



**THE KING'S
CE SCHOOL**

Pupil Attendance Policy

Empathy, Respect, Forgiveness and Responsibility

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| Committee Responsible: | Curriculum Committee |
| Approved Date: | 10 th November 2022 |
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Mission Statement

At The King's CE School

we believe that everyone is unique and created in God's image.

We enable all to achieve their God-given potential;

to grow, learn and aspire;

to transform their lives and the lives of others

and to journey in faith without limits

within a unified, respectful and harmonious community.

'Aspire, Believe and Achieve Together'

Aspire to be the best that we can be... Believe that anything is possible... Achieve beyond what we ever imagined...

- ◆ Learn and worship in the name of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and value, respect and celebrate all faiths and cultures.
- ◆ Believe in themselves and become successful adult – developing their vision, faith, ambition and aspirations.
- ◆ Develop a resilience and inner strength to overcome life challenges.
- ◆ Embrace life-enriching experiences and make well-informed lifestyle choices that promote health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Develop thinking skills and transferrable skills, working in partnership to become life-long learners.

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Principles

Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting pupils absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action by the Local Authority.

Children are sometimes ill or unhappy about attending school. Families can be going through unsettled times that make regular school attendance difficult. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties, are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child at an early stage. It is never better to cover up children's absences or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that school attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be recorded by staff at the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED** *. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

*(*An 'X' mark will be recorded if a pupil is unable to attend due to isolating or quarantining because of COVID-19 restrictions. The attendance will be authorised but the absence will be recorded on whole school attendance data. The pupil will be expected to complete work at home that will be set by their subject teachers on Class Charts)*

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the staff at school do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. These are an offence by the parent/carer and include:

- ☐ keeping children off school without a good reason
 - ☐ truancy before the register has been marked
 - ☐ absences which have never been properly explained
 - ☐ children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
 - ☐ taking holidays during term time that have not been approved by the school in advance
- Parents are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may offer parents a formal Parenting Contract or refer the child to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer).

The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement wherever possible but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use legal proceedings if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Alternatively, parents or pupils may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office.

Procedures

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. These are called “persistent absentees” by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- All pupils must arrive in school by 9:15 am. They will be directed to their social area and line up in form groups ready to be collected by their form tutor.
- If a pupil arrives between 9:15 am to 9:30 am they must report to the Attendance Officer who will sign them in and record a late mark. If a pupil receives 2 or more late marks in a week they will be required to attend an after school detention.
- If a pupil arrives after 9:30 am they must sign in at main reception before going to lessons
- A ‘first day’ text message will be sent if the child fails to attend the morning session and no phone call has been received from parents/carers notifying the school of the absence
- If no response is received by the afternoon then the attendance officer will call to enquire of the absence.
- If a pupil is going to be absent, parents must phone the school before 9:00 am stating clearly the pupil's name, year group, house and form with the reason why they are going to be absent.
- On return to school after an absence – a note needs to be brought in and shown to the Attendance Officer. If a pupil has had a medical appointment, evidence of this must be brought in to school.
- When a pupil has to attend a medical appointment in school time (we discourage this and request parents try to make them after school) the appointment confirmation must be signed by the Head of Year (HoY) before they will be allowed to leave school
- If a pupil requests a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances a letter from home must be brought in and given to the Vice Principal.
- When parents fail to send pupils to school, a continued absence or continued lateness letter will be sent home in the first instance. If this fails to have effect, appointments will be made with the Attendance Officer and/or EWO.

Penalty Notice

Should attendance fall below 90% the school will involve the EWO, when information will be gathered with the result of possible court action and a fine imposed. (*This will be from the second half of the Autumn term).

The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, minding the house, birthdays, day trips etc. Leave may be granted on compassionate grounds in an emergency (e.g. after the death of close relative).

Taking leave without permission is “unauthorised” absence and can be subject to a Penalty Notice fine or other legal proceedings by the Local Authority.

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, staff should be informed in advance if at all possible. A “present” mark may still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is advised that the pupil attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day.

School targets

All pupils to achieve a minimum of **96 %**

The staff responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Vice Principal (Personal Development and Well Being)_ - Mr Sutton

Attendance Officer – Mrs Barratt

Safeguarding Manager – Miss Bird

EWO – Donna Cox

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. School staff are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix 1

A MODEL POLICY ON TERM-TIME LEAVE

Dear Parents

As you know your children should be in school every day. Absence is disruptive for them and for the school. But we recognise that some absences, like illness, may be reasonable and unavoidable and leave can be authorised in certain circumstances. If you wish to request leave for some reason other than your child's illness, you **MUST** discuss it with the school **BEFORE** you take the leave.

The Principal has the power to grant leave in 'exceptional' circumstances only. These might include:

- Sudden unexpected incidents, such as when a family member dies or is very ill, or on other compassionate grounds;
- Special 'one-off' family events such as weddings, funerals and other occasional celebrations, (but **NOT** just because it is the child's birthday);
- Family holidays which have to be taken at certain times because of parents' work shifts and rotas or because their job requires them to work when the school is closed, (e.g. farming, the tourism industry or the emergency services);
- Opportunities to travel overseas for special events which cannot be held in school holidays;
- When your child has an extremely good record of attendance and there has been no other leave taken in the previous two years.

These are only examples. If you think the reason you need leave is 'exceptional', you **MUST** discuss it with the Principal (or other nominated member of staff) in person beforehand. Do not assume that because permission was given for someone else, you will be given permission as well. Every request will be treated on its merits and the full circumstances will not always be made public.

The school can impose reasonable sanctions for unauthorised absences including extra work to catch up or the loss of attendance awards for your child. **In the most serious cases, unauthorised absence can be classed as an offence by the parents and you could be subject to a Penalty fine by the Local Authority.** If you choose not to pay the fine, you may face prosecution if the absence meets the criteria set out in the LA's Code of Conduct. (You can ask to see a copy if you wish).

If you think the Principal's decision not to authorise the absence is unreasonable, you have the right to make representations to the Chair of Governors, but the final decision over any action to be taken lies with the Principal and the LA.