



Cabot
Learning
Federation

Attendance Policy: King's Oak
Academy

Attendance Policy

Creation Date	23 November 2020
Implementation Date	
Review Frequency	Annually
Last Reviewed	23 November 2020
Approval	Full Academy Council
DfE Status	

History of most recent policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, Change in legislation)	Actioned By
23/11/2020	Whole Document	Creation of new policy following review of existing policies.		Andrew Marshall-Aherne Assistant Principal



Contents

Context

King's Oak Academy is committed to the UNCRC and in accordance with this, the following articles are relevant:

Article 28: (Right to education) All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free.

Article 29 (Goals of education): Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures.

This document specifies the academy response to attendance for all students across both phases and outlines the response to COVID-19 and our additional measures to monitor and follow up absence which will help to safeguard our children.

Aim

King's Oak Academy aims to achieve the government target of 96% and will actively:

- encourage regular attendance amongst students
- support students who have an attendance problem through its own resources and those of outside agencies (e.g. Education Welfare Officer)
- monitor attendance regularly
- provide the DFE with all the statistics relevant to attendance
- inform parents of their obligations in respect of their child's attendance at school

Rationale

Regular school attendance is essential for all children and young people to achieve their full potential. Working closely with families ensures all children receive the best education we can offer

- Research shows children and young people who attend school at least 95% of the time are more likely to achieve good results.
- Patterns of attendance tend to be set in the early years.
- Good attendance develops the essential life skills necessary for young people to be responsible and successful citizens and is important for personal, social and emotional development and self-esteem.

Principles

- We will establish a good working relationship with parents/ carers and other agencies such as the Education Welfare Service, to support good attendance and punctuality.
- It is parents' and carers' responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. This includes not taking holidays during term time.
- We will celebrate good attendance and punctuality.
- Where necessary, we will challenge poor attendance and punctuality and will support families to improve this.
- Appropriate legal action will be taken where parents continually fail to ensure their children attend school regularly.

King's Oak academy aims to:

- Respond to attendance issues to ensure that safeguarding is paramount.
- Improve attendance and punctuality in all year groups from EYFS through to year 11.
- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all members of the school community:
- Promote a consistent approach across the whole academy
- Provide an inclusive high quality learning environment with which all members of our school community will engage
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks:
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Guidelines and Procedures

Under normal circumstances the only reason children should be absent is if they are ill and are therefore unable to attend, or due to extenuating circumstances.

A. Notifying the Academy of Absence/Lateness

Parents have a responsibility to inform the school as early as possible of a students' absence/lateness by telephoning or e-mailing the academy and to keep the school informed.

If possible, details of how long the absence is likely to be, should be provided. During periods of prolonged absence parents are asked to keep the Attendance Officer regularly informed of progress.

B. Registration

Registers will be marked for every lesson throughout the day using PARS attendance software. The official morning register will be taken during Period 1 and must be completed by 9.10am. The official afternoon registration will be taken during Period 5 and must be completed by 2.30pm. Students who arrive after these times should be marked as late after registration has closed. It is a legal requirement that staff complete the register for each lesson either electronically or by sending a paper copy to Student Reception. The academy operates a system called Keep Kids Safe which contacts parents directly if a student is not registered during Period 1. Staff responsible for visits out of school must inform the Attendance Officer which students are on the visit. Registers must be taken for groups involved in events/exams in school and be passed to the Attendance Secretary.

C. Punctuality, Lateness, Signing Out

Students arriving late must sign in at Reception. In the case of persistent offenders parents will be contacted by the Attendance Officer / Heads of Year. Students late to Periods 2 – 5 should be marked as late on the register by the class teacher. Students who have to leave the school site during the school day must have confirmation of the reason from parents and sign out at Student Reception when they leave. If they return during the school day they must sign in on their return.

Only the Academy can authorise absence not the parent. Parents are encouraged to keep authorised absence to a minimum. We encourage thought to be given by parents to whether appointments could be made outside of school hours rather than ask for time off school where possible. Persistent absence or illness not deemed genuine may not be authorised without medical evidence.

D. Unauthorised Absence

All absence will be marked as unauthorised until contact has been made by parents to the school either by phone call, email or post. Unauthorised attendance will be monitored and maybe reported to the Education Welfare Officer who can impose a fixed penalty notice to both parents for each day of unauthorised absence and for each child absent.

Holidays taken in term time will be unauthorised and result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

E. Holidays in Term Time

From September 2013 the DFE Guidance regarding students being allowed time out of school in term time changed. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that the Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Principal determines the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

F. Improving Attendance

The Attendance Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] will meet regularly with the Educational Welfare Officer to review attendance data and take the appropriate action which may include;

- a. Early contact with parents by letter for students highlighted as causing concern.
- b. Student Attendance workshops are run for students identified as potentially a cause for concern. These are run in school with the EWO and a representative from the Pastoral Team.
- c. An invitation for parents and the student to attend a meeting at the school. An action plan to improve attendance is drawn up at the meeting. A student contract may also be used to improve attendance.
- d. Students whose attendance drops below 80% and/or who have not improved following an action plan maybe referred directly to the Educational Welfare Service.
- e. Attendance reports will be sent home with each student school report.
- f. Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised attendance in line with CLF guidance.

Rewards

Rewards will be given to encourage and recognise good attendance and punctuality and may include certificates for 100% attendance awarded in line with the Academy rewards policy.

Responsibilities

Parents:

- Are responsible for making sure their child attends regularly and on time.
- Need to ensure that their children are appropriately dressed in full school uniform and are equipped for the school day.
- Must inform the school via phone call when their child is not in school in the morning of the first day of absence; any absence which school is not informed about will be coded as an unauthorised absence. There is an answer phone service available.
- Must use the academy absence request forms to request time away from school; holiday requests will not be authorised.
- Must provide evidence of medical appointments prior to attending them.
- Expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's progress.
- Expect the school to support and encourage them in continually seeking ways to improve attendance at school.

Children:

- Be listened to and respected.
- Have individual records of attendance and punctuality.
- Take responsibility for their personal school attendance.

Academy:

- Ensure accurate and daily registers are maintained on pupils in the school.
- Authorise absences where appropriate.
- Ensure parents/ carers are fully informed of their responsibilities.
- Publish expected school times and holidays (including inset days) to parents in good time.
- Keep parents informed of attendance levels at parents' evenings/through school newsletters.
- Ensure the school is a welcoming place where children want to come and learn.
- Reintegrate positively any pupils that have been absent from school for a significant period of time.
- Monitor data to identify patterns of attendance and resource accordingly.
- Work closely with EWO.

The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO):

- Meet regularly with the Principal, Head of Year and Attendance Officer to monitor levels of attendance and discuss individual pupils.
- Take appropriate legal action against parents/carers who do not complete their statutory obligations.
- Monitor and work with cases referred by school.
- Complete welfare home visits.
- Attend meeting with parents either at home or school.
- Support parents with improving their child's attendance and punctuality.

Covid Amendment

We recognise that:

- a. The government expects schools to strongly encourage pupils in priority groups (Vulnerable Children and Children of Critical Workers); and pupils in eligible year groups (where there is capacity for them to attend school safely) to attend.
- b. Unfortunately, due to current Health and Safety restrictions, we are unable to offer school sessions to all pupils who are in the eligible year groups, as there is not enough capacity for them to attend school safely.
- c. Some pupils are unable to attend, despite being eligible, as they have been advised to shield. This applies to:
 - Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. We do not expect these children to be attending school, and the school will continue to support them to learn at home as much as possible.
 - Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable guidance, if stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, the



Government does not expect those individuals to attend. The school will continue to support them to learn at home as much as possible.

- d. The Public Health England report published on 2 June 2020, on the disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19, states - whilst age and some underlying health factors present the highest risk - there is an increased impact of the virus on people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.
 - This will no doubt be concerning for BAME children and families in deciding to return to school when a place is offered.
 - In the absence of any clear DfE guidance at this time, the school will continue to encourage BAME children and families to share any concerns and will do our best to explain the safety measures the school is taking and will make any other reasonable adjustments if needed.
 - At the same time, we will also ensure parents and carers understand that, if they are still concerned and do not feel ready to send their child back to school yet, they will not be fined or prosecuted at this time.
- e. Whilst children are 'strongly encouraged' to attend, the law relating to regular school attendance will be reviewed again at the end of June. It is currently disapplied until 30 June 2020 and can only be disapplied one month at a time. Whilst this law is disapplied, parents and carers cannot be fined or prosecuted if their child does not attend school. and Government has confirmed that parents will not be fined if their child does not attend 'at this time' (correct at time of writing - 23/6/2020).

We will follow the CLF attendance guidance, and any other current CLF, Local Authority and Government attendance guidance:

- a) [CLF - Return to School Attendance Guidance - Covid 19](#)
- b) [CLF CME & PT guidance for pupils who may have travelled abroad prior to 3 April 2020](#)
- c) [CLF CME & PT guidance - pupils who cannot be contacted or have moved](#)

Marking the register:

- a) The Attendance Officer and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead [DDSL], will be responsible for ensuring the school is clear about exactly which pupils are expected for any session/s on a given day.
- b) The Attendance Officer will be responsible for ensuring any sessions that a pupil is not eligible for are pre-marked with the X code.
- c) The Attendance Officer and Admin Assistants in the Lower School will be responsible for ensuring any eligible sessions, where absence has been agreed in advance, are marked with the appropriate absence code (e.g. 8, 9, C, 7, I or M).
- d) Teaching staff in each bubble will be responsible for ensuring the registers are taken by 09:45 am each day.
- e) The Attendance Officer will be responsible for ensuring the SIMS registers are as accurate as possible by 10:45 each day (or later if the Data Team's deadline changes).

- f) The Attendance Officer will be responsible for completing any additional daily returns that are required, for example, the DfE Educational Setting Status form by the midday deadline (or later if this deadline changes).

First day absence process:

The Attendance Officer and DDSL will be responsible for the first day absence process to follow up the absence of any pupils who are expected, but do not attend any session on a given day.

This is to ensure:

- a) the parent/carer is aware their child has not arrived at school (where parents/carers cannot be contacted, the school will contact the child's emergency contact/s instead).
- b) the school is aware of the reason for absence.
- c) the school has an indication of whether the pupil is expected to attend the next day.
- d) where a child or family say they are self-isolating due to COVID-19 symptoms, the family are reminded of the process they should follow to get a COVID-19 test.
- e) where a child is self-isolating due to COVID-19 symptoms and/or a positive COVID-19 test result, the school is clear about what other measures it must take, in line with Public Health guidance.

Staffing

- a) Attendance Officer
- b) Head of Lower School
- c) Deputy Safeguarding Lead/Family Liaison Officer
- d) Designated Safeguarding Lead
- e) SENCO/(Deputy SENCO)
- f) CLF Attendance Manager - Fiona Lightwood fiona.lightwood@clf.uk
- g) CLF DSLO - Steve Bane steve.bane@clf.uk

Responsibility for reviewing absent pupils and taking appropriate action.

- a) Attendance Officer, DSL and Deputy DSL will be responsible for reviewing absent pupils and ensuring contact with pupils and families is maintained in line with:
 - b) the School's Safeguarding Policy.
 - c) the pupil's COVID-19 Vulnerable Students Risk Assessment.
 - d) the CLF Return to School Attendance Guidance; and
 - e) any other guidance relevant at the time – including CLF guidance, Local Authority Guidance and DfE Guidance.

Responsibility for ensuring school staff continue to work with Children's Social Care the Local Authority SEN Department and other agencies in relation to the non-attendance, continued education and safeguarding of **vulnerable pupils**.



- a) The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL and Attendance Officer will be responsible for overseeing the attendance and safeguarding of pupils with a Social Worker and those identified as 'otherwise vulnerable'
- b) The SENCO and Deputy SENCO will be responsible for overseeing the pupils with an EHCP.

Responsibility for keeping the school's Vulnerable Students List updated and sharing the information with the Local Authority:

- a) Attendance Officer and DSL will be responsible for keeping the school's Vulnerable Students List updated on at least a weekly basis, or more frequently on an 'as and when things change' basis.
- b) Attendance Officer and DSL will be responsible for submitting the required Vulnerable Pupil data to the Local Authority

All staff are responsible for sharing any safeguarding concerns that come to light when discussing attendance are logged on CPOMS and shared with the DSL in the usual way.