

KING EDWARD VII SCHOOL POLICY



Attendance Policy

Document Adopted by Governing Body

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Date: March 2018

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Date of Next Review: March 2020

Leadership Team Responsibility: Catherine Jackson

Secondary School Attendance Policy

Why have a policy?

- To ensure a whole School, consistent approach to attendance
- A recognition that attendance is important and linked to achievement
- The aims, systems and evaluation processes can be stated clearly to enable all partners to access and understand the rationale and procedures (students and their parents, staff, governors, support agencies and OFSTED)

Policy statement

- Attendance and punctuality are fundamental to a young person's ability to benefit fully from the opportunities provided by School
- There is a clear link between good attendance and academic achievement as well as enabling the development of social, emotional and personal skills

Aims and Targets

- To encourage all students to attend School and achieve their maximum potential
- To monitor individual and whole School attendance and measure against agreed targets
- To ensure that students and their parents understand and support the procedures in place to record and monitor attendance
- To ensure that all staff and governors understand and support the policy
- To use attendance data to inform policy
- To use the OFSTED criteria to audit current practice and plan informed changes as required.
- To ensure that absence is followed up quickly by ensuring that School procedures are consistent, efficient and effective.

Partnership Working

Parents, students, partner agencies and the School should endeavour to work in partnership in order to support the School community to raise attendance and achievement.

What the School expects of its students:

- Attend regularly and arrive on time
- Be prepared to work by bringing appropriate equipment
- Co-operate with registration procedures
- Inform the appropriate member of staff if there are issues which might prevent/affect attendance and punctuality.

- Sign out when they are required to leave School during the School day e.g. for medical, dentists appointments etc.
- Sign in when arriving in School outside normal registration times.

What the School expects of parents:

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to encourage their children to attend School
- To encourage punctuality
- Contact School on the first day of a student's absence and on every day following until they are back in School to explain the reason and send a note to School when the pupil returns. The note should be signed by the parent or carer.
- Contact the School to discuss issues that are affecting attendance and punctuality
- To send in written confirmation about absence
- To ensure that the student has the appropriate equipment and work for the School day
- Contact the appropriate member of staff if there are any issues that might prevent attendance. Confidentiality would normally be respected
- To arrange holidays out of term time. Parents should submit a leave of absence request form **with at least two School weeks' notice** if they wish to request authorisation for their child to be out of School for any reason during term time. Permission will not normally be granted other than in exceptional circumstances. If permission is not given but the absence still takes place, this will be recorded as unauthorised. **The absence will be submitted to the Local Authority for a fine to be issued.**
- Arrange non-urgent medical and dental appointments out of School hours. If this is unavoidable, let School know that an appointment is due, preferably in writing.

What parents and students can expect of the School:

- A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum
- The encouragement of good attendance
- Regular, efficient recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality.
- Regular and frequent contact where there are concerns about attendance or punctuality, with the aim of improvement.
- First day contact where a student does not attend without good reason. This is to be monitored half-termly and amended as appropriate
- Prompt action and contact with parents when problems arise
- Regular liaison with the Attendance and Inclusion Service which can assist and support parents and students where needed
- Regular Information given to students regarding their percentage attendance and relative attendance [in relation to the past and preferred levels].
- Rewards for good and improved attendance

The Law

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory School age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at School or otherwise
- The CYPD must provide School places to parents who wish their children to be educated at School
- The School must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The School must report to the CYPD, students who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than 10 days without explanation
- The CYPD has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at School of a registered pupil, is an offence punishable by law (Education Act 1996 Section 444)
- Fixed Penalties can be issued by the Local Authority where the criteria for such a notice are met (See policy re Fixed Penalty Notices, Parenting Orders etc)

Leave in Term Time

DfE guidance 2013 removed the rights of Head Teachers to authorise leave in term time unless they deem that the circumstances are exceptional.

In line with DfE guidance and Sheffield City Council's policy, School will not authorise any leave in term time if the circumstance is not deemed exceptional, and may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice for the period of leave taken.

If parents/carers wish to request leave in term time, they must complete the Request for Leave of Absence form which can be obtained as a paper copy from the school office on either site. The Head Teacher will consider each request individually and communicate the decision by letter. Term time requests for leave of absence that are not authorised by the Head Teacher may be submitted to the Local Authority for a fine to be issued.

Procedures

Registration

- Registration begins at 8.50am each morning and the register will be taken electronically on our lesson monitor system. On occasions when the electronic register cannot be accessed, the register will be done on paper and then taken to the School office for entering.
- If students arrive after 8.50am or after the register has been taken, in the morning they will receive a late mark in the register.
- Students who arrive after 8.50am will sign in at a designated place; At KS4: between 8.50 – 9.05am with their form tutor. From 9.05 am onwards with their Pastoral Manager or at the School office. At KS3 students who are late after

8.50 sign in **on the late sheet in reception and then go to their form room (or Pastoral Manager if it is an assembly day), and at the School office after the end of registration.**

- Staff should be in the form room for the start of registration and every student should receive a mark – present, absent or late.
- The electronic register is also taken in each lesson of the day, by the class teacher, for monitoring punctuality and attendance to lessons. Lesson 4 starts after lunch at 1:15pm and so the register taken in this lesson is also used as a record of punctuality/attendance to the afternoon session. Again, teaching staff are expected to mark students present, absent or late. Students should be marked late if they arrive in the room after 1.15pm.
- Staff who take students off site or out of School on visits or trips are expected to publicise the event through the annual Assessment and Events Calendar and ensure that accurate lists are posted for information and emailed to the attendance clerk or Pastoral Manager so that attendance is correctly entered.
- Arrival by 11.05am will be counted as late but present for the morning session. Arrival before 2.00pm will be counted as late but present for the afternoon session.
- The attendance clerks/pastoral managers review the registers daily and make sure that they are all complete and accurate.

Responding to absence

- Parents/carers are required to contact School when a student returns following a period of absence. They should give the dates of absence and the reason. This can be relayed by telephone, email, text or letter.
- Where a reason is accepted, the absence will be authorised using the appropriate symbol (See list of codes). The following circumstances would normally be authorised:
 - Illness – medical evidence may be sought if there are frequent periods of absence
 - Unavoidable medical/dental appointments. Students who have medical appointments who sign in before 11.05am will be marked present not late on arrival. The same applies in the afternoon for students who sign out during P5, for medical or other essential appointments.
 - Bereavement
 - Agreed religious observation
 - Exceptional circumstances agreed by the School
- The decision on whether or not to authorise an absence will be made by the Headteacher. Authorisation would not be given for anything that is not deemed to be an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a letter, email or telephone call has not been received, and the attendance clerk or pastoral manager has not been able to get a response by email, text or phonecall, the absence will not be authorised.
- Where there continues to be a problem, parents and students will be asked to attend a meeting in School, possibly including attendance at a Governor

Attendance Panel to better understand the situation and to find ways to improve attendance.

- If problems still persist, the School may refer the problem to the Multi-Agency Support Team requesting assistance and possibly the issuing of a fixed penalty notice.

Responding to and maintaining good attendance

KS4

- Year Leaders coordinate rewards for individuals and groups with high attendance, such as form prizes and rewards breakfasts.
- Year Leaders at KS4 use % attendance data on students in assemblies and with form tutors in tutor periods, to raise the profile of attendance in relation to attainment and to ensure that students keep track of their attendance record.
- Termly rewards are presented to the tutor groups with the best attendance.
- Prizes are presented at the end of the year for students with 100% attendance

KS3

- Letters of Praise are presented each half term for 100% attendance.
- Prizes are presented at the end of the year for students with 100% attendance.
- Termly rewards are presented to the tutor groups with the best attendance.

Re-integration /re-engagement process

- A range of pastoral staff on each site to support re-integration (or otherwise) of students whose attendance at School is interrupted for long periods, or of students whose attendance is a serious cause for concern. Students may be offered reduced timetables and access to alternative off site provision in an effort to reintegrate/re-engage them in School.

Collecting and analysing data

- Whole School and individual computerised attendance data is produced regularly by the School office
- This is used by pastoral teams to monitor whole School and individual attendance, evaluate the School's performance and strategies and inform future policies and strategies.
- On a regular basis, this attendance data will be reviewed in strategy meetings to ensure that all attendance concerns are being properly addressed.

Year Leader/Pastoral Manager

- Will identify who the persistent absentees are for their year group for the start of each year using the criteria circulated by CYPD. These students to be monitored closely and regular contact with parents maintained with a view to avoiding the use of more serious sanctions i.e. penalty notices.
- Will carry out regular reviews of attendance and monitor the attendance of all students in the year group against the 90% benchmark for persistent absence. Follow up to this could include sending letters home to parents of students whose attendance has deteriorated. This is done where appropriate and following consultation with the Senior Inclusion Officer about suitable wording, to avoid damaging good working relationships with parents. There is also the option to contact by telephone or email/text as appropriate.
- Will direct form tutors to work proactively with students fortnightly based on data produced by the attendance clerk, to encourage regular monitoring of attendance and obtain valid explanations for absence or for lateness in the afternoon, to keep the registers accurate up to date.
- Will gate students as appropriate in line with School policy.
- Will direct the pastoral admin staff and pastoral manager to contact parents as appropriate, in response to concerns re absence.
- Will take a lead role in the most challenging cases of poor attendance as part of a planned strategy to improve engagement, including working in conjunction with parents, SEN staff, Learning Mentors, social services, Inclusion officers, flexible programme providers and other relevant agencies.
- Will work with the attendance clerk responsible for logging attendance, to reduce inaccuracies in students' attendance records.
- Will coordinate staged sanctions, including gating, detentions and isolations for students who are frequently late for School in the morning and/or late to lessons.
- Will coordinate the rewards systems associated with attendance.
- Will systematically plan and coordinate attendance spot checks and follow up absences related to the spot checks with appropriate action.
- Will initiate strategies to raise awareness about the impact of attendance on attainment through assemblies, School newsletters, tutor time activities, analysis of data in relation to attendance at academic review points and monitoring of progress in relation to improved or deteriorating attendance: to commence with the "target" groups at the start of the year in September and subsequently in regular discussion with the Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST).

Attendance Clerk

- Will input attendance into SIMs by 10.45am in the morning and by 2.45pm in the afternoon.
- Will follow up uncovered absence with students, parents, pastoral managers, subject teachers as appropriate on a daily basis to maintain an accurate record of attendance in SIMs.
- Will work closely with pastoral managers and key stage Leaders over complex cases.
- Will provide data for the pastoral managers, key stage Leaders and Assistant Headteacher as required.

- Will send home or produce for the pastoral teams, appropriate letters in response to: deteriorating attendance records and an increase in poor punctuality etc. as laid down by CYPD attendance policies.
- Will work closely with pastoral leaders to ensure that there is an accurate record of all students' attendance/absence records for staff to access electronically during the School day in line with the School's commitment to safeguarding.

Assistant Headteachers

- Will work closely with MAST to ensure that the School's policies and procedures are appropriate and in line with CYPD expectations with reference to monitoring and managing of student attendance.
- Will meet regularly with pastoral leaders to discuss issues related to attendance.
- Will oversee the work of staff who input and manage SIMs attendance and work with the administrative line manager to resolve any issues.
- Will review the School's policy annually and amend it to ensure that it accurately reflects the practice in the School.
- Will seek to improve attendance procedures, to include electronic registration, as and when the resources become affordable and available.
- Will agree with the Leadership Team, School targets for attendance and seek to ensure they are met where possible.