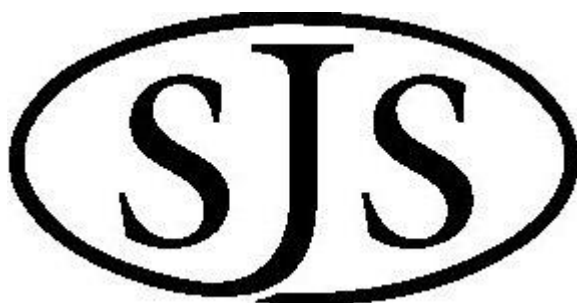


Shaftesbury Junior School

Attendance & Lateness Policy



'We care, we share, for the future we prepare'

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: 16/03/2026

Last reviewed on: March 2026

Next review due by: March 2027

This policy reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

We support the 'City of Sanctuary' vision that the UK will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. We endorse the City of Sanctuary Charter, and agree to act in accordance with City of Sanctuary values and apply the network principles within our work.

We recognize the contribution of people seeking sanctuary. Sanctuary seekers are welcomed, included and supported within our context.

Statement of intent

At Shaftesbury School we strive to create a warm, welcoming and secure atmosphere where children feel valued. We regularly monitor our performance in order to ensure that the climate of our school allows for diversity, and provides high standards of education, protection and safety for all.

We believe that regular attendance at school is important for all our children and we are therefore concerned when individuals are absent.

Children are expected to attend school every day unless there is an acceptable reason for them to be absent (i.e., acceptable in the school's view).

We are required by law to keep accurate daily registers of our pupil attendance and to expect to be informed, by parents or guardians, the reason for any absences. All absences must be registered as authorised or unauthorised and only the school can do this. The school gives a high priority in conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Parents have a vital role to play and strong home/school links and communication systems are imperative. The systems put in place means a clear focused approach which is aimed at the pupil having full attendance at all times.

Aims & Objectives

At Shaftesbury we aim to:

- Investigate and identify any problems affecting a pupil's attendance and ensure they are resolved as quickly and as efficiently as possible;
- Ensure all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive appropriate training;
- Follow guidelines issued by the LA;
- Stress to parents and carers that contact on the first day of absence is vital;
- Reward good and improved attendance of all pupils;
- Promote positive staff reaction to pupils after returning from absence;
- Consult with staff, school community and the EWO to maintain the Attendance & Lateness Policy;
- Undertake regular attendance analysis on a weekly basis and keep senior managers and governors up-to-date;
- Send newsletters with attendance and related issues;
- Ensure all pupils feel supported and valued;
- Have procedures to ensure absentees are contacted and reasons for it are followed up (see following statements);
- Set targets for each school year;
- Maintain good practice by keeping registers accurately and reporting any concerns, maintaining records of absentees and reporting on a weekly basis, analysing data, prompt follow up action and liaison with the EWO;
- If the absent pupil is 'Looked After' or 'At Risk' the response will be immediate contact with the carers or appropriate authorities to ascertain the reason in case of immediate action being needed.

Procedures for absence

Parents/ guardians should endeavour to send their child to school every day. However, we recognise that that might not always be possible. If a child is absent then the following procedures apply:

- It is the parent/ guardian's responsibility to inform school of any absence and they should phone school on the day of absence and leave a message on the 'Automated service';
- If the school has not heard by 9.30am, this will prompt a phone call home;
- If school is unable to contact home, then a letter will be sent;
- Both authorised and unauthorised absences are monitored weekly and any cause for concern will be addressed by the EWO;

- 'Persistent absence' refers to absence of more than 20%, whether authorised or unauthorised; pupils in danger of becoming PA pupils will be monitored;
- Pupils with less than 95% attendance will be monitored by the Office & Education Welfare Officer.

The Office & Education Welfare Officer will monitor trigger points and appropriate letters will be sent out. All pupils with 5 or more unauthorised absences will be referred to the EWO.

In the event of regular and/or prolonged absence due to illness, parents/ guardians will be asked to provide medical evidence from a medical professional. Failure to do so will result in these absences being unauthorised.

Children Missing In Education

When a pupil leaves Shaftesbury, they are not taken off roll until they are admitted to another school and we receive confirmation of this. Records are passed on securely to the new school. However, in a small number of cases, this is not possible.

If a family is returning to their home country, parents must provide school with a letter to this effect and the pupils' records will be kept at the school. The school office will endeavor to check that the family has arrived safely.

If a family decides to home school, school will discuss options and implications with the family and record this. The parents must provide school with a letter to this effect and school will inform the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

If a family moves with no forwarding address, records are kept at the school and the family's details are passed onto EWS. If there are safeguarding concerns with the family, this will also be passed onto Children's Duty & Assessment and/or the police.

Procedures for lateness at the start of school

School begins at 8.50am and the afternoon session at 1.05pm. We aim to have every child in class at this time, and any child who arrives after this is considered to be late. For the purposes of this policy, below is a set of guidelines that we will enforce initially in order to reduce the number of children who are late in the morning. These procedures will be reviewed regularly with the EWO in order to reduce lateness.

- The gates will be locked at 8.50am;
- If a child arrives between 8.50am and 9am, then they are late before register closes;
- If a child arrive after 9am, then they are officially late after register closes and the EWO will be notified;
- After a child is late three times in the school year, then a standard letter will be sent home;
- After a child is late six times in the school year, a second letter will be sent home;
- After a child is late ten times in the school year, then home will be called;
- After a child is late fifteen times in the school year, then a school meeting will be called with the parents, headteacher and EWO

Procedures for late pick-up

School finishes at 3.05 pm and After Care finishes at 5.30pm Mon-Thurs and 5.00pm on Friday. Children should be picked up at the appropriate time, unless there is a valid reason for not doing so. Parents/ guardians should make every effort to inform school if there is a problem and we will try to accommodate this. If a child is not picked up, the following procedures apply:

- A phone call home at 3.30pm;
- If there is no answer then messages will be left, where available;
- If there has still been no contact by 3.45pm then the appropriate authorities will be informed;
- If a child is picked up late from After Care, there will be a £5 surcharge for each 15 minutes to cover the cost of staffing;
- Two staff must always stay on premises with a lone child;
- A child will not be allowed to attend After Care if there is an outstanding balance due to late pick-ups;
- If a child has been picked up late three times, then a fourth will result in them not being able to attend After Care until there has been a meeting with the headteacher .

Success Criteria for Evaluation

- Attendance has improved;
- Punctuality has improved;
- Parental response to attendance has improved;
- Re-integration plans have been successful;
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance within the school, governing body and the local community;
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedure operating in school;
- Attendance issues are raised in assembly, PCHSE or in other appropriate areas of the curriculum.

Authorised absence can be:

- Sickness;
- Medical/dental appointments;
- Days of religious observance;
- Funerals/weddings of immediate family.

Unauthorised absences can be:

- Truancy;
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relative;
- Going shopping;
- Having hair cut;
- Birthdays;
- A family holiday;
- When the school has not been informed by telephone or letter;
- Piercings for jewellery.

Addendum

Due to the restrictions caused during the pandemic, the school operated on a staggered timetable and so the timings above did not apply. However, the processes remain, e.g. calling home if a child is absent.

The staggered times for the school were:

- Y4: 8.30am-2.15pm
- Y3: 9am-2.45pm
- Y5: 9.30am-3.15pm
- Y6: 10am-3.45pm

Breakfast club ran from 8am until 9.50am (free for parents with children in different year groups) and After Care ran from 2.15pm-4.30pm (free up until 3.15pm for parents with children in different year groups).

During a period of remote learning, attendance is also recorded and if a child is absent from their daily live lesson, this will be followed up with the parent. This is true if no work is received as well.

This addendum has been included in the latest review as an evaluated school process in case there is ever another national lockdown.