

ATTENDANCE POLICY

(Previously Registration of Students Policy)

This version: September 2018

Katharine Lady Berkeley's School seeks to establish and maintain regular student attendance in all years. We expect students to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence. We expect all students to aspire to a minimum of 96% attendance. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive effect on students' examinations and their futures..

AIMS

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school
- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school
- Promote, celebrate and reward good attendance
- To enhance students' attainment levels and external examination results
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To promote effective partnerships with Gloucestershire Local Authority's Education Performance & Inclusion Team and with other services and agencies
- To recognise and meet the needs of the individual when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

STATUTORY DUTIES

The 1996 Education Act (section 444) states that parents (including non-related adult carers in the child's household) have a legal responsibility to ensure that those of compulsory school age are educated, either by 'regular' attendance at school or 'otherwise'. The 2008 Education and Skills Act (section 155) specifies the same requirement regarding regular attendance at alternative provision.

SECTION 1: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Fostering good attendance is the shared responsibility of Katharine Lady Berkeley's School, parents, and students. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

Students are expected to:

- Be punctual and maintain a high level of attendance
- Attend registration at 8.25am and 1.30pm
- If arriving late, sign in at reception
- Not leave the school grounds without permission and, if permission has been given by a parent and approved by the school, bring a note and sign out at the main office
- Make every effort to catch up with any work missed when returning to school following any absence
- Arrive at school fully equipped and ready to learn
- Report to their tutor, Head of Year or EWO any issues or problems they are having within the school that may affect their learning and attendance
- Comply with sanctions for poor punctuality

There may be different arrangements for individual sixth form students, such as Home Study, agreed with the Head of Sixth Form.

***Parents/carers are expected to:**

- Ensure that their child attends Katharine Lady Berkeley's School regularly and on time;
- Contact the school on the first day of any absence giving reasons;
- Contact school on subsequent days of absence if this was not known on the first day;
- On their child's return to school following an absence, provide a note recording the reason for the absence which the child will hand in;

- Provide written authorisation, clearly stating the reason, if their child needs to leave the site during the day;
- Not take holidays during term time;
- Complete a leave request form for any leave they wish to take during term time, understanding that permission is the decision of the school and will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- Be aware of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence;
- Respond to any queries relating to an absence promptly as failure to do so may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised;
- Keep the school updated on any changes to address or contact numbers;
- Arrange medical and other appointments out of school hours wherever possible.

***Definition of Parents – DfE Advice on School Attendance**

A parent means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

Tutors will:

- Attend registration promptly at 8.25am and 1.30pm. Morning registration closes at 9am and afternoon registration closes at 1.45pm. Students arriving after these times will have these sessions coded as unauthorised unless justifiable reasons are given..
- Collect the register folder prior to registration.
- Mark the register accurately using the computerised system. Student names need to be called by the tutor.
- Return the register folder promptly to the main office at 8.30am and 1.45pm
- Ensure that a mark is entered for every student at registration. Blanks should not be left. The student is either present or absent at registration.
- Ensure that all information they receive about a student's absence (in advance or after an absence) is passed on to the attendance staff.
- Be aware of the attendance of students in their tutor group and liaise with the EWO and Heads of Year regarding concerns.
- Inform the EWO of any information regarding a student's attendance or change of contact details.
- Be aware of home/personal circumstances which affect a student's attendance.
- Reward students each half term with a Pace Point if they achieve 98% attendance.
- Highlight attendance concerns to the Head of Year or EWO.

Heads of Year will:

- Monitor the effective completion of registration by tutors.
- Liaise with tutors regarding attendance.
- Liaise with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and the Education Welfare and Attendance Officer to identify students causing concern; to implement appropriate intervention strategies for identified students.
- Establish personal contact with parents of students who are poor attendees, in order to monitor the situation closely and alert parents to the problem quickly
- Make attendance a regular feature of assemblies
- Use assemblies to emphasise the direct link between attendance and attainment
- Implement strategies for promoting improved awareness of attendance with students, tutors and parents

Subject Teachers will:

- Complete an electronic register every lesson in order to monitor attendance and record absentees within the first 10 minutes of the lesson wherever possible
- Support students on their return to school following a long period of absence
- Highlight students whose attendance is causing concern at department meetings

Heads of Department will:

- Include attendance as an agenda item at department meetings
- Inform Head of Year of attendance issues

Deputy Head (Pastoral) will:

- Ensure the full implementation of this Policy
- Monitor the school's progress in meeting school attendance targets
- Follow up missed registers or inaccuracies with members of staff as advised by the EWO
- Monitor the whole school link between attainment and attendance and share this with staff, students, parents and governors
- Raise the profile of attendance within the school and use assemblies to reward and celebrate good attendance
- Report to the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body on matters of attendance
- Meet regularly with the EWO and Heads of Year
- Have oversight of the implementation of Stage procedure for attendance
- Publish school's position about holidays in term time in newsletters and letters to parents

Headteacher will:

- Have overall responsibility for this Policy
- Receive regular reports
- Act as a signatory for legal proceedings

Governors will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Registration of Students (Attendance for Learning) Policy
- Ensure that attendance is an integral part of the school's action planning
- Receive regular reports via the Wellbeing and Community Committee

Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will:

- Implement fully the school's Registration of Students Policy.
- Support the Deputy Headteacher in developing and administering Registration of Students Policy.
- Provide attendance data, analysis and reports to a relevant of staff to enable them to carry out their operational responsibilities.
- Provide support to all staff on matters of attendance.
- Monitor the twice-daily completion of registers and report any concerns to the member of SMT with responsibility for attendance.
- In response to SIMS data, regularly send letters to parents/carers of students with missing marks.
- Liaise with relevant outside agencies particularly the Gloucestershire Local Authority's Education Performance & Inclusion Team.
- Provide attendance data for outside agencies.
- Produce attendance tables and weekly herringbones for distribution to Heads of Year.
- Run reports to identify possible internal truancy and highlight these names to Heads of Year
- Act as liaison officer between home and school.
- Make home visits and complete assessments.
- Liaise with other agencies to gather information and implement action plans.
- Discuss proposed intervention strategies with school staff and parents to agree the way forward.
- Monitor poor attendance and initiate legal proceedings when necessary.
- Write reports on individual attendance cases.
- Maintain records on school attendance problems.
- Prepare evidence for court action.
- Complete penalty notices warning letters when unauthorised absences total 10 sessions on in 10 weeks.
- Make decisions about authorisation of holidays on behalf of the headteacher.

Resolving problems

Parents/carers are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving problems. Katharine Lady Berkeley's School has a strong support system consisting of tutors, Head of Years, Parent Support Advisor, Educational Welfare Officer and Deputy Head (Pastoral). Where problems persist parents/carers and students will be invited to a meeting and an Attendance Improvement Plan will be written. Failure to succeed on this plan may lead to legal proceedings.

SECTION 2: 4 STAGE PROCEDURE

It is the school's duty to strive consistently to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Initial Concern – Attendance falls below 93% (below 90% in term 1) - Letter to parents. Review period 4-6 weeks. 4+ unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during the review period - the student moves onto Stage 1

Stage 1 – Letter to parents. A Student Attendance Agreement completed with Student and EWO Review period 4-6 weeks. 4+ unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during the review period - the student moves onto Stage 2

Stage 2 – Letter to parents – Education Welfare Officer will arrange Home visit and/or school meeting. Medical evidence will be required to authorise further absences due to illness. Review period 4-6 weeks. 4+ unauthorised sessions during the review period and/or prearranged home visits unsuccessful – the student moves onto Stage 3

Stage 3 –Attendance Improvement Meeting - Letter to parents. First review 4-6 weeks. A total of 28+ unauthorised absences or 20 continuous unauthorised absences – the student moves onto Stage 4.

Stage 4 –Referral to The Education Entitlement and Inclusion team - Request for legal proceedings

A student can be placed on any of the stages without having moved from stage to stage depending upon need. A student does not need to have been on all stages of the procedure before a referral is made to the Local Authority.

SECTION 3: INFORMATION ABOUT LEAVE OF ABSENCE (HOLIDAYS) DURING TERM TIME

Term-time holidays

Term-time holidays should be avoided. Parents/carers should make a request using the Leave of Absence Request form; available from the school reception or online, explaining the nature of the exceptional circumstances. Taking leave without permission will be classed as 'unauthorised' absence and can be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices

Parents/carers are required to ensure education for their child by that child's regular attendance at school; failure to do so could result in a Penalty Notice (fine) being issued. The Penalty Notice will state the fine payable and the timescale for doing so. All payments are made to the Local Authority.

Penalty Notices may be issued by the Local Authority for:

- Unauthorised holidays
- Persistent lateness (after registers have closed)

SECTION 4: AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

The school will decide whether or not an absence is authorised. This will be informed by the letter received when the student returns from an absence or in response to a letter/form received prior to a planned absence.

Persistent Absence

In an ideal world, we would want all of our students to be able to attend 100% of the time. We recognise that this is not always possible. However, schools have a responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This level of absence adds up to missing over 100 lessons over the course of the year, equivalent to over a month of schooling. Students who miss this much school are called 'persistent absentees' by the government, regardless of the reason for their absence.

The following show some authorised/unauthorised absence decisions:

Authorised:

- sickness – medical evidence may be requested
- unavoidable medical appointment – half a day, unless whole day agreed by school
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances
- going to other schools for visits, interviews or examinations

Unauthorised

- minding a house
- looking after a sibling or family member
- birthdays
- day trips –
- family holidays
- students arriving after the register has closed with no justifiable reason for lateness

SECTION 5: ATTENDANCE IN YEARS 12 AND 13

The above policy applies to students in Years 12 and 13 in all respects other than the following:

- References to the Head of Year and Deputy Head (Pastoral) are replaced by the Head of Sixth Form
- As students in Year 12 and 13 are no longer of compulsory school age, references to penalty notices and legal action are not applicable. Where attendance is poor and continues to be so after the involvement of parents, a student may be asked to leave the school.
- Where attendance is poor and the school is no longer able to prepare a student for public examinations through a course of study, the school may, at its discretion, refuse admission to public examinations or expect payment of the examination entry fees.
- Where a student is in receipt of Bursary Funding, this is dependent on an attendance rate of 90%.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. (We aspire to 100% attendance, but attendance targets expect a minimum of 96%.) Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All of the staff at Katharine Lady Berkeley's School are committed to working closely with parents/carers as the best way to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance. We hope that parents/carers can work in partnership with us on this matter.

Discussed by Wellbeing committee: 26 September 2018

Approvaed by full Governing Body: 10 October 2018