



Kingdown School

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

MARCH 2018

Appendix 1 - KINGDOWN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

Adopted by Governing Body – March 2018
Last amended - March 2018
For review - every three years - March 2021 Review target annually

Rationale

All children have a right to education. It is therefore one of the fundamental aims of Kingdown School that all students should attend regularly, to ensure they gain the maximum benefit of their time in school. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government expects:

- The School and the local authority to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
 - Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All students to be punctual to their lessons.

DfE school attendance 2016

Kingdown school attendance target = greater than 96.0%

Purpose

Regular attendance and punctuality at school is important for the well-being and future prospects of children. This policy is based on an understanding that full attendance underpins any learning and that high achievement is linked closely to good attendance. Kingdown School aims to work in partnership with parents and guardians to provide an education that students want to attend because:

- The school offers a safe, caring and supportive learning environment;
- The curriculum is far reaching and personalised to the ability of each student to help them achieve their full potential;
- Outstanding teaching and learning make school enjoyable and rewarding.

The school works hard to keep the amount of unauthorised absence to a minimum through the procedures outlined below.

Procedures

Registration:

This is a LEGAL DOCUMENT from which statistics are compiled and retrospect changes to the register can only be made by the attendance officer when evidence is produced. Lesson Monitor is used and registers are completed every lesson, with lessons 1 and 5 being statutory registration periods. This means:

- Truancy can be detected and reported at the earliest opportunity, thus discouraging students from truanting individual subject lessons;
- Patterns of absence can be investigated to halt further problems from arising;

- Lateness to lessons can be monitored easily as staff record 'minutes late' and reasons for lateness.

All staff are issued with clear guidelines as to the completion of the register document so that there is uniformity across the school.

IDENTIFYING PATTERNS AND CAUSES OF ABSENCE:

Data from lesson monitor is regularly used to:

- Identify individuals with poor attendance
- Identify groups (year groups, house groups, special interest groups) with poor attendance
- Look for patterns in terms of days or lessons
- Monitor patterns of lateness for individuals
- Set whole school and House attendance target percentages
- Monitor reasons for absence

DAILY MONITORING:

Morning registration closes at 9am; afternoon registration closes at 2:20pm.

The school Attendance Officer will then contact parents of those students who are absent to ascertain a reason for absence. This can be done by phone call, text message or email (In Touch).

Where no reason is given for absence (N), it will be the Tutor's responsibility to ascertain the reason from the child or parent at the earliest opportunity. Lists of N codes will go to tutors weekly for explanations to be sought.

Where patterns of absence are identified through daily monitoring, tutors should inform the Head of House at the earliest opportunity.

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. Where a child's attendance figure falls below 90% their attendance is continually monitored and appropriate action is taken. If after relevant support and intervention the student's percentage attendance has still not improved, the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Where a child has 10 Unauthorised absences in a 6 week period or 2 full weeks absence for no genuine reason, the school will refer the case to the Education Welfare Service.

NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL OF ABSENCE/LATENESS:

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a valid reason such as illness, religious observance, family bereavement or unavoidable cause. Only the school can authorise absence, not the parent.

ILLNESS

Parents are encouraged to inform the school at the earliest opportunity of their son/daughter's absence by calling the school on 01985 215551, OR by emailing the attendance officer at ael@kingdown.wilts.sch.uk. These contact details appear on the school website and in the organiser. If any other members of staff are informed of absence by a parent, they must let the attendance officer know as soon as possible.

If illness is prolonged, parents are asked to keep the tutor or attendance officer informed of progress regularly.

Whilst the school recognises that students will get ill, a prolonged period of absence, or regular bouts of illness still contribute to a poor attendance figure. Therefore, patterns of illness will also be monitored through the School Attendance Procedure and will be highlighted to parents:

- Students who are off school for more than 5 days due to illness will be required to provide a doctor's note.
- Parents who become aware that their child is reluctant to attend school by saying that they are ill should contact the tutor or the Head of House at the soonest opportunity in order to get to the root cause of the issue.

LATENESS

Parents are encouraged to inform the school at the earliest opportunity if their son/daughter will be late by calling the school on 01985 215551, OR by emailing the attendance officer at ael@kingdown.wilts.sch.uk. These contact details appear on the school website and in the organiser. If any other members of staff are informed of absence by a parent, they must let the attendance officer know as soon as possible.

School starts for the morning session at 8.30am, and for the afternoon session at 1:50pm. Registration closes at 9am for the morning session, and at 2:20pm for the afternoon session.

Students are regarded as late if they arrive after registration closes at 9am (or in the afternoon after 2.20pm); a U code will be recorded on the register. If a student arrives late but before registration closes, an L code will be recorded. The number of minutes late, and the reason for lateness, will be recorded on the register. Lateness data will be given to Heads of House who will see students or contact parents as the need arises. Head of House detentions will also be given once the student exceeds a total lateness of 30 minutes or more.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Parents are encouraged to keep planned authorised absence to a minimum. Where possible, parents are encouraged to arrange appointments for medical or other reasons outside of school hours. Parents are requested to write a note in the student's organiser or write a letter to the tutor that must be signed by the appropriate member of staff, who will then report the planned absence to the attendance officer. Students will then have to show this signed note to the front office staff before they will be allowed to sign out. If students come back into school after an authorised absence, they should sign in at reception. Authorised absence will be allowed as long as the school is satisfied that the request is genuine.

MEDICAL OR DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as authorised absence. However, parents / carers should make appointments out of school hours wherever possible. The DfE guidance document for school attendance states that when this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Consequently, we will only authorise absence for an AM or PM registration session (other than exceptional circumstances) unless we have been provided with appropriate medical evidence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES are those which the staff at school do not consider reasonable or for which no 'permission' has been given. These are an offence by the parents or student and include:

- Keeping children off school without a good reason;
- Truancy from a whole session;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark;
- Taking unauthorised holidays.

HOME STUDY:

Under exceptional circumstances as agreed with the school's attendance officer, there may be an occasion where the student is medically able to continue with their studies but physically unable to come to school. In these instances, students can access the VLE from the school website or email individual staff for tasks to be set. Subject work can be sent home if the student does not have access to a computer.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Parents must apply for the Headteacher's permission using the appropriate form available from the PA to the Headteacher, Miss Krzyzosiak at rak@kingdown.wilts.sch.uk. The application must be made in advance of the holiday by the parent with whom the student normally lives with. The Headteacher will inform the parent in writing as to the decision made regarding the absence.

Authorisation is only given in exceptional circumstances.

Where unauthorised holiday absence amounts to 10 sessions (5 school days, continuous or aggregated) or more within the previous 6 months of the current academic year, the Education Welfare Service will be notified by the Attendance Manager and the Local Authority will issue a penalty Notice* to each parent for each child.

*The Penalty Notice shall be a sum of £120 if paid within 28 days. This shall be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

PROCEDURES FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL:

Where a child has a prolonged illness, regular contact will be maintained with parents and work sent home where appropriate. Students can also make use of the VLE.

Individual arrangements will be made for students to access a gradual return to school where appropriate. These will be made between the Head of House and the parents and student. A Medical PEP may be needed to ensure that all agencies are involved in the reintegration; a member of the school's SLT will usually be present for these meetings.

Tutors will have regular meetings with the child to support them on their return to school.

On return, subject teachers will be informed of the individual needs of the students and will be requested to advise and support the child on how best to catch up without making the reintegration too stressful.

Communication with parents will be key at this time.

REMOVAL FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL:

Students will be removed from the School roll when:

- Parents make a written request to the school;
- Confirmation has been received that they are attending another school;
- They have left at the end of year 11;
- They have been continually absent from school for a period of not less than 10 days and both the school and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the student;
- They are from the Traveller Community and have been continually absent from school for a period of not less than 4 weeks;
- They have been continually absent from school for a period of not less than 4 weeks and are detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by the Secretary of State.

