



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2021-2022

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1.1 Statement of intent and aims

Kelvin Hall School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, behaviour & discipline, SEN and our strategic plans on Pupil Premium and Catch-up Premium. We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- c. Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2.1 Statutory requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). We will also refer to this guidance specifically on the sources this guidance refers to and specific guidance on legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including the following absences not covered in this policy: elective home education, work experience, school GCSE study leave, planned whole or partial closure and pastoral support plans for part-time tables.

2.2

Definitions

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils on this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each lesson. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- a. Present.
- b. Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
- c. Absent.
- d. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- e. Suspended from school (the HOS can suspend a pupil for one or more fixed-term periods up to a maximum of 45 school days per year as per behaviour and discipline policy).

3.1 Roles and responsibilities of the school

It is the responsibility of the school to promote high standards of attendance for everyone and to be accountable for attendance, providing support and systems which enables pupils, staff, parents and carers to take responsibility. This support may include praise and rewards for attendance and counselling/mentoring support for children with low attendance. The attendance team will liaise with student support staff to ensure accurate and timely information is received, recorded and acted upon and these teams will support parents with meetings to promote, sustain and improve attendance. **Attendance Targets: Years 7-11 – 95% for 2021/22.**

3.2 The Local Governing Body's responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis. It also holds the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.3 The Head of School responsibilities

- a. Implementation of this policy at the school.
- b. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- c. Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- d. Liaising with the Trust and Local Authority where appropriate.

3.4 The Attendance Officer's responsibilities

- a. Monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- b. Report concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion.
- c. Work with LA education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- d. Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues with the support of the pastoral team.
- e. Advises the Assistant Headteacher when to request for Local Authority additional support.

3.5 Classroom teachers' responsibilities

Are responsible for promptly recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on SIMS.

3.6 Parent and Carer's responsibilities

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Full attendance is essential to the all-around development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes puts pupils at risk. It is the parents' or carers' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning. Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.40 am. All pupils that arrive late must report to the school reception where the reason for lateness is recorded.

3.7 The Responsibilities of the School Staff

At Kelvin Hall School, there is a whole-school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility for certain aspects of this work. The Assistant Headteacher in charge of Inclusion has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues supported by our dedicated attendance team. Classroom teachers complete a register at the beginning of all lessons. Marking the attendance registers is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The pastoral team works with the attendance team to monitor children whose attendance is causing concern. It is the responsibility of the attendance team to ensure:

- a. Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- b. If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call or text.
- c. Where there has been no successful communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.

- d. The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (national attendance codes).

3.8 Timeline of school action for low attendance

- a. Pupils with 95 - 100% attendance are monitored by the attendance team.
- b. Pupils with 90 - 95% attendance are monitored by the attendance team with further school intervention. This intervention may include phone calls, letters, support meetings with parents and carers, and consideration of Penalty Notice or Early Help Notification.
- c. Pupils with persistently below 90% attendance are monitored by the attendance team with further school intervention. This intervention may include phone calls, letters, support meetings with parents and carers, home visits, pastoral support plans, consideration of Penalty Notice or Early Help Notification.

Where the level of absence has not improved and there are persistent unauthorised absences, the school will consult with the Local Authority for advice.

4.1 Children missing in education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation with the Head of School. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a 'Child Missing in Education' referral for the following circumstances:

- a. If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate them.
- b. The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

4.2 Dual registration/managed moves

As a result of specific medical needs or as a strategy to improve a pupil's behaviour, it may be necessary to:

- a. Direct a pupil to Alternative Provision.
- b. Trial a pupil on a managed move to another school.

During this time, attendance will be monitored in the same way as if the pupils were accessing their education at Kelvin Hall School. Failure to attend the provision would lead to the same attendance procedures as per Kelvin Hall School, these may be completed by the other provision/school.

5.1 Rewarding Attendance

At Kelvin Hall School, we believe it to be important to reward pupils with excellent attendance. The following guidance and examples provided below are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

- Focus group teachers award individual pupils with 100% attendance linked to Class Charts.
- Half-termly rewards for the Focus Group with the highest attendance.
- 'Well done' text messages are sent to pupils with 96% or above attendance each week.
- Communications are sent to acknowledge improvements in attendance.
- Easter attendance draw - pupils with 96% or higher attendance have the chance to win a family goody bag.

- Christmas attendance draw - pupils with 96% or above attendance have the chance to win a family goody bag.
- Christmas attendance advent calendar - each day a pupil has the chance to win a Christmas Selection Box.
- End of the year award for pupils with consistently high and improved attendance.

6.1 Lateness

The register is taken at the start of every lesson and the first register is taken at 8.45 am. Pupils arriving after this time must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L'). The register will close at 9.55 am. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence. Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice. Any pupil who needs to leave the school premises during school hours for any reason must sign out at Student Services and present a note or appointment card. Pupils who feel unwell or have sustained an injury during school hours must report to First Aid where they will be assessed and if necessary a parent or carer will be contacted in order that provision can be made for collection.

6.2 Authorising Absence

Only the relevant Pastoral Year Leader, Attendance Welfare Officer, or Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, Deputy Headteacher, or the Head of School can authorise absence for approved reasons. Where there is doubt the above will liaise with the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, on behalf of the Head of School, to ensure a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable.

The attendance team, on behalf of the Head of School, is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised. All requests for exceptional leave of absence should be considered by the Pastoral Year Leader in the first instance who will make a recommendation to the Attendance Welfare Officer for final approval and recording on behalf of the Head of School. Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent/carers and the school. The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness (i.e. poorly/unwell.)
- Absence of siblings if another child is ill.
- Oversleeping.
- Inadequate equipment or uniform.
- Confusion over school dates.
- Medical/dental appointment of more than half a day without very good reasons.
- Child's or family member's birthday.
- Shopping trip.
- Family holiday.

Persistent unauthorised absence may result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing. When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and carers and minutes of any meetings must be attached.

Local Authority Action may include:

- Attendance improvement meeting.
- Home visits.
- Liaison with other agencies.
- Fast track to prosecution.

6.3 Leave of absence/holiday/exceptional circumstances

Leave of absence with the school's permission will only be considered in the following situations:

- Due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent).
- Religious observance.

The Head of School may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Head of School supported by the Pastoral Year Leaders and Attendance Officer. Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head of School's decision is final. Such examples may include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided above are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

7.1 Training

Staff receive regular training on how our monitoring of attendance can be used as a tool to improve whole school attendance. The attendance team, student support team and Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion will:

- Provide instant reports for the Senior Leadership Team and pastoral teams which highlight trends and pupils at risk.
- Provide reports for focus group teachers, year teams and department leads.
- Manage attendance and make sure all staff are on board.
- Engage parents and promote our school's positive achievements in the wider community.
- Share customisable reports with parents through email notifications, texts, phone calls, and letters.
- Help pupils see their own progress and reflect on their achievements.
- Motivate & engage pupils with our rewards.

7.2 Pupil support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent pupils with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to attendance may be differentiated to cater to the needs of the pupil. The school's special educational needs coordinator, behaviour leads and wellbeing leads will evaluate a pupil who exhibits challenging circumstances or characteristics to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met. Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs. When acute needs are identified in a pupil, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child as required. We will work with parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis.

7.3 Written statement of principles

- Every pupil understands they have the right to attend school and feel safe, valued, respected and learn free from the disruption of others.
- All pupils, staff and visitors are free from any form of discrimination.
- Staff and volunteers should set an excellent example to pupils at all times.
- Rewards and sanctions should be used consistently by staff, in line with the attendance policy.
- The application of this policy should be understood by pupils and staff.
- Pupils should be supported and guided to take responsibility for their actions.
- Families should be involved in supporting good attendance to foster good relationships between the school and pupils' home life.

8.1 Attendance policy links

This policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, behaviour & discipline, SEN and our strategic plans on Pupil Premium and Catch-up Premium.

9.1 COVID 19 Addendum

During the current coronavirus pandemic, we recognise that regular attendance at school is not always possible. Students may be required to self-isolate and, at times participate in PCR testing. These students will be marked as an 'X' on the register and their non-attendance onsite will not count as absence pre-testing. After testing if they do not return to school after a negative (still feeling unwell) or a positive test they will be marked as 'I'.

Appendix 1

Sequence of school letters

1a. First letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been arriving late at school with details of the lates before the register closes.

1b. Second letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been arriving late at school with details of the lates before the register closes.

1c. First letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been arriving late at school with details of the lates after the register closes.

1d. Second letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been arriving late at school with details of the lates after the register closes inviting parents to a school meeting.

2a. First letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been absent at school with details of the absences

2b. Second letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been absent at school with details of the absences inviting parents to a school meeting.

2c. Final letter of concern over the number of occasions a pupil has been absent at school with details of the absences if no improvement after school support with referral to Local Authority.

NB The Executive Headteacher assumes overall responsibility for attendance as per scheme of delegation, September 2021

