



## Attendance Policy

Version 10 Sep 2021  
Approved by the Trustees for review 2 years from this date

## **Attendance Policy**

KWS is committed to maximising attendance for all pupils to enable them to benefit fully from their education. We believe that regular attendance is vital for effective learning and that improving attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the school community; pupils, parents and all school staff. KWS gives high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. The establishment and maintenance of strong home-school links and communication systems helps the school and home to work together when there are concerns about attendance.

In PSHCE and SEAL pupils are taught about the necessity of rules to maintain good behaviour, how to deal with bullying and the social and emotional aspects of learning. All of these areas can also impact on pupils' attendance. The school endeavours to help pupils with problems in these areas in order to ensure good behaviour and attendance.

### **Aims and Objectives**

KWS will;

- celebrate good and improved attendance of all pupils.
- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- support and promote positive attitudes to those pupils returning from absences.
- encourage parents to contact the school as early as possible once an absence occurs.
- regularly remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and discourage holiday absence during term time.
- make staff aware of the registration process and inform them of any changes that may occur.
- ensure registers are completed accurately at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and attendance is regularly monitored.
- work closely with the school's Education Welfare Officer and provide weekly attendance records.
- ensure that senior management and trustees regularly evaluate attendance procedures.
- put procedures in place to allow returning absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other pupils in the class.
- consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service to develop and maintain the whole school attendance policy.

### **Registration**

- Registers are to be called promptly at 9.00 am and at 12.45pm and will be marked according to the DoFE criteria (copy in each registration folder).
- Registers will close officially at 9.15am and at 1.00pm.
- Pupils who have not arrived by the time the register is closed at 9.15am will be marked 'L' as late. Pupils arriving late after 9.15am will be marked as 'U' unauthorised absence.
- For pupils on alternative timetables the registration period will be an L if past the time due in, a U if they attend after half an hour after due in time and an O if they fail to attend or give a valid reason for absence.
- The school follows a first day response system to ensure pupils safety and welfare. The school office and/or the DSL will contact parents of any pupil still absent after the close of the register about whom we have no information as to why the pupil is absent.

- If a pupil is ill, parents are requested to telephone the school by 9.00am at the latest. (The school has a dedicated phone line to receive messages when the office is busy.) Or to send a text message to the school phone.
- If pupils are absent from school without the school's prior knowledge and/or agreement, their absence will be marked as an 'unauthorised' absence.

### **Monitoring of the Register and Attendance.**

- The school office, DSL and/or Head monitors the registers on a daily and weekly basis and any concerns are logged by the DSL.
- The Head formally monitors the registers for 'lates' and absences every week.
- Holiday and other requests for absence are monitored and all absences /lates totalled and analysed for management information purpose and to provide details for pupils' annual reports and for the required DofE returns.
- Attendance will be monitored 3-weekly and attendance letters will be sent home to families on a half-termly basis to ensure all parties are involved and aware of areas of praise or concern.
- Welfare checks may be carried out on an ad-hoc basis by the DSL where a parent/ carer has not called in with an absence reason and KWS have been unable to contact the parent/carer to ascertain a reason for absence. In these incidences and failing to speak to a parent / carer a letter will be posted through the door, or a home visit made.
- Where attendance begins to slip to below 92% attendance letters will be sent to parents / carers highlighting the attendance and inviting them to discuss with school if there is any support they would like in order to help their child in school.
- The Education Office requests the registers and liaises closely with the DSL on a regular basis.
- Pupils whose regular attendance is problematic are referred to the EWO.
- Information regarding pupils with attendance issues is also shared at the termly multiagency meetings.

### **Absence requests.**

- The school follows the DofE's guidelines regarding requests for absence. Parents wishing to take pupils out of school for any reason e.g. annual family holiday or other reasons must complete a leave of absence request form before the date of the required absence. The Head will consider all requests and give written permission where appropriate. Retrospective permission will not be allowed. If absence is not granted, and the child does not attend school, then the absence taken is recorded as an 'unauthorised' absence.

### **Long term absence through illness.**

- If a pupil is absent for more than 2 weeks then the school will refer back to the referring agent.
- A medical certificate will necessary to confirm the illness or reason for absence and an expected return date.

### **Children Missing from Education.**

KWS will monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register and inform the local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission. Where a pupil has not returned to KWS for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the pupil can be

removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if KWS does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

KWS will also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion.

### **Support and encouragement for pupils/families**

- Keyworkers are required to monitor their pupils' attendance and well-being and raise any areas of concern. Keyworkers noticing pupils experiencing difficulties which they feel may lead to future absenteeism should refer the matter to the Head who will liaise with senior staff. The school has a number of strategies available to support pupils who are finding school difficult.
- School staff should encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example and have high expectations of their pupils.
- KWS encourages good attendance by rewarding pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for a term with certificates which are awarded at the end of term celebration.
- Where attendance issues relate directly to school issues, pupils will receive support from the school.
- Pupils (and their families) may also be directed to outside agencies eg 'Home school family worker', Early Help Assessment etc for additional support.
- Disenchanted pupils may be offered elements of an alternative curriculum to encourage their attendance in school.
- Action on irregular attendance will initially involve the Head, followed by the Head or DSL contacting the parents to discuss the matter. If attendance does not improve the parents will be invited to a meeting at school. The aim of the meeting will be to identify and resolve any difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. If necessary the parents will be made aware of the legal requirement regarding school attendance. If the difficulties are not resolved and the attendance does not improve a formal referral will be made to the EWO service.
- Pupils who are returning to school following a temporary exclusion will have a reintegration interview with the Head and the Behaviour Support Worker, to plan for the pupil's needs and support them on re-entry.

### **The Law**

All children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 17, rising to 18 in 2014) are required to receive an education. As parents/carers you are responsible for ensuring your child receives an education. You risk criminal prosecution if your child fails to attend regularly, and punctually, at the school where s/he is registered. Prosecutions may result in fines of up to £2,500 and/or the possibility of a three months imprisonment. Courts may at their discretion impose a parenting order or direct the LEA to apply for an Education Supervision Order which puts a child of compulsory school age, who is not being properly educated under Local Education Authority supervision.

The 2015 guidance from the Department of Education now sets the level for Persistent Absenteeism at 90%; children will be considered PA if their attendance falls below 92%. The Education Welfare Service will be alerted once a child's attendance falls below that mark.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.