

Absence model for schools within basic education in the City of Jyväskylä

The education provider must prevent and monitor the absences of pupils in basic education and systematically intervene in them. The education provider shall notify the pupil's guardian or other legal representative of any unauthorised absences. (The Basic Education Act, Section 26)

Children permanently resident in Finland are subject to compulsory education. According to the law, the parent/carer of a pupil in compulsory education shall see to it that compulsory schooling is completed. (The Act on Compulsory Education, sections 2 and 9)

In the calculation of pupils' school absences, all absences during the school year are to be taken into account, including authorised absences. Absences are monitored systematically, with the collective pupil welfare services group meeting four times each academic year.

1. Prevention of absences and supporting attendance

Activities supporting pupils' wellbeing, participation, and sense of community.

- Pupils' and staff's emotional, safety, and interaction skills are strengthened.
- Staff connect with pupils on an individual level and support their commitment to school through the reinforcement of study arrangements that support their learning potential as well as group-level support.
- The staff support interaction, grouping, and loneliness prevention in groups and peer groups throughout the school pathway.
- The whole community is involved in creating a safe learning environment and intervening in all instances of violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- The staff build interactive cooperation between home and school.
- Systematically monitoring absences at individual and group level as part of the operations of the collective pupil welfare services and the pupil welfare plan.

2. Intervene immediately and resolve with the pupil and the guardian

- worrying changes in the student's behaviour
- reluctance to attend school
- repeated late arrivals
- leaving in the middle of a lesson or school day
- a pupil is present at school, but does not attend the lessons
- unauthorised absences
- unresolved absences or insufficient explanations relating to absences
- repeated absences from the same subject or on certain days of the week
- repeated and prolonged absences.

3. Early intervention 5%

- The teacher gets clarification on the absences by discussing them with the pupil and the guardian.
- The teacher monitors the progress of learning, identifies learning difficulties and assesses the need for support.
- The teacher consults the special educational needs teacher and the pupil welfare services professionals if there is any concern about a pupil's wellbeing, learning, or schooling.
- The teacher agrees, if necessary, on support measures along with the next review date with the school pupil and the parent/carer.
- Unauthorised and unresolved absences are intervened in immediately.

4. Targeted actions 10–15%

- The teacher contacts the guardians and if necessary requests permission to assemble a multidisciplinary expert group and launch individual pupil welfare support.
- If necessary, the teacher consults a special educational needs teacher and the pupil welfare services professionals.
- The teacher convenes a multidisciplinary expert group if it is deemed necessary for the pupil's wellbeing, learning, or schooling.
- The meeting examines the reasons behind the pupil's absences and works to reinforce study arrangements that support their learning potential as well as group-level support. Additionally, the objectives to be set, the support measures taken at home and at school, and the date for the next review are agreed on.
- If a multidisciplinary expert group is not convened, the teacher agrees on support measures, follow-up monitoring, and targeted communal measures with the pupil and the guardian.

5. Strong actions 20%

- The need for pupil-specific support is assessed as part of the plan on carrying out pupil-specific support.
- The teacher convenes a multidisciplinary expert group. Actors external to the school are consulted as necessary.
- In multidisciplinary expert groups, teachers and pupil welfare services professionals agree on [investigating the reasons for the absences](#) with the pupil and their guardians.
- If the pupil-specific plan leads to a decision to render support, the support will be organised as planned.
- The designated responsible person will monitor that the agreed support measures are carried out and keep in contact with the pupil.
- The teacher, if necessary, 1) [initiates social welfare contact in accordance with the Social Welfare Act to assess the need for support](#) or 2) [submits a child welfare notification](#).

6. If the absences continue

- The multi-agency cooperation is strengthened and clarified.

- If necessary, the need for pupil-specific support is assessed and the plan on carrying out pupil-specific support is revised.
- The person responsible supports the pupil's return to school systematically.

An absence rate of 10% has been shown to be a wellbeing and learning risk factor.

Absences as a percentage and in hours per academic year in Jyväskylä.

SCHOOL GRADE	5% ABSENCE RATE	10% ABSENCE RATE	15% ABSENCE RATE	20% ABSENCE RATE
Grades 1–2	38 h	76 h	114 h	152 h
Grade 3	42 h	84 h	125 h	167 h
Grade 4	46 h	91 h	137 h	182 h
Grades 5–6	48 h	95 h	143 h	190 h
Grades 7–9	57 h	114 h	171 h	228 h

The automatic absence notification in the Wilma system is sent in accordance with the absence thresholds laid out above.