

# Kings Langley School



## **Attendance, Registration and Punctuality Policy**

Review Date: October 2017

## A. Policy Title: Attendance, Registration and Punctuality

### Character Development: Commitment to Equality and Diversity

This school is founded on a set of fundamental values designed to enable all students and adults connected with our community to flourish and succeed, regardless of background or circumstances. We are determined to be open to people, places, methods and ideas—and as such, equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do. Our continued dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity is embodied in everything we do.

We are creating an **inclusive** school community where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect
- Inequalities are challenged
- We anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength.
- We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age; disability; caring or dependency responsibilities; gender or gender identity; marriage and civil partnership status; political opinion; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, caste, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sexual orientation; socio-economic background; trade union membership status or other distinctions, represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.
- We recognise that patterns of under achievement at any level and differences in outcomes can be challenged through positive intervention activities designed to bridge gaps.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

## **B. Rationale:**

Kings Langley School is committed to raising levels of attendance for individual students and the school as a whole. Our belief is that good attendance and punctuality are vital if our students are to take advantage of the many educational opportunities we make available to them. Registration of students is a statutory responsibility.

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of “ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community”, to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special needs, and supports our desired outcomes of developing "strong character".

## **C. Purpose:**

- To improve the attendance of students at Kings Langley School.
- To improve the punctuality of students at Kings Langley School.
- To develop systems which enable staff to monitor the attendance of individuals and groups of students.
- To inform parents of the attendance and punctuality levels of their children.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding the attendance and punctuality of their children (The Education Act 1996).
- To develop a system which facilitates efficient monitoring of student attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that students, parents and teachers are aware of the impact of good attendance and punctuality on the education of students.
- To provide guidance for staff and parents to encourage students to attend school regularly.

## **D. Guidelines - Whole School**

### **The Headteacher's Responsibilities**

- The school keeps up to date records on the attendance of all students.
- All students are registered in forms twice a day on a SIMs electronic register.
- The school takes every opportunity to commend students with good attendance.
- Attendance percentages are monitored by Pastoral Staff weekly and this is reviewed with the Head of Year and Attendance Monitoring Officer fortnightly.
- Attendance percentages of individual students are used in academic reviews and written reports.

- Attendance statistics are reported to the Local Authority and the governing body.

### **The Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians**

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs that they may have.

The school expects parents to:

- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, in full school uniform and in a condition to learn.
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Impress on their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct.
- Take an active part in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and academic reviews.
- Notify the school if their child is absent from school. This should be done as soon as possible - preferably on the first day of absence. A full explanation of absence in writing is required on the child's return to school.
- Avoid arranging non-urgent medical/dental appointments during term time.
- Avoid booking holidays during term time.

### **The Responsibilities of Tutors**

- Tutors monitor and actively promote the attendance and punctuality of their students.
- Tutors take their form's register each morning between 8:40 and 9:00. They take a second register in the afternoon between 2:15 and 2:25. On Friday the afternoon registration is between 2:10 and 2:15.
- The register is taken electronically directly onto the SIMS database. A '/' is used to indicate that the student is present
- If a student is absent, an 'N' is marked on the register to indicate no reason has been provided for absence.
- If a student arrives late, they should sign in at reception. Tutors should actively discourage lateness. Parents should be informed of persistent lateness.
- The Tutors monitor and sign planners on a weekly basis. Students are expected to keep a record of their own attendance in their planners. Students will aim for 95% attendance or better.

- The Tutor is required to request notes to enable the school to authorise absences on a daily basis. A student is expected to submit a note to his/her Tutor on return from absence.
- All parental notes explaining absences should be noted by the Tutor and forwarded to the Officer where they are kept for at least 1 term.
- Where no authorisation for absence has been received for several days, the school sends home the standard letter requesting authorisation.
- The school will write home to the parents of students with moderately poor attendance using the school standard letter. If the attendance of such individuals does not improve they are referred to Pastoral Leaders.
- The Tutor or Key Stage Mentor will pass on the names of students with very poor attendance (below 90%) or with a high proportion of unauthorised absences to the Pastoral Leader.

### **Lesson Times**

A register is taken electronically in every lesson by the class teacher.

The teacher will mark students as present, absent or late.

Registers should usually be taken at the start of lessons.

All lateness to lessons is challenged by subject teachers.

Students are not usually permitted to leave lessons.

Students leaving a lesson for any reason should have a note written in their planner by the subject teacher.

Students who need to leave the school during the day, for medical appointments or other reasons are required to submit parental explanation in advance. The student should then sign out at reception.

### **Lateness to school**

All students are required to be in school by 8:40am. Students arriving after 8:40am and before 9:00am must report to school reception where they will be marked present on SIMS. Students arriving after 9:00am will be marked late. Any student arriving after 9:40am can no longer be marked late and the appropriate code should be used e.g. medical appointment 'M', interview 'J'.

### **First Day Absence Response**

Parents should inform the school by 8:15am if they know that their child will be absent on that day.

Once the SIMS registers have been taken by the form Tutor, all absent students are transferred to our automated calling database where parents of absent students will be called by text, emailed or called by telephone and required to state whether they are aware of the child's absence or not and to explain the reasons for their child's absence. Parents who are not aware should contact the office, the school will check lessons to see whether the child is actually in school.

### **Leaving school during the day**

Students are expected to stay in school for the duration of the day unless they are authorised, by the Headteacher, to go home for lunch each day.

If students need to leave school during the day (for a medical or dental appointment) they should bring in a note from their parents. This should then be signed by the Tutor and Pastoral Leader before they are authorised to leave. If a student fails to bring a note in to school they will only be allowed to leave school if their parents inform the school by telephone.

### **The Responsibilities of the Pastoral Leaders**

- The Pastoral Leaders can review attendance data on SIMS.
- The Pastoral Leaders will support the Tutors e.g. through assemblies and visits to forms, in promoting good attendance.
- The Pastoral Leaders will use the attendance data to identify students who may be experiencing difficulties which may be hindering attendance. The Pastoral Leader will contact the parents of students who have not responded to communication from Tutors to improve attendance.
- The Pastoral Leaders will liaise with the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Monitoring Officer regarding students with persistently poor attendances and who have exhausted the Tutor and Pastoral Leader strategies outlined above.
- The Pastoral Leaders are responsible for authorising students leaving school for medical appointments during the day.
- The Pastoral Leaders have primary responsibility for ensuring good attendance across their year group.

### **Responsibilities of the Attendance Monitoring Officer**

The Attendance Monitoring Officer provides Pastoral Leaders and the senior manager responsible for attendance with regular updates relating to students' attendance, attending fortnightly meetings in order to:

- Identify students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Agree on focused, time-limited action which needs to be taken by the school.
- Feedback and exchange information in relation to work undertaken.
- Discuss strategies for improving attendance.

Following on from the attendance meetings, the Attendance Monitoring Officer will:

- Send letters to parents advising of concerns regarding absences or lateness.
- Liaise with Pastoral Leaders to arrange meetings with parents to discuss any issues concerning attendance.

### **The Use of Legal Action**

If a student fails to attend school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the school fail to secure that student's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action.

A complaint may be made against the parents, in the Magistrates' Court (under section 444 of the Children Act 1996), or an educational supervision order relating to the student under section 36 of the Education Act 1989 will be applied for. Any exceptional mitigating circumstances are taken in to account, when considering legal action.

### **Holidays during Term Time**

Students will not normally be permitted to take holidays in term time as it has a highly detrimental impact on their learning. Parents do not have the right to demand leave of absence for family holiday reasons but the Headteacher may use his discretion to grant leave in exceptional circumstances.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Parents who fail to respond to requests by the school to send their children to school or who take unauthorised holidays during term time may be issued with a fixed penalty fine by the Local Education Authority.

The notices will be issued at the discretion of the Headteacher and will be applied to parents whose children have at least 21 sessions of unauthorised absence in the

previous and/or current term. The fines will apply to cases where the parent/guardian is able but unwilling to ensure the attendance of the student. Fixed Penalty Notices will operate following the Hertfordshire County Council Guidance for Schools (see attached).

### **Attendance Registers**

Attendance registers are legal documents that may be required as evidence in court cases.

Registers are taken twice a day, usually at the beginning of morning and afternoon school.

The registers are kept open for 30 minutes.

Students arriving after the close of registration are required to have their parents explain their absence. These students sign in to the 'late' book.

Tutors record the marks electronically on the SIMS system with a 'P' or an 'N' to denote presence or absence as appropriate. ('N' meaning no reason provided for absence).

In order to reduce the possibility of post registration truancy, class teachers take class registers in each lesson.

A student of compulsory school age shall have his/her name deleted from the school admissions register when:

- The student is registered with us in accordance with the requirements of a School Attendance Order and another school is substituted by the LEA or if the order is revoked.
- The student is registered at another school.
- The school receives written notification from the parents that the child is receiving education somewhere else. The school's staff seeks to establish the student's new address and place of education. The appropriate form is then passed to the Attendance Improvement Team.
- The child has ceased to attend Kings Langley School and no longer lives within reasonable distance from the school.
- In the case of a student granted leave of absence exceeding 10 days for the purpose of a holiday, the student has not returned to school within 10 school days immediately following the last day of absence which was granted and we



are satisfied that the student is not unable to attend school for illness or any other reason.

- The student is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of secondary school age.
- The student has been absent for more than 4 weeks. The school have failed to locate him/her after reasonable enquiry. We would send the appropriate form to the Attendance Improvement Team in West quadrant at Apsley One, Apsley to enable them to try to trace the student.
- The student will cease to be of secondary school age before the school next meets and intends to cease to attend. (All registered students are required to remain at school until the leaving date-last Friday in June). 'At school' includes for these purposes approved educational activities undertaken off site, including work experience.
- The student has had a permanent exclusion which has been upheld.
- The student attends a special school and the LEA gives consent for his/her name to be removed.
- The student is absent from school for over 4 weeks because of detention in secure accommodation final court order or order of recall.

### **Promoting attendance**

- The school has an anti-bullying policy designed to prevent behaviour which hinders attendance.
- Students are regularly informed that bullying and aggressive behaviour is totally unacceptable. We have a climate in which bullying is reported immediately and dealt with.
- Students are expected to dress to a high standard, to take pride in themselves and their appearance.
- The school curriculum is continually reviewed to ensure that it is broad based, varied, challenging, differentiated and relevant to the needs of our students.
- The school will send letters to the parents of students with poor attendance. These letters will escalate in their seriousness.

### **Authorising Absence and Approved Educational Activity**

The responsibility for authorising absences rests with the school. Written or verbal parental communication does not by itself constitute authorisation.

The school may or may not accept the reason offered as valid.

All absence notes are kept for at least one term by the Office. Where there are concerns, notes are kept until there is no longer a concern.

The table below outlines valid reasons for absences and their accompanying codes:

<b>Code</b>	<b>School Meaning</b>	<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	<b>Physical Meaning</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (attending other estab.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (not med/dental appointments)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical / Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs (not covered by other code)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	DfES #: School closed to pupils	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Do not use	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
!	DfES X: Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
*	DfES Z: Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session