

# Attendance Policy

Reviewed Mar 2018 (FGov); next March 21

## Values

We value regular and punctual attendance as part of the process of training our children to be self-disciplined and to take responsibility for themselves in a mature way.

We also value family, educational experiences and the pursuit of spiritual development.

## School Responsibility

1. The school keeps two registers: an admissions register (school roll) and an attendance register which is marked twice daily.
2. The school tracks attendance.
3. The school follows up with parents, or the other named contacts, any concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.
4. The Principal is solely responsible for authorising absences.
5. The School must report to the Local Authority (LA) anyone to be deleted from the register or a pupil who fails to attend school regularly (CME)
6. The school reports attendance and lateness to parents in reports

## Pupil Absence from School

1. For medical appointments, pupils should provide a note of explanation for their absence in advance of their absence, wherever possible.

**In the event of illness, a note of explanation should be provided on the morning the child returns to school. It is expected that, wherever possible, parents will notify the school by e-mail or telephone on the first day of the pupil's absence. In the event of an illness lasting longer than three days the school will ask you to provide evidence of the doctor's appointment or contact your GP for such evidence. The principal can then determine whether or not the continued absence is authorised.**

2. As a school we strongly discourage pupils being withdrawn during term time for any other purposes. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may authorise pupil absence. Where the request is for the purposes of a family holiday in term time, the request must be submitted in advance, so that, if authorised, staff can be notified and work set.

The school has the right to report unauthorised absence and to request a fixed penalty charge. Where a pupil is regularly absent without the school's permission the Local Authority will be informed, usually by contacting a Local Authority Attendance Officer. The school will also report to the officer where concerns arise from frequent absences or lateness due to sickness. The school will seek to make contact with any new school of a leaving pupil's arrival, passing on relevant information, and responds to requests from other schools for such information.

Registers are reviewed each day by the administration team, and where no reason has been given to the school, an email, text or telephone call will be made to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil concerned. This will normally have occurred before 10am. The degree of immediate follow-up will

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be determined by the administrative staff in consultation with the principal or relevant Head where necessary. Account will be taken of any safeguarding concerns, the family circumstances and the age of the child.

## Pupil Absence from Games

A request for a pupils to be absent from Games should be sent by email by the relevant parent or carer to the school office. Pupils may also bring a written note signed by the parent. Pupils may be asked to catch up with work or to serve around the school in some appropriate way.

## Sickness in School

In the Primary School, permission to go home must be sought from the class teacher, often in consultation with the Qualified First Aider. At the Secondary School permission must be sought from the Form/Year Tutor or assistant tutor, or Head of School if neither are unavailable. The member of staff taking responsibility for authorizing the pupil's return home will arrange for contact to be made with the parents through the office. Pupils are **not** to contact parents directly.

## Stepping Stones

Please see Stepping Stones FSU safeguarding code of practice for how attendance is registered in the early years.

## Work missed through Absence

### Secondary School

1. Pupils absent from School are themselves responsible for catching up on missed work. They are responsible for finding out the nature of missed work first from classmates, then from teachers.
2. Where pupils are absent on the day when homework is due in, they should hand work in at the earliest opportunity on return to School – via the Year Tutor if the subject teacher is not in School that day. Arrangements for homework missed through absence, i.e., the pupil is absent on the day homework is set, should be clarified with the individual subject teachers.

### Primary School

1. Where work is missed through sickness teachers will seek to ensure that pupils catch up on work missed by enabling them to complete it in their dinner hour or by giving it to them to take home on their return to school.
2. Where work is missed through holidays parents can choose whether to take the work with them for the pupil to complete on holiday or to complete it on the pupil's return to school.

## Regulations and Codes

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- **DFE regulations**

*“Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.”*

- **The Legal Absence Codes**

## **Authorised Absence from School**

‘Authorised absence’ means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes beyond illness or exclusion are as follows:

### **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil’s attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

### **Code F: Extended family holiday authorised by the school**

The principal may in exceptional circumstances agree more than 10 school days leave of absence in a school year. The application must be made in advance and the principal must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the principal’s discretion and is not a parental right.

### **Code H: Family holiday authorised by the school**

Currently principal’s may in special circumstances grant leave of absence of up to ten days for the purpose of family holidays during term time. The application must be made in advance and the principal must be satisfied that there are special circumstances which warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the principal’s discretion and is not a parental right.

### **Code N no reason yet given and O: unauthorised absence**

In the event of prolonged or regular absence under these codes, the following action will be taken:

1. Contact parents to ascertain the reason
2. Arrange a meeting with Head, Tutor, Parents and Child to discuss
3. Draw up a contract between the school, parents and child
4. In the event that the contract is broken, apply for a EHA with the local hub
5. In the event that the unauthorised absence continues contact the LEA attendance officer
6. Arrange for a multi-agency meeting with LCSS, Local Hub, School, parents and pupil

## **Parents Withdrawing Children from School during Term Time.**

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The school strongly prefers parents not to take their children out of school during term time, unless there are unavoidable reasons for doing so. This is because:

1. Pupils will be missing valuable educational time.
2. It easily becomes perceived as unfair by those families who do not take advantage of reduced holiday rates during term time. It therefore becomes a divisive issue.
3. Classes are disrupted by regularly having children away from school.
4. Since our term lengths are shorter than state terms, there remains the opportunity to take advantage of favourable rates at the beginning and end of some holiday periods.

We would therefore ask parents to avoid taking their children out of school if at all possible. We would, in any case, ask parents to, first of all, prayerfully consider whether withdrawal from school is really necessary. If, after such consideration, it is felt right to withdraw the pupil, it becomes the parents' responsibility to ensure that any work missed at school is made up. Teachers are not expected by the school to prepare extra work as a result of such an absence. We ask parents to write to the school stating their intention to withdraw their child for a particular period, giving as much notice as possible.

Our prime concerns are the educational welfare of the pupils and the unity of all those involved in the life of the school: pupils, parents and staff alike.



**Absence from School For Exceptional Circumstances Request Form**

Name of child: ..... Date of request: .....

I **request** permission for my child/children to be absent from school between:

First Day of absence ..... Date of Return ..... Total of absent school days .....

Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from The King’s School in term time and include any supporting information to support this being an exceptional circumstance. The Principal or Headteacher will not be able to grant an authorised absence without agreeing that there are exceptional circumstances. (Headteachers cannot authorise school (or other educational establishment) absence purely for the reason of a cheaper family holiday)

Signature:..... Date:.....

Full name:.....

**For school use only**

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child’s absences will be recorded as follows:-

Number of Authorised Days: .....

Number of Unauthorised Days: .....

We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.

Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting this request to your child’s school. Original signed and completed forms to be retained with pupil’s records. Copy should be returned to the parent/carer of the pupil to confirm authorised or unauthorised absence prior to the intended absence period.Any

unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.