



King's Cross Academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Procedures

Chair of Governors: Robert Evans and Alexandra Woolmore

Headteacher: *Stephen Mithcell*

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Introduction

King's Cross Academy seeks to ensure all of its pupils receive a full education in order to reach their full potential.

Regular attendance at school is **essential** to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can **seriously** affect each child's:

- **attainment** in school (how well they do)
- **relationships** with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- **confidence** to attempt new learning and work alongside others

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

96%+	Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
94-95%	Average – Well done, strive to build on this.
85-93%	Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school urgently to improve the situation.
Below 85%	Unacceptable – Absence is causing SERIOUS CONCERN . It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. We will work closely with you to improve your child's attendance.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.

Prior to the engagement of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), the school may issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupils' absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for EWO involvement.

Aims of the Policy

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at the school
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for all people involved in maintaining pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To implement a system of sanctions and rewards.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and responding to attendance data.

Principles

Rewards / Celebration

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.

Whole class rewards

There is an attendance assembly held every week for each key stage. During the assembly a 'trophy cup' will be awarded to the class that has the best attendance along with a class certificate.

At the end of a term, the class with the highest average attendance will be awarded with a prize.

Individual incentives

Where positive impact is required (particularly with those who are persistently absent), all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made. It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child's attendance. Individual sticker rewards are sometimes employed as an additional incentive where appropriate; these are designed according to the child's particular need.

Registration

The registrations at King's Cross Academy are taken electronically and the data used to inform the school's attendance team of an individual's record of attendance.

The following procedures are followed at the school:

- All children should be in the school ready to register at 9.00 am each morning
- The registers are also taken at 1.00pm (EYFS / KS1) and 1.30pm (KS2) for the afternoon session.
- A school day counts as 2 attendance marks.
- Morning registration ends at 9.10a.m. If a child arrives after the registration period, he / she must report to the school office and will be marked in as 'Late'. Arrival after 9.30am is recorded as an 'unauthorised' late mark.
- The symbols / (am) and \ (pm) are used to indicate present and 'L' is used to indicate absence and lateness.
- All lateness must be marked with an L and the time and day.

- If a pupil arrives after 9.30am without an acceptable explanation, it is marked with a 'U' and is considered an unauthorised absence.

Parental Responsibility

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, both parents, or carer with whom the child resides. Attendance is discussed with each parent at consultation evenings, with the current percentage attendance being reported. Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children receive a full time education.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their children arrive at school on time each day.
- Contacting the school in person or on the telephone to provide an explanation on the first day their child is absent.

Absence

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time and a penalty notice (fine) may be issued if they do.

Authorised absence: this is when a pupil is away for a reason acceptable to the school. **The school will determine** whether the absence is authorised after receipt of a verbal or written explanation from the parent. Explanations from pupils or siblings are not sufficient.

Unauthorised absence: The school will follow up on all unauthorised absences by reminding parents of their responsibility for providing explanations. The school communicates via:

- A telephone call on the first day of absence
- A written notification to say that an absence has been recorded as unauthorised and will remain so unless an acceptable explanation is offered within the deadline set.

Special leave of absence can be authorised only at the Headteacher's discretion. Periods of absence may only be authorised in **very exceptional circumstances**. Any time taken without the school's authorisation, or any additional time taken over and above the amount authorised will be recorded as unauthorised absences and the school will be obliged to report this to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Absence due to Illness and/or Medical Appointments

When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 9.15am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

With regard to medical appointments:

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- An appointment card or verification by the doctors/ dentist/hospital is required.
- If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

Absence during term time for other reasons

The Headteacher and Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. **Parents are therefore strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday in term time.** Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and in law, have to apply for permission in advance.

When application is made for authorised absence during term time, the Headteacher gives consideration to:

- The nature of the proposed absence
- The timing of the proposed absence
- Frequency of such requests from the pupil's parents
- The attendance pattern in the present and previous academic years. Absence will not be authorised where attendance is lower than 96% or where the absence would take attendance below 96%.
- The child's progress and their educational needs and ability to catch up on work missed

Penalty Notices

If a child's absence warrants it, the school may refer to the Education Welfare System (EWS) and seek their intervention. Children who have more than 15 unauthorised absences in a 10-week period may be served with a Penalty Notice by the EWS, resulting in a fine of £120.00 in the first instance. Prolonged non-attendance may result in court action being taken by the EWS.

Monitoring attendance

School staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges.

- The school is responsible for the initial intervention. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a discussion is needed between the class teacher and the Headteacher to determine a course of action.
- If a class teacher makes initial contact with a parent and there is no improvement, the Headteacher must be informed and will arrange to contact a parent/carer. If there is still no improvement after suitable interventions by the school, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may become involved.
- Although all cases are considered individually, the EWO will generally become involved when a pupil's attendance falls below 80% in one term.
- To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the EWO will meet with the school's named attendance person each half term to discuss and

agree a course of action for all pupils with attendance under 90%. The agreed action may include:

Closely monitoring the situation

A letter from the school

A meeting with the school or the Education Welfare Officer

A formal referral to the EWS

Please refer to the 'attendance and punctuality systems at King's Cross Academy' document for further details about procedures and example letters to send home.

Appendix 1

Roles and Responsibility

Role	Responsibility
Headteacher	<p>Operational management of the policy.</p> <p>Consider requests for authorised absence. Give approval in advance in appropriate circumstances, taking account of the child's attendance record.</p> <p>Authorise absence after it occurs when a satisfactory explanation is accepted.</p> <p>Ensure that anti-bullying and behaviour policies are followed and ensure action is taken in response to any difficulties reported and [e.g. bullying/behaviour] which impact on attendance.</p> <p>Consider the use of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or lateness.</p> <p>Complete HT witness statements on pupil absence for court use.</p>
Attendance Lead	<p>Oversee day to day attendance where there is cause for concern, working closely with parents and children to improve poor attendance.</p> <p>Monitor pupil attendance monthly, report to the Headteacher and take action according to this policy.</p> <p>Analyse trends in attendance data to identify appropriate action.</p> <p>Investigate reasons for absence exploring any underlying cause either at home or in school.</p> <p>Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and make referrals as necessary.</p> <p>Work with the EWO towards improved patterns of attendance for referred pupils identifying the course of action that should be taken.</p> <p>Make referrals to other agencies where appropriate.</p> <p>Work with Class Teachers to agree and implement strategies to reengage pupils with emerging attendance problems.</p> <p>Work with the Inclusion Leader to plan reintegration for pupils who have been absent for a period.</p> <p>With the Attendance Secretary, compile and update standard letters re: % attendance , notification of reasons for absence and lateness and send to parents when necessary.</p>
Class Teachers	<p>Prepare and deliver stimulating and enjoyable learning for all children.</p> <p>Registration of pupils at the start of morning and afternoon sessions.</p> <p>Alert the attendance secretary/FLO of any children who demonstrate an unsettled pattern of attendance or whose attendance pattern changes.</p> <p>Return registers to the designated place immediately after registration.</p> <p>Report percentage attendance at parent consultations; encourage regular punctual attendance; work to secure this Ensure all absence notes are passed to the attendance secretary via the class register folder.</p> <p>Work with the DHT to agree and implement strategies to re-engage pupils with emerging attendance problems.</p>
Administration team	<p>Make calls to parents when first day of absence contact has not been made by parents.</p> <p>Accurately record attendance data daily using agreed codes.</p> <p>Record late arrival and reasons.</p> <p>Ensure reasons for absences are accurately recorded.</p> <p>Prepare standard letters requesting reasons for absence when this is unexplained.</p> <p>Prepare letters to inform parents when a child's attendance is giving cause for concern and is thus being monitored</p> <p>Collect absence notes and record reasons for absence.</p> <p>Meet with the Headteacher reporting monthly attendance monitoring and take agreed action.</p> <p>Provide attendance reports when requested and ensure DfE attendance returns are accurate.</p>
Parents	<p>Ensure their child attends daily and on time.</p> <p>Keep the school fully informed on all matters that might affect attendance and their child in school. Telephone school on the first day of any absence to inform school of the reason</p> <p>Provide a note confirming the reason for absence on the child's return to school</p> <p>If attendance becomes a problem – work with the school to improve matters.</p> <p>Give serious consideration to whether it is appropriate or necessary to request term time absence. Make application for any term time leave of absence prior to proposed dates.</p>

<p>Education Welfare Officer</p>	<p>Work closely with school and families to resolve attendance issues. Visit school for meetings at agreed times. Identify, with school, cases of unauthorised absence which necessitate action and advise on responses. Provide written reports to school in the form of consultation sheets. Complete regular register checks. On receipt of a written referral, take appropriate action, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● advice on strategies to improve attendance ● assessment home visits ● action planning ● agreed time-limited intervention ● attendance at school meetings ● written record of work undertaken ● verbal feedback where appropriate ● written response to referral within 10 days ● liaison with other agencies ● onward referral to other agencies ● liaison with other Local Authority departments ● preparation of cases for prosecution including sending warning letters ● preparing Witness Statements for Magistrates Court
<p>Governing Body</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for Attendance Policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures remain high. Attendance Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.</p>



(Date)

‘King’s Cross Academy attendance Target – 96%+’

Dear Parent,

I am writing to remind you that good attendance is very important to help your child reach their academic potential, develop good friendships and feel a part of the school community.

Our records show that your child’s attendance has fallen **below 94%**. It would be helpful to explore the reasons for their absence, I will telephone to discuss this matter with you.

Yours sincerely,

(name)

Attendance Lead

(Absence letter 2)

(Date)



'King's Cross Academy Attendance Target – 96%+'

Dear Parent,

You will have already received a letter reminding you about the importance of good attendance. Since then, your child's attendance percentage has either remained the same or decreased further.

Your child's present attendance percentage is -----%

We monitor attendance regularly, and I will be looking to see whether you have managed to make a difference to your child's attendance figures. If there is no improvement, I will be required to arrange a meeting with you, a senior leader and myself. Following this meeting, we may decide to refer this matter to our Education Welfare Officer.

We are here to support you and your family and want to work together towards a positive outcome for everybody.

Yours sincerely,

(name)

Attendance Lead

Appendix 2 – (Late Letter 1)



(Date)

'Be in line by five to nine!'



Dear Parent,

We are writing to remind you that punctuality is very important; that lateness affects children's learning and having a positive start to the school day.

Your child has been late **twice or more** within a week.

If poor punctuality continues, you will be invited into school to discuss the situation and how we can help towards supporting improvement.

Yours sincerely,

(name)

Attendance Lead

(late letter 2)



(Date)

'Be in line by five to nine!'



Dear Parent,

You will have already received a letter from me reminding you about the importance of punctuality.

Since then, your child has **continued to be late** for school twice or more since the start of term.

I will arrange a meeting for you to meet with a senior manager to discuss ways of improving your child's punctuality. Office staff will telephone you to arrange a time that is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

(name)

Attendance Lead

(Late letter 3)



(Date)

'Be in line by five to nine!'



Dear Parent,

You have already received letters from us reminding you about the importance of punctuality.

Since then, your child has **continued to be late** for school twice or more within a week.

The Late Book will be monitored to see if you have managed to make a difference to your child's timekeeping. If poor punctuality continues, we will be required to ask you to come in for a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer and myself.

Yours sincerely,

(name)

Attendance Lead
