the JMAT and its schools recognise that in order for all pupils to realise the vision that we hold for their education, they need to be in school accessing a high-quality education at all times.

Our aim is to build strong relationships with our families ensuring that they know we are a source of support at all times, we are approachable and that we genuinely want to achieve the very best for their children.

## The impact of poor attendance

EVERY DAY COUNTS		
Attendance	95% or better is the LJI attendance target for all children	
	LOST LEARNING DAYS	LOST LEARNING HOURS
96 – 100%	0 - 8 days	Up to 48 hours
94 - 96%	8 - 12 days	Up to 72 hours
92 - 94%	12 - 15 days	Up to 90 hours
90 - 91%	15 - 19 days	Up to 114 hours
Below 90%	20 or more days	More than 120 hours

## The JMAT Attendance Strategy

Our attendance strategy is written in line with the DFE's 'Working together to improve school 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... a calm, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.'*

We aim to work together with staff, parents and the local authority to ensure that we have the right culture in JMAT schools to promote good attendance for all pupils. This means the right support being offered at the right time to enable pupils to fully access education, including our most vulnerable children.

Our staff must remain professionally curious at all times and forge strong, trusting relationships with parents and carers in order to work together with families, by listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working together with families to remove them.

Improving attendance must be a whole school approach across the entire school community, including teaching and support staff, parents and carers, children, the trust and governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Together, we aim to achieve good attendance in all our schools through **Expect, Monitor, Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support, Formalise Support** and **Enforce** in accordance with WTISA 2024.

## Expect

- The JMAT attendance policy sets out the clear expectations of the school with regard to a whole school approach with parents.
- All staff have read and understood the attendance policy on RecordMy.
- School attendance expectations are discussed at termly Trust attendance meetings
- Trust Attendance Lead provides strategic support for schools
- All schools use the attendance codes set out by the DfE in WTISA 2024
- Each JMAT school has an individualised attendance policy which sets out how they address attendance in school
- Attendance is regularly discussed as a whole school at staff meetings, briefings, etc
- Each school will work with their locality attendance support team from the LA.
- Attendance expectations are clearly defined on the school website for parents and children, this includes the parental code of conduct, the attendance policy and strategy.
- Attendance expectations are reinforced in school at admissions meetings, transition and key stage parent meetings.
- The impact of good attendance, poor absence and lateness posters are displayed in school.
- Attendance information is regularly communicated to parents e.g. school report
- Attendance expectations are shared with governors within Headteacher report.
- Class teachers talk to their pupils about the importance of attendance regularly.
- Ensure a consistent attendance message runs through the ethos of the school with staff, children and parents.

## Monitor

- All schools provide their attendance data to the DfE and used the monitoring tool accordingly (VYED).
- Attendance concerns and actions are recorded on RecordMy.
- Schools should regularly analyse data to identify individual or cohorts of pupils who require support with their attendance
- Attendance reviews take place in a regular basis, at least half-termly.
- Staff monitor pupils for indications where poor or falling attendance may be an indicator of a safeguarding concern.
- Attendance is tracked on an individual basis. Any pupil who does not have attendance levels of 95% or more at the end of each half term is discussed by the attendance team and appropriate actions are agreed and tracked for impact.
- Half termly letters are sent to families informing them of their child's attendance level (under 95%)
- Pupils who end the year as persistently absent will be become a focus family in the new school year. These pupils' attendance will be monitored more closely and these families will be prioritised for support.
- Pupils whose attendance sits between 90-94.99% will be monitored more closely, including tracking reasons for absence, patterns in absence and frequency of absence. Alongside this, these families will be prioritised for support.
- Lateness is monitored to identify families who are frequently late and may require additional support.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Listen and understand</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each school has an attendance lead who will work with other staff to monitor attendance and designate the best placed member of staff to work with the child and family to improve attendance</li> <li>• A key/designated attendance person for individual children will strive to build strong relationships and work jointly with families to improve their attendance, this should be the best placed person in school for that particular child and family</li> <li>• School staff are professionally curious, working to understand the barriers to attendance for that child.</li> <li>• When a pupil's attendance is identified as a concern by the attendance team, the first contact with a parent or carer will be to explore the reasons for the concerning attendance. This provides information for the attendance team to reflect on, to identify individual measures that can be taken.</li> <li>• When data is analysed and a vulnerable group is identified as having poor attendance, for example children who have physical and/or mental ill health, support for attendance is tailored</li> <li>• Attendance support staff will work together with the child and family to remove the barriers for attendance in order to improve the child's outcomes.</li> </ul>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Facilitate support</b></p>	<p><b>Phase 1</b>          Universal/whole school approach to attendance – open to ALL pupils in school</p>	<p>Good communication with parents, building strong relationships          Early identification of any barriers to attendance          Absence challenged at the point of absence          Lateness challenged at the point of lateness          Daily attendance phone calls          Reminder texts          Phone calls from key staff          Weekly/termly/annual attendance incentives          Attendance included at parents' meetings          Attendance included on annual reports</p>
<p><b>Phase 2</b>          Children/groups whose attendance is falling, a more bespoke approach for child/family</p> <p>The schools in the JMAT continually strive to employ supportive strategies and techniques to improve pupil attendance.</p> <p>The strategies and techniques increase or decrease in significance as the child or family needs more or less informal support.</p>	<p>Child voice/work with child          Reminder texts          Key person phone calls          Attendance meetings with parents to discuss barriers to attendance          Attendance letters          Late letters          Attendance meetings          Translated texts and emails          Support with transport          Breakfast club in a safe space offered          Incentive charts          Buddy system          School nurse (if available) at parent meetings</p>	

<p><b>Formalise support</b></p>	<p><b>Phase 3</b>  A more formal approach for individual children, e.g. use of parenting contract, when other measures haven't been successful or the barrier to attendance need further exploration/support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free of charge breakfast club/after school club</li> <li>Referral to school nurse</li> <li>Wake up calls</li> <li>Collection from home/walking bus</li> <li>Therapeutic/nurture sessions if available (ELSA, etc)</li> <li>Separate drop off/pick up point</li> <li>Earlier start/finish times</li> <li>Welcome by an emotionally available adult</li> <li>Attendance contracts</li> <li>Possible referral to MASH</li> <li>Early Help assessment (school as lead worker) for parents of children where absence is due to medical, physical or mental ill health issues, can include referral to other support agencies</li> <li>Referral for parenting course</li> <li>Support for parents to access education, employment or training.</li> <li>Educational Psychologist involvement</li> <li>Temporary part time timetables</li> <li>Regular attendance reviews</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enforce</b></p>	<p><b>Phase 4</b>  Involvement with LA School Attendance Support Team and discussed at Targeting Support meetings to look at joint actions and where help is needed to support and remove barriers to attendance, including legal intervention e.g. FPN.</p> <p>Further legal interventions, such as a parenting order, is the responsibility of the LA.</p> <p><b>Attendance prosecution is a last resort when all other support has been exhausted and is the most appropriate intervention to change parental behaviour.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral into MASH (possible neglect), particularly when persistent absence is severe (below 50%)</li> <li>Parents informed of the severity of the situation and the consequences that may occur should their child's attendance not improve.</li> <li>Parents are given a clear insight into actions that may follow including prosecution and education supervision orders.</li> <li>Meeting with School Attendance Support Team</li> <li>School begins to issue attendance pathway letters (in line with local authority) to formally address the attendance issue.</li> <li>School seek support from the Local Authority Attendance Team.</li> <li>Legal options are considered, e.g fixed penalty notice, education supervision order, etc.</li> </ul>