

Sir John Leman High School
2026-2027
Parental Attendance Guidance





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Foreword

Good attendance allows students to be fully supported in their educational, social, emotional, and mental development. At Sir John Leman High School, we encourage and promote good attendance for all, with an expectation of 95% attendance (Band One) from our students. It is the parent/carers and the school's duty to work together to help support our young people to attend school.

The content within this guidance outlines the procedures that parents need to follow to ensure this support happens.

If at any point you are concerned about your child's attendance or feel that something is a barrier or may become a barrier to their attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school so we can work together to resolve the issue on attendance@sirjohnleman.co.uk



Reporting Your Child's Absence

If your child is too ill to attend school, you must contact the school Attendance team via your MCAS (My Child At School) App 'attendance' section. This will record your child's name, year group, and tutor group automatically. However, you will be required to:

Explain the reason for absence with as much detail as possible, simply saying they won't be in, or are unwell is not sufficient information and the school will contact you for further details or clarification for the absence to be authorised. The school will usually authorise 3 days of absence without any further clarification or evidence.

We ask that you report the absence by 8.30am and please contact us each and every day your child is absent.

If we have not received a reason for absence and a student is not in school, a phone call home or communication through MCAS APP will be made and sent to Parents/Carers. This will happen even if your child has been absent due to illness in previous days. We cannot assume that your child is unwell unless you have notified us on that day, we would not want to put your child at risk by not contacting you.

If Parents/Carers do not contact school regarding absence, then a fixed penalty notice (FPN) will be considered if regular non-contact of absence occurs (10 sessions in a 10-week rolling period) as these are considered to be unauthorised. Please note that there are 2 sessions each day – morning and afternoon.

Lateness

All students are expected to arrive to school on time by **8.40am**. Any student arriving late, after this time, must sign in via the attendance office behind the main school hall. If a student is late, they may find that the school gates are closed, in this instance they need to press the buzzer by the main vehicle entrance so that they can be let in. The school day starts at **8.40am**, and any student who arrives after this time, but before **9.10am** will receive a late mark 'L'. Any student who arrives **after 9.10am** will have an unauthorised absence late mark for the morning session 'U' until 10am as the register will have closed as per DfE guidelines. Arrival after 10:01am will be considered an unauthorised absence (unless medical evidence or exceptional circumstances apply). Being on time to school is very important for your child's education and their future with managing their time etc. It's vital that they attend 'Tutor Time' in the mornings as this is where they will receive important messages and communication from their form tutor.

If your child is running late for school, please call the school to let us know so we can make a note on the register. When phoning or messaging in for a student who is late for school, we will need the reason for lateness explained. Late arrivals are logged for monitoring purposes; a pattern of lateness will be closely monitored by the Attendance Officer. Parents/carers of students who are persistently late for school will be telephoned to discuss ways of improving their child's punctuality. If a student is late twice in one week for either the morning or afternoon registration period, this will result in a lunch time detention and a C2 will be recorded. Parents/Carers can check on their child's punctuality through the MCAS APP.



Every Minute Counts

If you arrive late to school everyday your learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school everyday over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



Missing The Bus

Students who miss their normal school bus would be expected to get the next available public bus into school, or arrange for someone to bring them in. Please give the school a call and let us know if your child has missed their bus. Missing the bus **is not a valid reason to miss a whole day of school** and will be logged as an unauthorised absence. It is expected that students then arrive to school via other means, i.e. a lift, a public bus, taxi etc.

Circumstances that are out of your control such as public transport not running due to bad weather or a bus breaking down, will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

Medical Appointments

If your child has an appointment that cannot be taken out of school hours, they will still be required to attend school both before and after the appointment where possible. If it is an afternoon appointment they can come into school as normal and can be collected for their appointment, or if it's a morning appointment, they can be dropped off after the appointment back at school.

If your child is not in before an afternoon appointment, or after a morning appointment it will be logged as an unauthorised absence. Please note that the afternoon DfE registration mark is during P3 at 12:00pm.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to provide evidence, such as an appointment letter/card or screenshot of the appointment, for the absence to be logged as medical, otherwise it will be logged as unauthorised.



Being Sent Home

Students being sent home unwell will only be authorised if the school has contacted you directly and advised that your child is unwell and needs to be collected or you have given them permission to walk home. **If your child calls you directly and asks you to collect them this will not be authorised (although with the new school phone lockers, this should not be possible, and a behaviour sanction will also be applied in this instance).** If your child is unwell, they need to go to J2 to find their year manager in the first instance, or the main attendance office where a member of staff can assist them and provide them with authorisation to be collected after they have been assessed by a member of staff.

Sir John Leman High School has a no phone policy and students should never be using their phones during the school day as they should be stored in their tutor room cabinet.

If your child needs to leave during the school day, please call the main school reception (**01502 713233**) or email reception with full information as to the reason why they need to leave school. Or alternatively record the request through MCAS (My Child At School) APP.

Students must sign in and out at the main school office as they arrive or leave. No child will ever be released from school without parental consent, due to Safeguarding requirements.

Holidays

We want to give our students the very best educational experience we can. An extended absence from school will affect this by causing disruption to the learning process. For this reason, we do not authorise term time holidays, any holiday will be unauthorised, and a fixed penalty notice (FPN) will usually be considered and issued as per the new DfE guidance. **The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.** Please note that the school does not authorise absence due to 'illness or being unwell' either side of a known holiday.

Any requests for absence during term time should be made with plenty of notice, and in writing to the head teacher using our leave of absence form, which can be obtained from the school reception, attendance office or school website.

Any request for up to three holiday's during a three year academic cycle could result in prosecution as per the new DfE guidance.

If Parents/Carers wish their child to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave, to participate in sporting activities or music exams, or for any other special occasion the application must be made in writing, in advance, using a leave of absence request form with supporting evidence if appropriate.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf



Mental Health Concerns

Unfortunately, mental health issues are becoming increasingly common in young people. The school can only authorise prolonged mental health issues and/or anxiety issues for students if we receive **medical evidence**. This can be in the form of an official GP letter/summary explaining the issues or a letter from an official mental health provider such as CAMHS.

If you need help with your child, please contact your child's year manager:

- Year 7: Mr Cable xdc1@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Year 8: Mrs Skinner xbes@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Year 9: Mrs Sayer xlxs@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Year 10: Mrs Blowers xsrb@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Year 11: Mr Taylor xhmt@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Director of Key Stage (yr7, 8 & 9) Mrs Francis xdf@sirjohnleman.co.uk
- Director of Key Stage (yr10 & 11) Mr Slater xpxs@sirjohnleman.co.uk

The school is here to support students as much as we can, and we have both an internal and external counsellors who can offer help and support, as well as a school nurse. The wait for the external counsellor is long, however, we will always try and help where we can or refer you to other sources of help and support.

If your child is suffering with anxiety, or their mental health is suffering, it is very important you take them to their GP for discussion and referral if needed. Sir John Leman High School will not authorise prolonged anxiety-based absence without any medical evidence. We also cannot provide any physical work or online provision without professional medical evidence in place.

Home Visits

The school does undertake home visits for both welfare and attendance reasons. These can be announced or unannounced and are designed to keep links open with the school and family with a view to supporting the child.



Attendance Matters

Under new DfE guidance from the 19th August 2024, updated in July 2026, the school will consider a fixed penalty notice (FPN) if a student has 10 unauthorised absences, including unauthorised lates in a 10-week rolling period.

A Change in Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in **each parent** receiving 3 separate fines.

5 Consecutive Days of Term Time Leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a Rolling 10 Week Period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period. These can include unauthorised lates.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

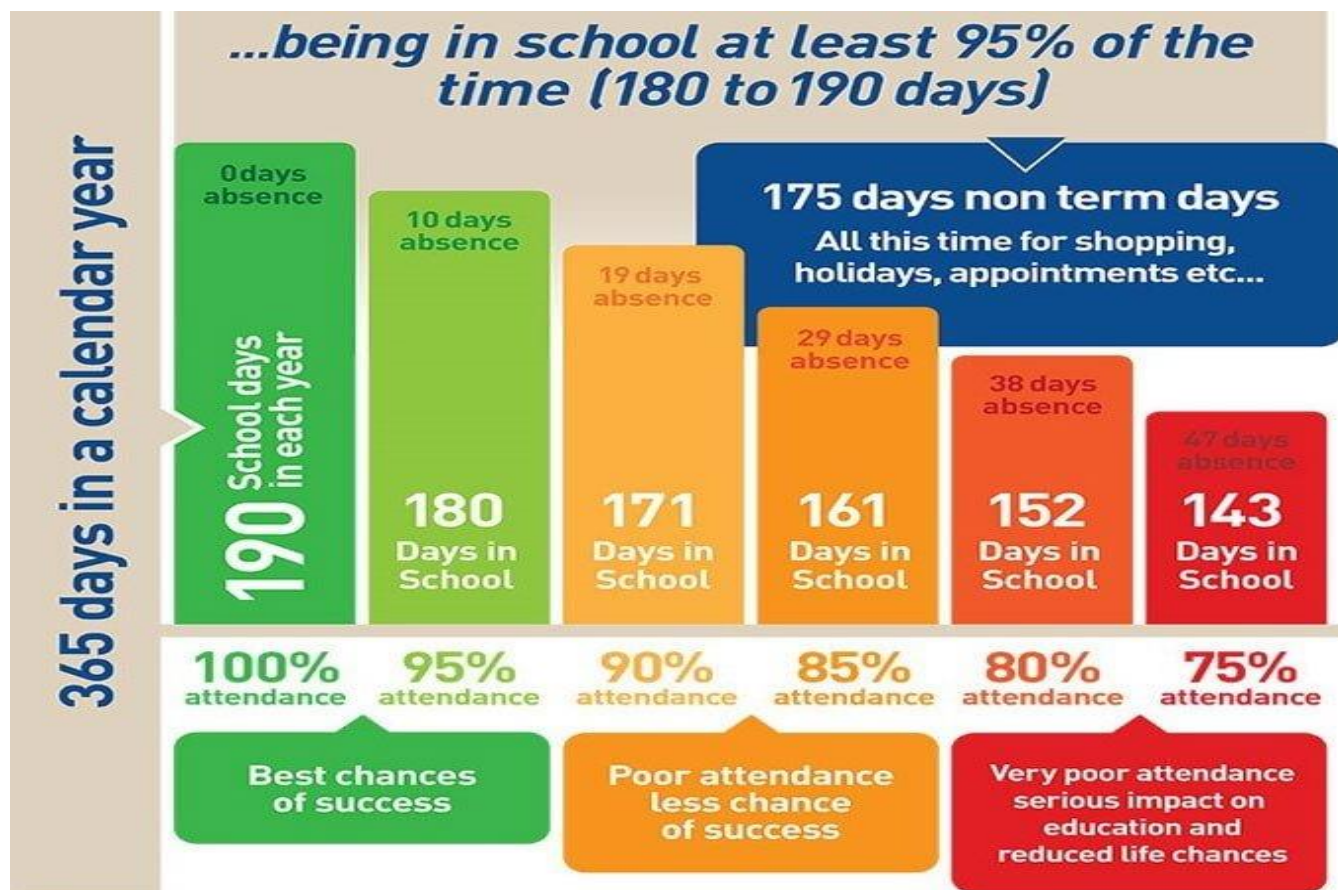
The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.





PLEASE NOTE:

- The school year is usually 40 weeks per academic year which equates to 800 lessons.
- 1 week of school = 20 lessons
- 1 lesson = 75 mins of lost learning
- Persistent Absence (PA): A child who only attends school for 90% or less of the time
- Severely absent (SA): A child whose attendance is less than 50%
- Definition of a Parent: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:
 - All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
 - Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.





Every Day
Counts



Supporting Good School Attendance

Guidance for Parents / Carers

Good attendance at school is one of the most important factors in ensuring that children and young people have the best opportunities in adult life.

Did you
know?



90%
Attendance

for one year = 4
weeks of learning
missed, this is called
persistent absence.





Research has shown that there is a strong link between levels of attendance at school and levels of achievement. Students with high levels of attendance tend to gain better results in tests and examinations than students with lower attendance levels. Children with good attendance are more than twice as likely to pass their English and Maths GCSEs compared to those who are persistently absent.

How you can help your child have good attendance

- ✓ **Get into good routines: start the year right and make attendance a priority, or even better, get into good habits from the start of nursery!**
- ✓ **Show an interest in school and education; attend parents meetings, concerts and other school events.**
- ✓ **Talk about school at home: ask your child what they're learning, how their friends are and how they're getting on.**
- ✓ **Encourage your child to take part in school activities.**
- ✓ **Don't let your child take time off school for minor ailments: particularly those which would not stop you from going to work.**
- ✓ **Where possible, make appointments outside of school hours.**
- ✓ **Take family holidays during school holiday time only.**
- ✓ **Encourage your child to tell you about any problems they may have at school. If you know or think that your child is having difficulties attending school, you should contact the school straight away.**
- ✓ **Acknowledge, praise and reward good or improved attendance, even small successes.**

