



Attendance Policy (Students)

Audience: Parents/Staff/Governors

Status: Statutory

Date of First Issue: September 2009
and Governor Approval

Frequency of Review: Annually

- New Policy Issued November 2017

Post Holder responsible for Review: Mr C. Bury, Assistant Headteacher

Link with Governance: Managing & Organising

Recommended associated documents:

- Appendix, School Procedures

Date of Last Review	21/11/17
Date of Next Review	Nov 2018

Kingsmead School

Attendance Policy (Students)

1. Legal Framework:

The following legislation enforces expectations on how schools should deal with attendance and punctuality;

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013;
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of the School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments; and The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- Staffordshire Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices September 2017.
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

2. Contextual Information:

Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. We promote attendance through a personalised and differentiated curriculum and stimulating learning resources, in order that students can value their time and make progress whilst at Kingsmead.

3. Aims and Objectives:

- To ensure that students attend school unless prevented by illness
- To reduce absence from lessons
- To improve punctuality to lessons
- To ensure that staff, parents and students are aware of their responsibilities with regard to attendance.
- To ensure a consistently and fair approach to managing and supporting attendance to school.

4. Key Principles:

- Students should attend school every day, except when there is illness or other abnormal circumstances;
- Attendance at school should be enjoyable;
- Students should feel that they are achieving, they are safe and they are supported;
- Good attendance will be rewarded;
- Students will be made aware of their own attendance percentage;
- Students will be taught about what good attendance is and why it is important through tutor time and assemblies;
- The electronic registration program follows a code system appropriate to social inclusion legislation;
- Being late is unacceptable except in genuine, unavoidable circumstances;
- Where appropriate, suitable adjustments are made to ensure students can attend school;
- The school will provide parents with regular updates with their child's attendance and punctuality via text message, phone calls, letters and the school report;
- Staff and parents should encourage and support students to attend school.

5. Admissions Register

School keeps an admission register which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details. Kingsmead can only remove a child's name from this register where they have:

- been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, for example home education;
- moved to a new school;
- ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- a medical condition certified by a medical professional that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not have reasonable belief they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- been permanently excluded. Kingsmead will notify the Local Authority in advance of any exclusion.

6. The importance of good attendance

Statistics show that good attendance leads to good attainment. Students with attendance below 90% are likely to underachieve against their target levels/grades by the end of each year. National statistics suggest that students who have low attendance are less likely to be successful when they leave Kingsmead, based on the number of qualifications they achieve.

7. Attendance Targets

Each year Kingsmead will set challenging targets to continually improve attendance, these will be shared with staff, governors, students and parents. For the academic year 2016/17 the school has set the following targets;

- Whole School Attendance Target (above): 96%
- Persistent Absentee Target (below): 8%

These targets will be tracked and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors.

8. Persistent Absence

From September 2015, the Department for Education has changed the threshold for categorising Persistent Absences, reducing it from fifteen percent to ten percent absence of any kind. Any student who has attendance below 90% is categorised as a persistent absentee. Kingsmead has an obligation to intervene when a student's attendance falls below this threshold. This may include a referral to the Local Authority to peruse a Fixed Penalty Notice after work has been done to support parents/carers to enable their child to attend. Parents/Carers will be alerted when attendance falls below 96% so we can work together to ensure good attendance.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

- Have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends and stays at the school, and that he/she arrives on time and should not make excuses for poor punctuality;
- Should ensure that their child is appropriately dressed and brings the relevant equipment;
- Should inform the school on the first day of absence, by email, telephone, text or in person stating the reason for absence and the expected duration of the absence. If the absence continues beyond the first day, the parent should make contact with either the Attendance Officer or the Attendance Intervention Manager via telephone or in person.
- Where a student has been identified as having low attendance or will become a persistent absentee due to the absence, parents will be asked to provide medical evidence to support a continued absence from school (see Attendance Appendix).

Kingsmead School

- Will encourage good attendance and recognise it through attendance awards;
- Will work with parents to address any problems which may lead to absence;
- Will monitor attendance via the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance;
- Will carry out a safe and well check on the student in cases where an issue has been identified with an absence.

The LA

- Will ensure that parents fulfil their legal duty. Educational Welfare Workers are employed by the Authority to carry out their statutory duties (which may include the initiation of court action where the absence rate is unacceptable) and to work with parents and schools to resolve difficulties.

10. Contact Details

In the first instance, parents should contact the Attendance Office on;

- Attendance Officer 01543 227323
- Attendance Intervention Manager 01543 227324.

If parents require further assistance please contact the Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for attendance.

11. Fixed Penalty Notices

With effect from Monday 1st January 2018, Staffordshire County Council has amended their criteria for issuing fixed penalty notice to parents and carers. A fixed penalty notice can only be issued in the case of unauthorised absence or if a child is present in a public place during school hours whilst in the first five days of exclusion.

A fixed penalty notice can now be issued in any of the following circumstances:

- If a student has 20 sessions of unauthorised persistent absence, excluding unauthorised holiday holidays (absences do not have to be consecutive);
- For unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) that is not authorised by the school;
- If a student has been persistently late (late marks do not have to be consecutive)
- 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival in a 12 week period.

There will be no limit on the times a penalty notice will be used for ULA in an academic year.

If a parent or carer is issued with a fixed penalty warning notice or a formal fixed penalty notice for persistent absences or lateness, this will be restricted to one notice or warning in an academic year.

We have also published the Staffordshire County Council Code of Conduct on our website for further details regarding fixed penalty notices.

Kingsmead school will now issue a fixed penalty notice to any parent/carer that takes their child out of school for any length of time if the absence is an unauthorised request. Equally if a parent/carer is not truthful about a child's absence, they could face prosecution.

12. Leave of absence requests

In some exceptional circumstances leave of absence requests will be authorised by the Assistant Head teacher on behalf of the Head of School. These absences will not be referred for a fixed penalty notice. If this is the case, the leave of absence will be coded accordingly (depending on the nature of the absence). Examples of absences that could be authorised are;

- A funeral of a direct family member
- A wedding of a direct family member
- Time off for students whose parents are service personnel
- One off special event for example an award ceremony for the student
- Participation in a sporting activity/representation of the school
- Time off for religious observance

All leave of absence requests will be considered on an individual basis. The school will aim to be fair and consistent for all students. The amount of time authorised will be at the Assistant Head teacher's discretion. For example one day's leave of absence may be authorised, for the wedding (in the UK) of a close relative. To enable the school to make a decision we ask that parents/carers provide as much information as possible when they submit the leave of absence request. In some instances the school may ask for further information.

13. Appendix

- Late to Lesson Procedure
- Planned Absence
- Leave of Absence
- Request for Medical Evidence
- Staffordshire County Council – Code of Conduct January 2015 v6
- Attendance Letter 1
- Attendance Letter 2
- Late Letter

