Kennel Lane School

Valuing Achievement
Encouraging Independence

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	AHT – Support Intervention Team and Senior Leadership Team	**Date:** Spring Term 2023
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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every learner has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure learners have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure colleagues receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher and those who have delegated leadership responsibility for attendance to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors
- Supporting colleagues with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated leader responsible for attendance
The designated leader is responsible for:
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families

The designated leader responsible for attendance is a member of our Support and Intervention Team and can be contacted via attendance@kennellaneschool.com.

3.4 The attendance officer
The school attendance officer is responsible for:
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school colleagues and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
- Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/the designated leader for attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is a member of our Administration Team and can be contacted via 01344 483872 or attendance@kennellaneschool.com .

3.5 Class Teachers
Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.6 School Office
Colleagues in the school office will:
- Take calls from carers/parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from carers/parents to the attendance officer or attendance lead, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Carers/parents
Carers/parents are expected to:
- Make sure their young person attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their young person's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their young person
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their young person are made outside of the school day

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register
We will keep an attendance register and place all learners onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every learner is:
- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:
- For learners whether the absence is authorised or not (including those of non-compulsory school age)
- The nature of the activity if a learner is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a learner is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Learners must arrive in school by 8.45am for Primary and Woodlands Hub and 9.00am for Secondary on each school day.

4.2 Unplanned absence
The learner's carers and/or parents must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also Section 7).

You can contact the school office by calling 01344 483872 or emailing attendance@kennellaneschool.com.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Keeping your young person off school with a minor ailment such as a headache or cold is not acceptable.

Repeated absence will require us to request that you obtain evidence from your doctor's surgery, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Please note that the school is not asking any parent, guardian or carer to incur a charge for this information and we will not be liable for the cost.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and carers and/or parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence
Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the learner's carers and/or parents notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

You can contact the school office by calling 01344 483872 or emailing attendance@kennellaneschool.com.

However, we encourage carers and parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The learners' carers and/or parents must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to Section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality
Learners learn best when they arrive punctually at school. The school has staggered start times. Learners in Primary and the Woodlands Hub are expected to be at school by 8:45am and Secondary learners are expected to be at school by 9.00am.

Registers open at 8:45am for Primary and Woodlands Hub and close at 8:55am and registers open at 9am for Secondary learners and close at 9.10am.

A learner who arrives late:
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any learner we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the learners carers and/or parents on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the learner's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit and inform Children's Social Care and Education Welfare.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the carers and/or parents on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer

4.6 Reporting to Carers and Parents

The school will inform carers and/or parents about their young person's attendance and absence levels if their attendance falls below 90% on a ½ termly rolling basis.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a learner during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' on a case-by-case basis as this is very much determined on the needs of each of our learners. Other exceptional circumstances would include a family bereavement, attendance at a funeral or a family celebration, such as a wedding.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's cares and/or parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the carers and/or parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Travellers travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision
- There may be very rare occasions where the Headteacher grants term-time holiday, this will be due to the reason for the holiday, for example a wedding and/or the learner's needs
- Study leave
- Short term flexi-schooling requests – where there is a confirmed medical need and this is part of a full reintegration package

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or Local Authority can fine carers and/or parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each carer and/or parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, Local Authority Officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded learner is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance
We recognise good attendance by speaking to our learners and their families.
We reward 100% attendance each term with a certificate in our Department Awards & Achievement assemblies.
At the end of each academic year learners with 100% attendance are given a certificate and a small reward/prize.
Learners whose attendance may have improved can be nominated by their class teacher/tutor to receive an end of term certificate in recognition of their success.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance
The school will:
- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly and at an individual learner level
- Identify whether or not there are particular learners whose absences may be a cause for concern

Absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body.
(Pupil attendance in schools, Week 16 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk))

7.2 Analysing attendance
The school will:
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify learners that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these learners and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance
The school will:
- Provide regular attendance reports to Class Teachers, Family Support Workers, and the Extended Leadership Team, to facilitate discussions with learners and/or their families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence
Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school.
The school will:
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the carers and/or parents of learners who the school (and/or Local Authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Where appropriate and possible, provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements
This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Senior Leadership Team. After every review, the policy will be shared with the Full Governing Body.

9. Links with other policies
This policy links to the following policies:
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Regulation and Co-regulation Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day