

# STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Signed:	Signed:
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Date:	

## Attendance Policy

### Principles

It is the legal responsibility for the parents of all registered students to secure regular attendance of their children, under Section 39 of the Education Act 1944.

It is the legal responsibility of the school to register attendance & to help secure regular attendance of its students. "A school's rate of attendance can be regarded as a significant indicator of its effective performance" (**Education Observed – Attendance at School, DfES**).

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole college community. All students should be at college, on time, every day the college is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable, in order to maximise learning potential.

Where a student does not attend there is a detrimental impact on their learning and achievement, especially with regards to examination performance. Students with poor attendance consistently underperform in their examinations.

Any issues that arise with attendance are best resolved between the college, parents/ carers and the student. However, permitting absence from college without a good reason is an offence by the parent and could lead to a referral to the Educational Entitlement Service (EIP) and legal action.

The attendance and behaviour policy must include procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. We have a duty in law to refer any unauthorised absence of 5 days where the college has been unable to make contact with the parent/carer or there are general concerns about the absence to the Education Entitlement Service at the Local Authority. If the child is in care or there are child protection concerns we will refer after 3 days. Where there is a social worker involved we will let the social worker know on the first day.

The college is required to take an attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions each day to show whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory college age is absent, every half-day absence from college has to be classified by the college, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only college can authorise the absence, not parents/ carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required by telephone to account for each day of absence and confirmed in writing on the student's return. The college will use Lesson Monitor to electronically monitor attendance in lessons.

*Authorised absences* are mornings or afternoons away from college for a good reason such as an illness or other unavoidable cause.

- It is not appropriate for the college to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical treatment. Dental and optical appointments should be made outside college time.
- The college makes the final decision on whether or not an absence is authorised.

*Unauthorised absences* are those which the college does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/ carers keeping children off college unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the college day

- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at college too late to get a mark
- leave of absence for holidays

Parents/ Carers whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the college at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the college or the parent may refer the child to the Education Entitlement Service. He/she will try to resolve the situation through support but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the Education Entitlement Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at college. The penalty notice will be £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

### Promoting good attendance

The importance of excellent attendance has a high profile throughout the college. The link between attendance and achievement is emphasised. Assemblies promoting excellent attendance are frequent and good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through the inter-house competition. Students with excellent attendance receive certificates and recognition through our reward assemblies. The planner has an attendance 'traffic light' so the students can evaluate their attendance. The students receive their attendance on a regular basis and students and parents/ carers can see their attendance breakdown through the parent portal.

### Impact of reduced attendance

Attendance Percentage	Number of sessions missed	Equivalent number of days missed	Equivalent number of weeks missed	Equivalent number of lessons missed
100%	0	0	0	0
96%	20	10	~ 2	49
90%	38	19	~ 4	95
85%	57	28 ½	~ 6	143
80%	76	38	~ 8	190
75%	95	47 ½	9 ½	238
70%	114	57	11 ½	285

### Procedures

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

*Absence:*

- If a student is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the college on the first day of absence and to give an indication of how long the absence is likely to be. The college absence line is available on (01604) 716106.
- Further days of absence must be reported as they occur.
- On return to college, the parent must provide a letter to confirm the reason for and the duration of the absence. Parents should contact the college when students are too ill to attend. Contact can be made by telephone using the student absence line where a message can be left. Alternatively Reception can be contacted by telephone. The college needs to be contacted on each day the student is too ill to attend. For safeguarding reasons the college is not able to assume that your child will not be present in school if they have been reported absent due to illness on a previous day.
- Absence for medical or dental appointments for students will only be authorised for either a morning or an afternoon session in school. Students will be expected to attend school for the remainder of the day.
- Absence for a full day will only be authorised by Kingsthorpe College in exceptional circumstances and applications for this must be made in writing. Evidence of the location and length of the appointment may need to be provided before a full day of absence can be authorised.
- Registers close to late arrivals at 9.30, from which point the student is absent.
- After the registers have been read, 'Truancy Call' will contact all homes where the student has not arrived at college and there has been no notification from home.
- Where attendance for a student falls below the minimum target level of 96%, a letter (Amber) will be sent home. Where attendance falls below 90% another letter (Red 1) will be sent home and will be regarded as persistent absentees.
- For students who are regarded as persistent absentees, parents/ carers will be invited to a Parent Contract Meeting to agree targets and strategies for support. Continued unauthorised non-attendance will result in a referral to the Education Entitlement Service who may decide to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- It is essential that parents provide up to date contact details and phone numbers.

*Lateness:*

- Lateness is a form of absence
- Students who are late to college must have a valid reason such as a supporting medical appointment form or equivalent.
- Students who are late with no valid reason will sign in and a consequence will be put in their planners for lesson 1. The student will then lose their break time through the Failure in Normal Expectations (FINE) detention.
- Persistent lateness leads to referral to the Achievement Director
- Students with poor attendance and punctuality will be put on a pastoral report which must be signed and stamped in addition to their planners.

*Family Holidays:*

- Family holidays are not authorised during term time. Any student who is absent from college due to a family holiday will be reported to the Education Entitlement Service who may decide to issue a fixed penalty notice. Holidays can only be authorised by the Principal in 'exceptional circumstances'.
- The immediate referral to the Education Entitlement Service for any student who takes a term-time holiday implements the revisions made to The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2013 which were implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

*Administration:*

8.30                      The bell signifies that students move to their first lesson

Student Attendance Policy

8.40	Students begin lesson 1 and their attendance is recorded in SIMs.
8.40 onwards	Lates are recorded in main reception
8.50 – 10.00	SIMs lesson monitor read for absences, Absence line searched and recorded
10.00 – 11.40	First day response calls made (identify high alert students) 'Truancy call' sent out
12.20	Students begin lesson 4 and their attendance is recorded in SIMs

*Lunchtimes:*

- All students stay on the College premises for lunchtime.

*Planners:*

- Tutors will check and sign planners on a regular basis as evidence of attendance as well as behaviour
- Parents will check and sign planners each week
- Teachers will stamp or put in a level as appropriate for each lesson
- Students will ensure that their planners are well maintained and that they have stamps for all lessons.

*College action*

- The house teams will monitor students whose absence and lateness cause concern
- The house teams will track and analyse attendance and identify patterns of absence
- Reports, FINE detentions and correspondence with home will arise from poor attendance and punctuality.
- Where there is cause for concern about child protection a referral may be made to Social Services and the Education Entitlement Service.

*Education Entitlement involvement*

- Referrals will be made to the Educational Entitlement Service after College action (Parent Contract Meeting) and in the event of continued poor attendance and punctuality.
- Parental contracts will be issued as appropriate and in accordance with the Local Authority's procedures.
- When an individual student's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the Education Entitlement Service will be made by the college. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.
  - From September 2013 the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice must be balanced
  - against the option of giving a further warning notice dependent on the level of
  - unauthorised absence which may be:
    - a. 18 sessions of unauthorised absence in the last 6 weeks
    - b. 10 consecutive days unauthorised absence
    - d. An accumulation of unauthorised absence leading to an attendance of 85% or less

**Summary**

The college has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend and are on time. College staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

All students should strive for 100% attendance but the minimum target figure for the college is currently 97%.

**This policy takes into account the changes introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 through The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2013.**

## **Appendices**

Appendix I  
Appendix II  
Appendix III  
Appendix IV  
Appendix V

Attendance Flow chart  
Amber letter  
Red 1 letter  
Red 2 letter  
Sample Parent Contract