



KINGSGATE

SCHOOL

Kingsgate School

Attendance Policy

Local procedure owner: Tim Rogers

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Attendance Policy and Procedure

Introduction

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that we make sure that pupils attend regularly and this document sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why regular attendance is so important

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law which may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:- A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - Parents/Carers, Pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Report half-termly on the Pupil Progress - teacher assessment and attendance data
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that '*the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

*(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have
Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'*

The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and Pupils under the age of 18.

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping
- birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Whilst any pupil may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance will be monitored and a meeting set up to devise a pastoral support plan.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any pupils educational prospects and we need to monitor all absence thoroughly. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our recording system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to their Local Authority.

Absence Procedures – Parents/Carers

If a Pupil is absent you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence with an explanation of the absence

If a Pupil is absent we will:

- Telephone the Parent/Carer if we have not heard from them
- Invite parent/carer in to discuss the situation with the Pastoral coordinator if the absences persist

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the pupil and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **0845** and we expect pupils to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **0900** and pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **0915** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if a pupil arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If a pupil has a persistent late record a Pastoral Support Meeting will be arranged to resolve the problem.

Off-Site Provisions

Where pupils access and attend an off-site provision, mainly local pre 16 college providers, there are 3 absence procedures in place.

- Where school staff support at the college, they are required to make contact with all pupils and feedback to school for those in non-attendance;
- The college are also required to feedback where a pupil is not in attendance;
- Where a pupil does not attend due to illness or other known circumstances, the parent/carers are required to inform the school and college prior to the absence.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect a pupil's schooling as much as any other absence. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the Head Teacher. A maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS), or any other public examinations.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

School targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has targets to improve attendance and all pupils have an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The target level of attendance for this school is **95%** attendance.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our Newsletters.

Summary

All school staff are committed to working with pupils to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every pupil's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Linked to:

- School Attendance Strategy
- Preventing and Managing Unauthorised Absence

Attendance Monitoring at Kingsgate School

