



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a whole-school policy, within the framework of which the Primary Phase and the Nursery policies operate as appropriate.

ATTENDANCE POLICY STATEMENT

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School we are committed to promoting the welfare of our pupils and students through regular school attendance. We know that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on pupils'/students' attainment and overall progress in the school. The link between good attendance and high levels of achievement are undeniable. Poor attendance and lateness may also be detrimental to the social adjustment and development of pupils/students.

We expect parents/carers to ensure that pupils/students attend school and that they are punctual.

In cases of persistent absenteeism (those pupils/students with less than 90% attendance), the School works closely with parents/carers to make sure that issues preventing attendance at school are dealt with efficiently and effectively.

General

Parents and carers of pupils/students of compulsory school age have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise.

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Pupil Registration Regulations 1995, the School must keep an attendance register. The School records the attendance of pupils/students electronically.

The School is registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Aims

The School is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils/students to attend school regularly. The School will work with parents/carers and pupils/students to secure this aim.

The Attendance policy aims to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils/students who should be attending the School have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the School.

The School aims to deal promptly with the causes of poor attendance and lateness.

Registers

Pupils/students of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register all pupils/students (including those over compulsory school age) twice a day.

The register is updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition, all teachers must check that the pupils/students who should attend each lesson do so. **If a pupil/student is not in lessons, the teacher must report this to Reception straight away.**

Those taking the register are presented with a range of options giving reasons for the absence and must choose the appropriate one when they are absolutely sure of the reason; otherwise N should be selected until the reason can be pursued.

All attendance registers will be closed ten minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Roles and responsibilities

Staff, parents and carers must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils/students, by their behaviour and attitude, the importance of good attendance.

The Board of Governors will:

- approve the Attendance policy and any proposed changes
- receive reports on attendance from the Head
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Head's report
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the School, and is known by the parents/carers

The Head will:

- include attendance targets as part of the School Development Plans
- monitor progress
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the School
- determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested
- notify parents/carers as appropriate that, if a pupil/student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, his/her parents/carers commit an offence
- liaise with the Local Authority over persistent absentees
- liaise with the Local Authority and social services as appropriate when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school; in certain circumstances, it will be appropriate to inform the Prevent team (Channel) or the police.
- make an annual report with statistics to the Board of Governors

The Deputy Head will:

- oversee the attendance arrangements
- work with Joint Heads of Primary Phase, Senior Heads of Year, Heads of Year and Form Tutors to ensure the efficient running of the system
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil/student absence
- make contact with parents/carers
- will contact the parents of pupils/students whose attendance is falling below 90% in conjunction with Joint Heads of Primary Phase and Senior HoYs.
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up
- deal with issues of inadequate registering
- arrange appropriate training for staff
- keep the Head informed of the effectiveness of the policy
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved

The Assistant Head (Data) will:

- provide half termly attendance data for all Year groups
- Provide weekly reports on persistent absentees.

The Joint Heads of Primary Phase/Senior Heads of Year/Head of Sixth Form will

- Carry out all the duties of the Heads of Year, but also will contact the parents of pupils/students whose attendance is falling below 90%.

Heads of Year will:

- ensure that all pupil/student absences are noted and absence notes received from parents/carers in their son/daughter's planner.
- make regular checks on absence notes
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- contact parents/carers over pupil/student absences where appropriate
- review attendance for the Year group every half term and take appropriate action.
- reinforce good practice at Year team meetings.

- interview pupils/students, where absence or punctuality is a concern and take appropriate action
- work with the parents/carers of pupils/students to address any attendance issues
- ensure that the Form Tutors set individual attendance targets with pupils/students
- provide Form Tutors with up to date attendance records
- deal appropriately with any incidents of lateness.

Form Tutors will:

- ensure that pupils/students are registered accurately and punctually
- ensure that pupils/students bring absence notes
- follow up cases of unaccounted absence or unacceptable notes
- keep the Head of Year informed of any signs of suspected truancy
- inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences, bearing in mind any safeguarding or 'prevent' issues that may need to be brought to the attention of the Designated Senior Leader.
- Conduct termly attendance reviews with pupils/students in their form.

Classroom/Subject Teachers will:

- check the attendance of pupils/students in their lessons and activities
- inform the Form Tutor of the names of pupils/students who are absent without notification.

Pupils/students are required to:

- attend regularly (above 96.1%) unless they are ill or have an authorised absence. 'Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session.
- bring an explanatory note on their day of return to School. This should be written in the pupil's planner. Sixth Form students should provide a written note from parents/carers.

Parents/carers are required to:

- ensure that each pupil/student arrives on time each day.
- let the School know if their child is going to be late.

- promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- not take their son/daughter on holiday during term time.
- notify the School when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of absence.
- telephone the school on subsequent days of absence (unless arrangements for a long-term absence have been agreed e.g. when there is a broken limb or surgery).
- keep the School well informed, in cases of lengthy absence, so that work can be sent home in certain cases.
- seek prior authorisation, from the Head, for any medical appointment that take place in school time. Provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen. Pupils/students will not be allowed to sign out of School if they do not have a note from a parent/carer. **Medical appointments during normal school hours should be avoided as far as possible.**
- provide a note confirming the reason for any absence when the pupil/student returns to school. This should be on the first day of the pupil's/student's return to school.

Absence Procedures

If a pupil/student is absent the following takes place.

Day 1. If no communication is received from parents/carers, an email (KKS) message is sent to the parents/carers to get in touch. The family home will be contacted and if no contact is made with the parent/carer, a message is left on the answer phone.

Day 2. The family home will be contacted alongside all listed contact numbers on SIMS. If no contact is made with the parent/carer, a message is left on the answer phone

Day 3. If no contact is made from home a discussion is held between the Form Tutor and the Head of Year. The likely outcome is a home visit.

The BwD Learning and Access Manager will be contacted if contact has not been made with parents/carers through any of the above methods by Day 4.

Lateness

If a pupil/student is late they must report to the School Reception. This is recorded on the register. If a pupil/student is repeatedly late it will be treated as a disciplinary matter. The Head of Year and Form Tutor will work together to help the pupil/student to improve their punctuality. Parents/carers are likely to be involved in this process. Sanctions will be imposed as per the Negative Behaviour Charts for repeated unexplained lateness.

Inspection

The Deputy Head will ensure that the School Attendance Registers are available for inspection by HMIs, registered inspectors and other approved agencies.

Leave of Absence

Authorised absence means that permission has been granted in advance by the Head. Unauthorised absence means that the Head has not granted permission for absence.

Leave of absence can be granted only by the Head. Requests must be made in writing to the Head.

The Government's amended pupil registration regulations no longer allow Headteachers to approve any requests for leave of absence during term-time, unless the application is made in advance and there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the time off school. For example, permission can no longer be granted for absence due to holidays. The school adheres to the local authority's joint 'Code of Conduct' for issuing education penalty notices. Should a parent/carer decide to take their child out of school for a leave of absence that has not been authorised by the Head, the absences will be recorded as unauthorised and will result in a request for the Local Authority to issue fixed Penalty Notices, which is per child, per parent/carer.

Holiday Leave

The Head is not allowed to grant leave for holidays. Parents/carers must ensure that holidays do not encroach into term time and failure to do this will mean the absence(s) are recorded as unauthorised and the procedure set out under 'Leave of Absence' is followed.

Short Term Leave

The School can legally grant short term, exceptional leave for family reasons (e.g. weddings or funerals of close relatives). It is for the Head to determine the reasonableness.

The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Head will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Deputy Head and the appropriate Head of Year. The Head may also seek advice from other appropriate agencies before coming to a decision.

Religious Observance

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a document with advice on attendance for schools and LAs. It explains that the day being taken as absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's/student's parents/carers belong.

The Head will review each application but will try to accommodate reasonable requests (e.g. she will allow one day for example for Eid, Diwali, Day of Atonement etc, providing parents/carers request this in advance).

The School expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

Taking a Pupil/Student off the School Roll

The Head will authorise the taking of a pupil's/student's name off the School Roll in accordance with the current Education Act Regulations.

Updated by Mr NH Vyse: September 2018

Approved by the Board of Governors: 15th October 2018