



Joy Lane Foundation Primary School  
Oysters SRP (ASD)  
Oyster Bay Nursery

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Draft Prepared	September 2017
Date Agreed	
Signed Executive Headteacher/ Head of School	Debra Hines /Mark Ashley-Jones
Signed by Chair of Governors	Mr Phil Baldwin (draft)
Date Policy to be Reviewed	September 2018

**Joy Lane Primary School is part of the Coastal Alliance Co-Operative Trust and we work alongside the CACOT Attendance Policy.**

### **Statement of Intent**

Joy Lane Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of awards to promote good attendance and punctuality. At Joy Lane Primary School we actively promote excellent attendance for all our pupils by keeping parents informed of their own child(rens) attendance termly. We also share classes and the whole school attendance throughout the year, through newsletters, and follow up all concerns immediately.

The Governors, Executive Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Joy Lane Primary School.

### **Parental Responsibility**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Full attendance is essential to the all round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law.

**It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.**

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.40am. The register is taken at 8.50am and is then closed at 9am. All pupils that arrive late must report, with their parent to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded and also pupils are issued with a late pass in order to inform the class teacher.

### **The Role of the School Staff**

The Executive Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance. Mr Ashley-Jones, Head of School, is the Lead Attendance Officer for Joy Lane Primary School.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement (The Educational (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present or absent.

The class teacher notifies the attendance officers/administrator of children whose attendance is causing concern. Attendance data for each class is closely monitored by the class teacher through an internal monitoring system.

It is the responsibility of the Lead Attendance Officer and administrators to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a seven day reply deadline before the absence is unauthorised
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes) updated as from Statutory Guidance November 2016
- Parents informed termly of child's attendance figure

### **Timeline of School Action for Managing Poor Attendance**

- 95 – 100% attendance - class teacher to investigate and notify school FLOS of initial concerns
- 90- 95% attendance- monitored through weekly attendance meetings involving attendance team and school FLO. Data and on-going concerns to be referred to SLT and the Executive Headteacher for course of action. If there is no support seek help through Early Help Notification
- Below 90%- Advise Attendance Service of child's attendance and consider referral or Penalty Notice where the absences have not been authorised
- An AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution.
- A Penalty Notice request to be submitted to the Local Authority
- Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice.

**Please refer to Project 97 paperwork on procedure for 2017-18 and subsequent years (page 5)**

**Please refer to Appendix 2 & 3 for guidance on what work should be undertaken by the school prior to referral.**

### **Children Missing Education**

If a pupil is withdrawn from Joy Lane for any reason, and the school is not informed in writing of the new establishment being attended, a 'Child Missing Education Referral Form' (CME) will be completed. This form will be sent to the Local Authority who will investigate further and the pupil will remain on school roll during this time. If the details of a new school are put in writing, the school will contact them to confirm that the child has been admitted on to their school roll.

Joy Lane will also inform authorities if parent/carers have advised in writing their intention to withdraw their child to electively home educate.

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

## Lateness

The children are able to enter the classrooms from 8.40am where a member of staff will be there to greet them. The school day begins at 8.50am and the register will be taken as soon as possible after this. Children arriving after 8.50am should report to the school office with their parent or carer where they will be marked as arriving as late before the register closed (L). The registers close at 9.00am; any children arriving after this time without a reason for doing so will be regarded arriving late after the register has closed (U) and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

## Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

**Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016, as revised in April 2017, when:**

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed in a term may lead to a referral to the Attendance Service (AS) for a Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue, the Local Authority may instigate court proceedings

## Authorising Absence

Only the Executive Headteacher or Head of School in consultation with the Chair of Governors can authorise absence for approved reasons. Where there is doubt, the Executive Headteacher, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Executive Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent and school.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that **may not** be authorised:

- Holidays during term time
- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing or uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without clear explanation
- Child/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Other reasons not agreed by the Executive Headteacher or Chair of Governors

## **Attendance and Lateness**

If a new pupil has a history of poor attendance at their previous school, there will be a pre-start attendance meeting held with a member of the SLT. The school will monitor absence and lateness on a termly basis and will consider the appropriate action where there are concerns.

Reasons for absence are recorded and retained by the school

### **Local Authority Action may include:-**

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

## **Project 97 approach and steps to success in improving attendance at Joy Lane**

### **'Five Steps'**

- Where there has been no contact from parents, first day calling for all pupils and Parent/Attendance
- Whole school awareness letter explaining project that aims to encourage all pupils to achieve 97% attendance or above
- Letter 1 - to Parents and Carers whose child is below 97%
- Letter 2 – Meeting invitation to parents/carers where there is a concern
- Letter 3 - failure to attend attendance meeting letter

### **Local Authority Action**

Where there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance and/or there is at least 10 sessions (5 days) absence in a term the school will consider the following:

### **Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance**

**Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Codes of Conduct effective from January 2016 and revised in April 2017**

- **Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct.**
- The Inclusion and Attendance Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

- Joy Lane Primary School follows the directive of, '**10 sessions of unauthorised absences within 100 sessions or 50 school days as the trigger for a Penalty Notice.**'

#### **Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:**

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) or 20 sessions (10 school days) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

#### **Leave of Absence/Holiday**

As from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 (updated November 2016), amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **all Headteachers may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted due to exceptional circumstances.

If a parent or carer feels that leave of absence is required due to exceptional circumstances then a detailed letter outlining the circumstances should be sent to school and addressed for the attention of the Chair of Governors and Executive Headteacher with the Request for Absence Form.

The Executive Headteacher will consider requests for exceptional leave. There is no automatic right that these will be authorised. Each case will be considered individually and previous attendance records will be taken into account.

Agreement to any request for exceptional leave is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher acting on behalf of the school Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

The Executive Headteacher's decision is final and once the decision to not authorise the leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If holiday is taken, the school will write to you and confirm that a penalty notice has been requested. A Penalty Notice can be issued per parent per child for £120 if paid within 28<sup>th</sup> days, reduced to £60 if

paid within 21 days. All correspondence relating to the penalty will come from the Local Authority department.

The following are examples of reasons leave may be granted due to exceptional circumstances:

- Bereavement/terminal illness
- Weddings/civil partnerships-1 day only
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professionals as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Any strong personal/religious reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school.
- Auditions and performing arts, music examinations etc
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where is it evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.

### **Penalty Notice Proceedings for Unauthorised Holiday/Leave Absence**

- Penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Code Of Conduct
- The Inclusion and Attendance Service receives a request for an unauthorised holiday of 10 or more school sessions (5 days)
- The inclusion and Attendance Service issue Penalty Notices (one per parent per child)
- If Penalty Notices is/are not paid within 28 days of issue the Attendance Service may instigate court proceedings.

### **Medical Appointments**

We ask that parents make routine appointments e.g. dental check-ups, during school holidays or after school whenever possible. We understand that some medical appointments are only available during the school day and would ask that, wherever possible, these appointments are made as late in the day as possible to cause the least disruption to your child's learning. If a morning appointment is unavoidable, please make it as early as possible.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

#### **Joy Lane Primary School**

##### **Punctuality**

The school gates open at 8.40am for primary school children and 8.30am for Oyster Bay Nursery.

If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know as soon as possible.

Parents of children who persistently arrive late will be contacted by the Family Liaison Officers or members of the Attendance Team and reminded of these times and their obligations to comply with them. It will also be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education, but also that of others in the class.

Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason may result in a school meeting and could lead to a Penalty Notice being requested from the Local Authority.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a note will be sent home asking the parent to explain the lateness or to ensure that punctuality is maintained. In rare circumstances where the school is made aware of a situation, an arrangement allowing a degree of flexibility can be agreed with the Executive Headteacher.

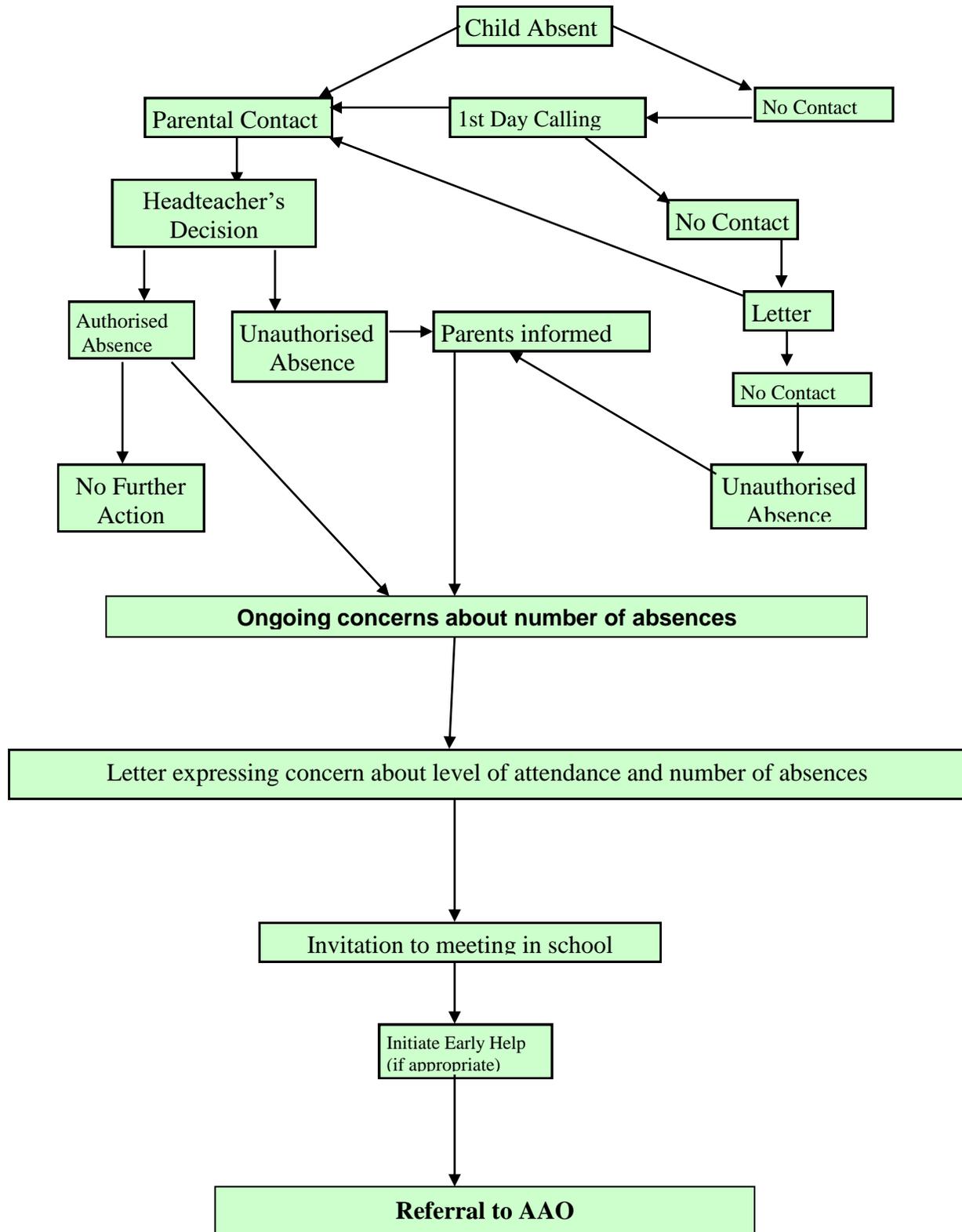
#### **Joy Lane's Oysters SRP**

##### **Punctuality**

The school day begins at 9.00am and the register will be taken as soon as possible after this. The registers close at 9.30am: any children arriving after this time without a reason for doing so will be regarded as being absent without authorisation. The School accepts that the overwhelming majority of the children arrive by taxi and there may on occasions be unavoidable delays.

If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know.

# School based absence intervention



**Appendix 3**

