



The Joseph Whitaker School - Attendance Information and Support

It is sometimes a challenge to know how schools operate and what they can do to offer support. For this reason, the chart below outlines the attendance process we follow when supporting young people to attend our educational school setting.

The categories are based on the expectations placed on schools by the Local Authority (Nottinghamshire County Council) and the Department for Education.

School attendance is measured in **sessions** (two sessions per day - morning and afternoon). In a standard 190-day school year, there are **380 sessions** in total. Please understand that for the morning session registers close strictly at 9.00am and any students arriving after this time have to be marked absent on official attendance returns to the Department for Education.

Secondary School Attendance Flow Chart

Attendance %	Status	Intervention/Action
97% +	Excellent	This is the national expectation for all students. Recognition of great attendance.
93% - 96.9%	Stage 1 Monitoring	School will send a letter to highlight the drop in attendance and offer informal support.
90% - 92.9%	Stage 2 Intervention Support	School-Led Support: Meeting with the Head of House and/or Attendance Team. An Individual Attendance Plan (IAP) will be created to identify and remove barriers.
Below 90%	Stage 3 Persistent Absence Intervention	Formal Intervention: The student is now a <i>Persistent Absentee</i> . Meeting with Head of House/Senior Leader. An Enhanced Individual Attendance Plan (EIAP) will be created to identify and remove any additional barriers and detail interventions offered. Possible referral for Enforcement and/or Parenting Contracts.
Below 50%	Stage 4 Severe Absence	Statutory Action: Severe Absence threshold has been met. Intensive multi-agency support and a high risk of legal proceedings, if relevant.

How We Can Support You

Attendance issues are rarely just about not wanting to go to school, and may be a symptom of another issue. The Department for Education and Nottinghamshire County Council highlight a '**Support First**' approach in line with the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' which we adopt here.

Common Barriers & Interventions:

Health/Medical: If your child has a long-term medical condition, we can implement a **Healthcare Plan** (Section 19 of the Education Act 1996) to support a child if they are too unwell to attend full-time.

Anxiety/Mental Health: We can offer *soft starts* (e.g. entering through a different door, arranging to meet a key person to touch base with to discuss the day, looking at alternative spaces for break and lunch).



SEND/Learning Needs: If the curriculum is the barrier, we can review the **SEND Support Plan** to ensure all possible adjustments have been put in place.

Parent/Carer Tip: If your child is struggling, **contact the school immediately**. Early communication and intervention can be extremely effective at preventing attendance declines.

Who to contact?

Your child's tutor and their Head of House are more than willing to support your child with any issues that are impacting on attendance. Additionally, the Attendance team will be happy to speak with you and provide guidance and support.

Whilst we will pursue a *support first* approach it is important that you have all relevant information regarding what could happen if your child does not attend school regularly without certified reasons.

The '10-Session Rule'

Nottinghamshire schools follow the Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices. Regardless of your child's total yearly attendance, specific legal triggers apply to unauthorised absences:

The Threshold: 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a **rolling 10-week period**. The 10-school week period when the national threshold applies may span different terms or school years.

The Consequence: If this threshold is met (through holidays, lateness after the register closes, or unexplained absence), the school is required to consider a **Penalty Notice (Fine)**.

The Cost: As of 2024/25 regulations, the first fine is **£160** (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days). A second fine within three years is a flat **£160**. A third offense leads directly to **Magistrates Court**.

Schools **do not** directly benefit from the issuing of any attendance fines.

Please do not hesitate to make contact with the attendance team should you need support.