



Godalming Junior School

Attendance Report Autumn 2024

Date completed: Spring 2025	
This report is for the period: Sep 2024	to: Jan 2025
Date presented to the governing board: 12 th Feb 2025	
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Attendance data

Attendance this term compared to this term last year

	OVERALL ABSENCE		AUTHORISED ABSENCE		PERSISTENT ABSENCE (10% OF SESSIONS)		SEVERE ABSENCE (50% OF SESSIONS)	
	This term:	Last year:	This term	Last year	This term	Last year	This term	Last year
England	7%	7%	4%	5%	17%	19%	Not published	2%
School	3.3%	3.3%	2.79%	3%	5.8%	7%	0	0

Headteacher's comment

Attendance at GJS continues to be a strength of the school compared to national, local and similar schools with overall absence lower than previous year and PA levels slightly lower than previous year, for all groups. Further embedding of practices and updates on the Attendance Policy continues. Clear lines of communication between home and school continues with whole school termly letters on attendance, standing attendance items in weekly newsletters and the issuing of penalty notices for unauthorised absences.

Attendance by pupil group

	OVERALL ABSENCE		AUTHORISED ABSENCE		PERSISTENT ABSENCE (10% OF SESSIONS)		SEVERE ABSENCE (50% OF SESSIONS)	
	This term	Last year	This term	Last year	This term	Last year	This term	Last year
Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)	5%	6%	4%	7%	12%	27%	0	0
National Average	N/A	10%	N/A	10%	N/A	30%	N/A	N/A
Pupils with an education health and care (EHC) plan	5%	4%	4%	4%	14%*	29%	0	0
National Average	N/A	12%	N/A	12%	N/A	35%	N/A	6%
Pupil Premium	5%	7%	4%	7%	10%	37%	0	0
National Average	N/A	11%	N/A	11%	N/A	37%	N/A	4%

*1 child

Headteacher's comment

Overall decline in absence for vulnerable groups compared to last year with regular contact sustained between home and school by HSLW/ Attendance Co-Lead.

Policies and procedures on attendance

	DATE OF LAST REVIEW	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	DETAILS OF POLICY UPDATES
Attendance Policy	Autumn 24	Autumn 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Information regarding penalty notices included for unauthorised absences > References to CWMNWCAS policy and WTISC guidance >Inclusion of Appendix A - the flow diagram of attendance monitoring and intervention
Exclusion Policy	Spring 25	Spring 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Further clarity around point 9 - returning to school after a fixed-term exclusion
CP and Safeguarding Policy	Spring 25	Autumn 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Substantive changes following KCSiE 2024 update >Change of review cycle from Spring to Autumn >inclusion of exploitation and potential form of abuse >Further detail around 'Early Help' process >Greater detail around safer recruitment processes including possible online searches >References to DV and the impact on children who witness or hear incidents and the affects >Schools that may have alternative provision that children may access are still responsible for the safeguarding of pupils >Children missing in education to include unexplained or persistent absence <p>Additional resources to include: Stable Homes, Built on Love, Improving support for children going to court, DfE Data Protection Guidance,</p>

Known barriers to attendance

- > EBSNA (anxiety/ low mood)
- > Friendship issues (sometimes happening at home, online)
- > Siblings with low attendance (often involving poor mental health)
- > Parental mental ill health and low resilience
- > Low resilience amongst children (safer to stay in the comfort of own home; potential 'hangover' from Covid)
- > Children's awareness that parents are working from home (a 'hangover' from Covid)
- > Caring responsibilities
- > Holidays taken during term time

Strategies in place to mitigate low attendance

	ACTION	IMPACT
Discouraging parents from taking pupils on term-time holidays	Frequent newsletters reminding parents of school attendance expectations and potential use of penalty notices	Attendance always a priority at GJS and part of the culture. Attendance remains consistently high at GJS.
	Penalty notices have been issued to two families (as of Jan 25)	
Identifying and supporting pupils with mental health issues that could develop into a barrier to attendance	Child's voice: HSLW and ELSA work with children to establish barriers and come up with an agreed plan of support which is also shared with parents.	Child feels empowered that they have been listened to and the school are taking active steps to support their well-being, e.g. in the form of a trusted adult meeting them first thing in the morning.
Inviting parents/carers in for meetings to discuss pupil's poor attendance	Green and red letters sent to parents (below 90% attendance) advising of low attendance and encouraging engagement with school.	X% of parents within a short space of time addressing the levels of absence and remaining engaged with the school and appreciating the schools' support
	Attendance expectations discussed at parent's evening with concerns being identified and raised	

Headteacher's comment

The school continues to maintain high levels of engagement with parents making every effort to 'connect before content' to ensure a collaborative approach is taken to improve any attendance concerns. This is primarily driven by regular contact between parents and the HSLW via phone, email or face to face meetings at the earliest convenience for all parties. The level of pastoral support is exceptional with every effort taken to ensure school is a calm and predictable environment for children in an attempt to minimise children's anxieties, especially at the beginning of the school day.

Case study to demonstrate impact

➤ Case study K currently Year X

➤ Context:

➤ **Previous Year:** Mum and K reporting significant anxiety around school (EBSNA). K off school frequently with tummy aches/ low-level illness. K struggling to detach from Mum in the mornings therefore late in. K on pathway for ASC assessment. Disengagement with Early Help due to Mum's mental health. Single parent family. PP. Attendance around 85%.

➤ Support put in place:

➤ Mum signposted to and encouraged to engage with ASC parenting course delivered through Mindworks

➤ Devised bespoke plan for K involving script to use with Mum in the morning, visual timetable for the morning, specific role for K to have in the classroom upon entry

➤ Regular liaison with teacher ensuring K is 'noticed' for positive behaviour in class, given extra responsibilities

➤ ELSA support for K around techniques for managing generalised anxiety. These shared with home and small steps congratulated.

➤ letter sent home to K to congratulate them on progress made.

➤ **Current Year:** Attendance at 95% in Jan 2025. No EBSNA. Has participated in residential school trip for week on IOW. Very supportive 'buddy' to Year 3 child. Mum contacting school for appropriate reasons. HSLW has 'check ins' with Mum, rather than weekly organised contact. K coming into school independently.

Working in partnerships

Frequent liaison with secondary schools, particularly Broadwater, about children whose attendance is a concern. For 'shared families of concern' we make contact if a child is off to see if their sibling is in and whether parent has made contact. Secondary school will also inform us if they are working with the Inclusion Service and prosecuting any shared family. This contact has led to welfare checks being made.

HSLW has attended TAF meeting with families, local schools, nurseries and Early Help to tackle low attendance and come up with shared plan of support for the family.

Evaluation and improvement plan

STRENGTHS
-children's voice is priority; bespoke individual plans are created with children who are experiencing EBSNA
-strong partnerships between GJS and local schools/ nurseries and agencies (e.g. Early Help)
-awareness of barriers facing families
-strong partnership between GJS and parent's; majority of parent's have high expectations for their children, including good attendance
-attendance is praised and promoted regularly throughout the schools via rewards and incentives (individual and whole class)
-parents are frequently informed of school attendance expectations via newsletters etc
-GJS considered a 'low need' school by Surrey CC Inclusion Services

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT	PROPOSED ACTIONS	RESOURCES REQUIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Update attendance section on the website in an effort to signpost parents to external support >Begin celebrating class attendance in end of term celebration assemblies summarising the term instead of week >Become more aware of national trends in attendance for different groups and how this compares to our setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Attendance Team to carry out termly audit of the website to ensure it is fit for purpose. Contact local authority for support >Admin team to provide HT with half termly reports on class attendance for more robust and fuller picture of attendance within the school >Using Arbor platform, gather data for the different groups to inform termly reports to governors and compare term on term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Time to meet