

28th November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for your child to fulfil their educational potential. Historically, students at John Spence with 96% attendance or higher achieve the best GCSE grades, surpassing their targets. That means no more than 8 days off a year.

The Education Act 1996 mandates that parents/carers ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Our school expectation is **96% attendance or higher**.

- **Penalty Notices:** Unauthorised absences (10 sessions/5 days) in a 10-week rolling period can result in a penalty notice.
- **Absence over 3 days:** We may carry out a routine home visit as part of our safeguarding policy.
- **Medical Appointments:** If your child must attend an appointment during school hours, please do not keep them off for the entire day unless absolutely necessary.
- **Medication at School:** If your child needs to take medication at school, please complete the relevant form at reception.

To ensure good attendance, we ask that you:

- Notify the school on the first day of absence (and any subsequent day), providing a reason.
- Inform the school of any issues impacting your child's attendance.
- Work with agencies to improve attendance if necessary.
- Do **not** arrange holidays during term time.

For minor illnesses like a headache, sore throat or menstrual cramps, we suggest taking relevant medication and **attending school**. If your child continues to feel unwell, they should report to their Head of Year.

Specific Illnesses: When to Attend

- **Coughs/Colds** – Attend school
- **Headaches** – Attend school
- **Sore Throat** – Attend school
- **Menstrual Cramps** – Attend school
- **Cold Sores** – Attend school (Encourage good hand hygiene; do not share cups/lip products)

Headteacher Mr Jonathan Heath
John Spence Community High School, Preston Road, North Shields, NE29 9PU.

Registered address: Pele Trust, c/o Ponteland High School, The Crescent, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE20 9EG.
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- **Conjunctivitis** – Attend school (Encourage good hand hygiene; do not rub eyes)
- **Ear Infection (Minor)** – Attend school (Suggest taking relevant medication)
- **Head Lice/Nits** – Attend school
- **COVID (Mild Symptoms)** – Attend school (if they feel well enough)

Specific Illnesses: When to Stay Home

- **Chickenpox** – Stay home until spots have crusted over (usually 5 days)
- **Vomiting/Diarrhoea** – Stay home until no longer sick/having diarrhoea and well enough to return
- **Impetigo** – Stay home (Often requires GP treatment. Keep off until sores have crusted over, or for 48 hours after starting antibiotics. Encourage good hygiene)

Punctuality

We continue to have high standards with student punctuality. Your child must be in form and ready by **8:35 am**. Occasional issues if communicated with us will not result in the below.

- Lateness to school will result in a 30-minute lunchtime detention.
- Failure to attend the lunchtime detention will escalate to a detention after school on a Friday.

We look forward to continuing our work with you to ensure good attendance and punctuality.

Yours faithfully



Jonathan Heath
Headteacher