

## **Attendance Policy**

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School	King Edward's School
School policy owner	Deputy Head Pastoral
GB approval date	

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# 1. Introduction

This policy is statutory (from 19 August 2024; Working together to improve school attendance), and is to enable Foundation Schools and the Academy trust to promote high levels of school attendance.

This policy should be read alongside school policies and documentation on:

- Children missing education
- Supporting children with medical conditions in school
- education for children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Suspensions and exclusions
- Alternative provision
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e., lives with and looks after the child).

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, the school takes into account the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be fairly and consistently applied but in doing we always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In development and implementation of the policy, we recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and considerations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We seek to work in partnership with pupils, parents to remove barriers to attendance.

The Equality Act 2010 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of the protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

In the implementation of this policy, the school is mindful of conscious and unconscious bias. This means in dealing with attendance the school will:

- Take time to consider decisions; listening to and considering issues that are raised.
- Justify and record decisions, including the reasoning.
- Ensure all pupils, parents and interested parties know what is expected of them.
- Ensure clear guidance on reporting prejudice-related concerns.
- Promote positive behaviours.
- Encourage engagement from a wide range of pupils, parents and interested parties.

## 2. School statement of intent

*At King Edward's, we recognise that attendance at school is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience; including their attainment, wellbeing, and life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for safeguarding and educational needs to be identified and support provided.*

*The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance.*

*We are committed to providing the highest quality of education and safeguarding; looking to parents to support these objectives. King Edward's has high expectations for every pupil's attendance and offers support to those who find attendance challenging. Securing good attendance must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff.*

*We appreciate the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.*

*The school is committed to working in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.*

### 3. Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

**Expect:** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

**Monitor:** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

**Listen and understand:** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

**Facilitate support:** Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

**Formalise support:** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

**Enforce:** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

## 4. Statutory information

Senior Attendance Champion Name	Dr Daniel Kennedy
Senior Attendance Champion Position	Deputy Head Pastoral
Senior Attendance Champion Contact Details	0121 472 1672
School start time (AM register opens)	8:45am
Morning (AM) register close time*	9:10am
Afternoon (PM) register open time	1:55pm
Afternoon (PM) register close time*	2:05pm***
Contact details for on-the-day explanation of unexpected absence**	0121 472 1672 <a href="mailto:kesabsence@keschools.org.uk">kesabsence@keschools.org.uk</a>
Contact details for routine absence information (e.g. Form Tutor)	<a href="mailto:kesabsence@keschools.org.uk">kesabsence@keschools.org.uk</a>
Contact details for requesting leave of absence	<a href="mailto:kesabsence@keschools.org.uk">kesabsence@keschools.org.uk</a>
Contact details for further and on-going support on attendance issues (e.g. Head of Year/ Attendance Officer/ Family Liaison Officer)	Attendance Officer <a href="mailto:kesabsence@keschools.org.uk">kesabsence@keschools.org.uk</a> 0121 472 1672
Electronic Management Information System used for admission and attendance registers	SIMS/SIMS Next Gen/ID

\*\*when a pupil is unexpectedly ill, the school does not routinely require medical evidence; when the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness, we may request additional supporting evidence.

\*\*\*King Edward's has a shorter PM registration session to coincide with Form Tutor time. A second register is taken in period 6 to triangulate data (n.b. except on a Games afternoon and a Friday, when follow up work is undertaken by the Attendance Officer to ensure register completion).

## 5. The role of the School Attendance Champion

The School Attendance Champion is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies as appropriate. They are responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for attendance;
- Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence;
- Maintaining a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school;
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress on attendance, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- Ensuring all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance;
- Appropriately resourcing for attendance support.

## 6. School admission register

The admission register (school roll) contains personal details of every pupil (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in the school along with their starting date, information regarding parents, and details of the school last attended.

Parents are encouraged to notify school of changes to information whenever they occur, so the school can update the admission register.

A pupil's name can only be lawfully deleted from the admission register in line with regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school will notify the Local Authority when a pupil is deleted from the admission register, except when it is at the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the school's most senior class. The school will inform the Local Authority of the pupil's admission register details as well as the name of the new school and the reason set out in regulation under which the pupil's name has been deleted.

The school admission register records:

- Full name;
- Name the pupil uses in school;
- Sex;
- Address;
- Full name and address of each of the pupil's parents;
- Which of the pupil's parents, if any, the pupil normally lives with;
- At least one emergency contact telephone number (two are recommended);
- Day, month, year of birth
- Day, month year of pupil's starting day at the school;
- Name and address of the last school attended by the pupil, if any.

Where a parent informs the school that the pupil will live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of the given address, the admission register will be updated to include:

- The address;
- The full name of each parent the pupil will normally live with;
- The date the pupil will start normally living there.

If a pupil is moved to another school, the admission register will updated to include:

- The name of the other school;
- The date when the pupil began or will begin attending the school.



## 7. School routine procedure for managing attendance and lateness

A register of all pupils is taken at the start of each morning session and once during the afternoon session of each school day. This is a record of the pupil's physical presence in school, or the reason they are not in school. The national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, are used.

The register is a legal record of attendance, and the school preserves every entry for 6 years from the date the data was entered. Amendments to the register must only be made when a reason for the absence is subsequently established. When amendments are made, the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made and the person making the amendment will all be automatically recorded within the MIS.

Attendance data is shared with the King Edward VI Foundation for local benchmarking.

**Managing lateness:** Pupils are expected to register with their Form Tutor at 8:45am and 1:55pm. Pupils who arrive late but before the end of registration period at 9:10am and 2:00pm are registered as 'L', late before the register is closed. A late pupil may alternatively sign in late at reception where they will be registered as L until the close of the register. Pupils arriving after these times must sign in at reception where they are registered as U, late after the register closed. At the end of each registration period, the Attendance Officer monitors the N codes to identify pupils missing from school.

The Attendance Officer visits the classrooms of pupils who fail to sign in correctly to ensure pupils are aware of the correct procedure. Pupils persistently failing to arrive at school on time or to sign in correctly are referred to the Deputy Head Pastoral to be sanctioned.

**Communicating to parents the expectation that they will contact the school when their child is absent:** the Deputy Head Pastoral writes to all parents at the start of the academic year to reiterate expectations regarding communicating attendance information and to remind parents of the importance of good attendance.

**Contacting parents on the first day of unexpected absence and how continued unexplained absence will be followed up to ensure safeguarding:** the school attendance officer or reception will contact parents by text message/SchoolComms of pupils recorded with an N code after the AM session. Where an N code is recorded in the afternoon after a pupil has been present in the AM session, and a pupil cannot be found, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will decide when to instigate the Missing Pupil Policy.

**Updating registers to ensure correct coding. Unexplained absences must be updated no later than 5 working days after the session:** the school Attendance Officer or a senior member of staff will make amendments to the register to ensure accuracy of coding. Codes will be monitored at least weekly to ensure N codes are suitably amended. SIMS automatically records code changes.

**Regularly informing parents, in an understandable way, of attendance and absence levels of their child:** attendance information is included as part of a pupil's school report.

**Regularly meeting the parents of pupils considered vulnerable or persistently or severely absent:** when a pupil is at risk of persistent absence (attendance approaches below 90%), the Attendance Officer will alert the Deputy Head Pastoral who will devise a suitable schedule of intervention with the pupil and their parents.

**Timely identification of pupils in need of further support:** the Attendance Officer provides a regular summary of pupils at risk of persistent absence to the Pastoral Deputy Head, who works with Heads of School and Year to ensure appropriate support is offered and documented.

**Supporting pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable absence:** after a lengthy absence the Attendance Officer will alert the Deputy Head Pastoral of the need for

documented intervention by a member of the pastoral team (Form Tutor, Head of Year or Head of School).

**Any monitoring of lesson attendance that is undertaken (non-statutory) including monitoring of pupils on site but not attending lessons:** a register is taken in each academic lesson to enable identification of concerning attendance throughout the day and to triangulate information on pupils arriving to school late.

## 8. Leave of absence

The school may, at the head teacher's discretion, grant a period of leave of absence. The circumstances for granting a leave of absence are given in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad; this should be in line with a licence obtained from a Justice of the Peace or a body of persons of approval (BOPA);
- Attending an interview: for entry to another educational institution or employment
- Study leave for public exams: as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with;
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: for exceptional reasons and having agreed the times and dates the pupil will be expected to attend school;
- Other exceptional circumstances: the school will consider an application, made in advance, for a leave of absence made by a parent the pupil normally lives with. Generally, term-time holidays or other absence for leisure or recreation are not considered an exceptional circumstance. Pupils are not permitted to take a leave of absence to take part in protest activity during school hours;
- Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively. If a parent has not applied in advance, leave of absence cannot be granted.

The school may also allow pupils to be absent from the school site to take part in approved educational activities off site. These must be agreed with school in advance.

No leave of absence can be agreed unless communicated with school in a timely manner.

## 9. Promotion of good attendance

Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. The school treats pupils and parents with dignity and uses a positive approach to attendance; recognising that this helps to challenge parents' misconceptions about what good attendance looks like.

**Listening to and understanding pupils' and parents' concerns about potential barriers to attendance:** The school will use opportunities such as school council's and prefects' forums to hear the voice of pupils in understanding barriers to attendance. Parent forums are available for parents to raise concerns and comments about attendance.

**Working with partners to mitigate the impact of barriers beyond the school's control:** When specific contextual matters are identified the school will work with relevant parties to mitigate the impact of barriers. For example, before Eid, the school will work with the Islamic Society to ensure good communication of likely absence.

**Escalation of support for pupils at risk of becoming severely or persistently absent;**

**Accessing Early Help when appropriate:** when pupils are identified as being persistently or severely absent, the Deputy Head Pastoral will be alerted by the attendance office, for escalation to include Early Help. As necessary the DSL or a deputy will go through the three houses with pupils at risk of severe or persistent absence.

**Championing and modelling good attendance:** Good attendance will be recorded and celebrated, for example in in school reports, during form time and assemblies.

**Communicating the importance of good attendance to all pupils, parents and staff:** assemblies will periodically include information on the benefits of good attendance and the Deputy Head Pastoral writes to all parents at the start of each academic year to reiterate the importance of good attendance.

**Escalating safeguarding concerns that may be flagged by poor attendance, these include, but are not limited to: neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation:** when pupils at risk of persistent absence are identified, pastoral leaders consider other risk factors that may be present that may indicate poor attendance may be symptomatic of a safeguarding concern. These will be escalated to the DSL using the school's safeguarding policy.

## 10. Using data to improve attendance & punctuality

The school recognises that poor attendance is habitual, and therefore early identification, intervention and prevention are crucial. The school regularly analyses data to both identify and provide immediate support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it.

**Monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns to deliver intervention:** the school Attendance Officer regularly monitors attendance data at the individual, year and whole-school level to identify patterns of absence, including groups identified as of need (e.g. by ethnicity, vulnerable pupils, etc) and make recommendations to the Deputy Head Pastoral for areas of intervention.

**The provision of regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate early discussion of attendance:** Form Tutors are provided with copies of their pupils' reports for checking at regular intervals through the year; these reports include attendance data.

**Identifying individual pupils at risk of severe or persistent absence:** Attendance data is monitored by the Attendance Officer and Deputy Head Pastoral to identify pupils approaching 90% attendance.

**Analysing and evaluating data half-termly, termly and yearly to identify patterns and trends among pupils and cohorts:** data is provided to the Senior Leadership Team half termly to assess attendance data at the whole-school level that can then be cascaded to Heads of School and Heads of Year.

**Benchmarking attendance data against local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus:** Data is routinely shared with the King Edward VI Foundation to allow for inclusion in benchmarking exercises.

**Monitoring the impact of interventions and strategies:** where intervention on attendance is deemed appropriate, the impact is monitored by the Head of Year or Head of School, with escalation to the Deputy Head Pastoral if attendance fails to improve.

**Providing data and reports to the Governing Body to support the work of the school:** strategic-level attendance data is provided to governors to inform decision making and resourcing.

**Identifying pupil cohorts for monitoring:** the Deputy Head Pastoral monitors attendance data for patterns that are discussed as part of Senior Leadership Team and Pastoral team meetings, for example, with Heads of Year, Form Tutors and Heads of Section.

## 11. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence: a pupil is absent from school for 10% or more of their possible sessions.

Severe absence: a pupil is absent from school for 50% or more of their possible sessions.

Details of the school's procedures for:

- **Identifying pupils at risk of becoming persistently or severely absent:** regular reviews of pupil-, cohort-, year group- and school-level data is undertaken by the Attendance Officer and reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral for cascading to Heads of Year and Section.
- **Identifying the barriers to attendance faced by pupils identified as persistently or severely absent:** Where a pupils is identified as persistently or severely absent the Deputy Head Pastoral in conjunction with Heads of Year and Section will work with parents and pupils to understand the barriers to improving their attendance, giving particular regard to matters that may indicate safeguarding concerns for the pupil.
- **Supporting individual pupils and pupil cohorts identified as persistently or severely absent to enable them to re-engage with school:** where barriers to

attendance are identified the Deputy Head Pastoral and those delegated by the Deputy Head Pastoral will work closely with pupils and families to support children back to school.

- **Working with external agencies to support pupils identified as severely absent:** where a pupil is severely absent or at risk of becoming severely absent, external advice will be sought from relevant local and national agencies.
- **Recording decisions and their reasoning for decisions made around pupils identified as persistently or severely absent:** the school uses CPOMS to record decisions and reasoning made around attendance. This is overseen and monitored by the Deputy Head Pastoral.

## 12. Role of the Foundation (Academy Trust)

The school is a member of the King Edward VI Foundation Birmingham, this enables the school to access data and best practice from across the Foundation. The Foundation also supports schools to promote excellent attendance by:

- Ensuring the school prioritises the importance of school attendance through the school's ethos and policies;
- Reviewing and comparing attendance data to discuss and challenge trends;
- Ensuring the school's leadership team fulfil the expectations and statutory duties;
- Supporting staff through training opportunities;
- Sharing good practice across the Foundation;
- Where appropriate, working with schools to develop a comprehensive attendance action plan.

### 13. The attendance register

The school keeps electronically an attendance register of all pupils on the school admission register (the school roll) in accordance with School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) 2024. The attendance register is taken at the beginning of the morning session and once during each afternoon session.

School morning session times	8:45 – 9:10am
School afternoon session times	1:55 – 2:05pm

\*the afternoon session usually begins after a lunch break.

To aid data collection, monitor attendance and absence, and facilitate the sharing of data the school uses national attendance and absence codes.

Code	Meaning
/\	Pupil is physically present in school at the time of registration
L	Late (before the register closed)
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in an approved sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered (attending another school)
C1	Leave of absence for regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
M	Medical or dental appointment
J1	Attending an interview for employment or other educational institution
S	Study Leave for public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence granted for exceptional circumstance
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not a medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded (no alternative provision made)
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to normal transport not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed
Y5	Unable to attend as in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend due to other unavoidable cause affecting the pupil
G	Unauthorised holiday
N*	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in unknown circumstances
U	Late after the register closed
Z	Pupil not on the admission register
#	Planned school closure

\*an N code must be updated as soon as the reason is ascertained but no more than 5 school days after the absence is recorded; after 5 school days, the code is amended to O.