



King's Academy College Park

Attendance Policy 2023-2024

Introduction

A good education is vital for children and young people, and regular attendance at school is essential for a child to reach their full educational potential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of our pupils, and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.



Persistent absence is defined as a child whose attendance is below 90% (or when overall absence equates to 10% or more of their possible sessions).

Severe absence is defined as a child whose attendance is below 50 % (or when overall absence equates to 50% or more of their possible sessions).

Legislation and guidance

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. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

The Education Welfare Officer

The Education Welfare officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the leadership team



- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Supports parents and pupils through the use of attendance contracts for pupils with persistent absence, or lateness, affecting their attendance.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis onto Study Bugs.
- Ensuring that all students are registered accurately.
- Promoting good attendance with pupils at all opportunities.
- Liaising with the Education Welfare Officer on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicating any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Supporting pupils to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

School admin staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence, record it on the school system and monitor Study Bugs.

Parents/carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/ carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/carers will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
- Continue to inform the school for subsequent days of absence.
- Discuss with the class teacher any planned absences in advance.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or studybugs message on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter or in person if a phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments. We also ask that parents try to keep appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.



- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late, or are leaving the school site during school hours (e.g. for a medical appointment).

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Procedures

	Infant School	Junior School
School gates open at	8.30am	8.30am
Doors open at	8.45am	8.40am
Doors and gates close	8.45am - 8.55am	8.45am - 8.50am
Any children arriving after this time will need to enter via the main school office on Crofton Road and will be marked as late.		



Registers close	9.10am	9.05am
Any pupils arriving after this time will be given an unauthorised absence mark.		

Unplanned absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible using the Study Bugs app where possible.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Please note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence the school is required to start child missing in education procedures. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends, wider family, or a home welfare visit conducted by the Education Welfare Officer with another member of staff.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Evidence may be required for appointments with short notice. This could include a text message showing confirmation of the appointment time.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality



It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late they can miss work time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action.

Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any term time period, the school will refer to Portsmouth City Council who may be required to issue parents with a Penalty Notice.

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies. If one is available, the school will place a child into the after-school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.

Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by either a phone call or contact on Study Bugs
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Reporting to parents

The school will report to parents on their child's attendance annually in the written end-of-year report.

You will also receive communication when if your child's attendance falls below expectations, so that we are able to support you in ensuring good attendance continues.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences



One of the most important ways a parent can support the education of their child and the child's social, emotional and academic development is to ensure they attend every day and on time and avoid any unauthorised absences.

The Education Act 1996 section 444(A) requires parents to ensure their children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education. The law says that parents/carers whose children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason are committing an offence.

Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education. If your child is absent and there has been no contact from the parents/carers, we will notify you by the Studybugs app of our concern and the need for your contact by midday. No communication following this will mean that a wellbeing visit may be conducted at your home.

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

It is important to note that headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are 'rare, significant, or unavoidable' which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There is no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday, and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments



- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Any absence not approved by the headteacher is an unauthorised absence. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised, and if the number of sessions absent hits the threshold set by Portsmouth City Council, parents/ carer’s will be issued with a fixed-penalty notice, or other legal action.

Unauthorised absence includes things like time off for shopping, birthdays, holidays, visiting relatives, arriving late and having days out. A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Holidays

In total there are 175 non-school days a year.

This gives families the opportunity to: Spend time together, go on family visits and days out, go on holiday, go shopping, and attend routine appointments.

If your child has a holiday of 1 week during term time and 10 days of illness, they would miss 75 hours of education in an academic year. If this pattern were to be repeated throughout your child’s school life, they would miss almost a year of their education.

Children who go on holiday for a week during the term, may miss out on more than one week of work. Before they go on holiday, they can be distracted and afterwards they may not be able to access learning because they have missed out on part of their learning journey.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child’s schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.



Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

Portsmouth schools and Portsmouth City Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:
1- the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2- the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The Local Authority never takes such action lightly and would far rather that parents work with schools to improve attendance without the Local Authority having to resort to enforcement action. However, attendance is of such importance to all of us, that the Local Authority will take necessary action to secure a child's education.

Please note: If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences, additional legal action will be taken.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best discussed with the school. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is important to not cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons. It is important that we identify the reason(s) and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it useful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.



Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film, or television work and modelling

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence.

It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C on the register, an authorised absence.

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

Parents of children can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Attendance monitoring

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:



- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Hold meetings with the Portsmouth City Council school attendance team with parents of pupils who have not engaged with support offered

The senior leadership team and the Education Welfare Officer at our school monitor pupil absence on a weekly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to notify the school via StudyBugs in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. Notification is expected for each subsequent day of absence.

Absenteeism is dealt with on a scaled system:

	Number of days absent by the end of the year	Number of lessons missed	Absence percentage	Overall attendance percentage
Green	10	50	5%	95%
Amber	20	100	10%	90%
Red	30	150	15%	85%

Green level: Any student falling below 95% as this equates to 10 missed sessions.



Parents will receive a letter reminding them of their statutory responsibility and providing them with the opportunity to get in touch to discuss any attendance issues they have by contacting the EWO. Letter reminds parents that illnesses over 5 days not authorised unless satisfactory info has been shared (and evidence seen).

Amber level: Any student falling below 90% as this equates to 20 missed sessions.

Parents will receive another letter asking them to get in touch with the EWO (face to face or telephone) to discuss further issues and school concerns around attendance. If absence is medical related, evidence will be required. If holiday related, parents will be referred onward for fining. Made clear that it is expected that attendance will improve from this point. The EWO will attempt to work with parents of pupils who have reached 90% attendance through the use of an attendance contract to support with increasing attendance again.

Red level: Any student falling below 85%, 30 sessions missed.

Initially parents will be asked to be part of an attendance contract in which they will have a specified amount of time to improve attendance. This will be discussed during a meeting with EWO and a member of SLT. Meeting provides opportunity for referrals to external agencies if needed. If no improvement after the time specified, parents will be referred to fining via appropriate PCC avenue (CME, SAPS or LOAFS). Meetings may also take place between the EWO, Portsmouth City Council School Attendance Team, and parents/ carers.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Useful Links:



<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/schools-learning-and-childcare/schools/school-attendance/>

<https://what0-18.nhs.uk/professionals/school-childcare-staff/should-child-go-schoolnursery-today>

September 2023



Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
AUTHORISED ABSENCE		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no



		reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

