



Kings Langley School

Unlocking Potential for Life

Attendance, Registration and Punctuality Policy

Date agreed – November 2023

Review date – November 2024



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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.

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. We have an expectation that all students have a minimum attendance of 96%.

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".

PURPOSE

- To improve the attendance of students at Kings Langley School.
- To improve the punctuality of students at Kings Langley School.
- 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.

GUIDELINES – WHOLE SCHOOL

DEFINITIONS - AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

The Headteacher of a school decides whether an absence will be authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the student to be away, or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory. Parents may not authorise absence, only the school can do this. Should staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised. This decision must be made and communicated to parents by the school.

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Sickness (may require medical evidence)
- Medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances – eg bereavement

Note: Kings Langley School emphasises to parents that all medical/dental appointments should be made outside school hours.

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- Holidays
- Unsatisfactory explanations (e.g. shopping, minding the house etc.)
- Caring for sick siblings, parents or other family members
- Birthdays

Persistent absence (PA) is absence of 10% or more. An individual child is deemed to be a persistent absentee if their attendance is less than 90%, regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised.

The Headteacher's Responsibilities

- The school keeps up to date records on the attendance of all students.
- All students are registered throughout the day on the SIMS electronic register system.
- 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.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Promote effective partnerships with the Hertfordshire Attendance Team (Hertfordshire LEA attendance service) and with other services and agencies.

The Headteacher will be responsible for the implementation and the day-to-day management of the policy. A designated member of Senior Leadership, with responsibility for student attendance and punctuality, will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the attendance management, tracking and intervention systems, provide regular reviews to their SLT and an annual report to the designated governing body committee as well as calendared updates to the Trustees. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied.

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. Parents are legally responsible for the attendance and punctuality of their child at school.

The school expects parents to:

- Ensure that their children arrive at school by 8.35 in full school uniform, well rested and in a condition to learn.
- Instill 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 on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day. 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.
- Not book holidays during term time.
- Not send their child to school if they have a diagnosed contagious disease eg Covid and ensure that the policy of notifying the school is correctly followed

The Responsibilities of Tutors

- Tutors monitor and actively promote the attendance and punctuality of their students.
- Registers are taken at the start of each day by the Form Tutor and at the start of every lesson.
- 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 and appropriate sanctions will be given for lateness.



- 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 given to the Attendance Officer in the main office.
- 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 Attendance Officer will pass on the names of students with very poor attendance (below 90%) or with an attendance pattern which causes concern 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 and the number of minutes late.

Appropriate sanctions are given for lateness.

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.

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 must then sign out at reception.

Students who feel ill during the day are to go to the medical room. The medical room will then decide whether to send the student home or to the Pastoral Leader.

Lateness to school

Students arriving after 8:40am will be marked late or with another appropriate code on SIMS where necessary. Appropriate sanctions will be issued for lateness.

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 contacted by phone, text or email to check on the explanation for the reasons for their child's absence.

Leaving school during the day

Students are expected to stay in school for the duration of the day unless they are authorised.

If students need to leave school during the day (for a medical or dental appointment) they should bring in a note from their parents for the Attendance Officer 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. For all appointments where students need to leave during the day, they should be collected from school.



The Responsibilities of the Pastoral Leaders

- The Pastoral Leaders can review attendance data on SIMS and PowerBI.
- The Pastoral Leaders will support the Tutors e.g. through assemblies, recognition 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 Officer regarding students with persistently poor attendances and who have exhausted the Tutor and Pastoral Leader strategies outlined above.
- The Pastoral Leaders have primary responsibility for ensuring good attendance across their year group.

Responsibilities of the Attendance Monitoring Officer

The Attendance 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 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.
- Organise relevant interventions.

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.

Local Authority Attendance Officer

The fundamental purpose of the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) is to maximise attendance rates for individual pupils, individual schools and for the county of Hertfordshire as a whole and to discharge the County Council's legal duty to ensure that all pupils of compulsory school age are in receipt of suitable education. LAAOs will also assist in removing barriers which may prevent a child receiving education.

Referrals to the LAAO will be made by a school once it feels it has exhausted all other avenues to improve attendance.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007, schools are empowered to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the parent/carer of a child who has irregular school attendance, where the absence is unauthorised by the school. Fixed Penalty Notices are an alternative to prosecution. As long as the fine is paid they do not require the parent/carer to appear in court and no criminal record is incurred.

An assessment of the circumstances will take place before a Fixed Penalty Notice is served. Parents will receive a warning letter advising that if unauthorised absences total 15 or more half day sessions the school will apply to Hertfordshire ISL Attendance Team for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

However the authorising officer, has the discretion to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for a first offence in exceptional circumstances.

A fixed Penalty notice imposes a fine of £60 (per child) to each parent/carer if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, the parent/carer may be prosecuted in a Magistrates Court for the offence under S.444 of the Education Act 1996

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 15 sessions (1day=2 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.

Attendance Registers

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

Registers are taken at the start of each day by the Form Tutor and at the start of every lesson.

Students arriving after 8.40 must sign in at reception.



Tutors record the marks electronically on the SIMS system with a '/' 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:

- A new school is named on a School Attendance Order or the Order is revoked.
- The student is registered at another school.
- The school receives written notification from the parents that the child is receiving Elective Home Education.
- The child has ceased to attend Kings Langley School and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school.
- The student has failed to return after being granted leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
- The student is medically unfit and is likely to remain so beyond compulsory school age.
- The student has been continuously absent for not less than 20 school days.
- The student is in custody for four months or longer.
- The student will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets.
- The student has had a permanent exclusion, which has been upheld.

Promoting attendance

- The school has an anti-bullying policy and behaviour 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 appropriately.
- Students are expected to dress to a high standard, to take pride in themselves and their appearance.
- Students are expected to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality and will be made fully aware of the school's policy, procedures and expectations.
- 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:



Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	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)/Covid	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