Attendance policy

Approved by:	Trustees	**Date:** 26/09/2022
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Contents

Education is an inalienable and inherit right of every child (article 28 of the UNCRC). Every child of compulsory age is entitled to an efficient, full-time education suitable to the age and needs.

Good attendance is a foundation to positive educational outcomes for our students. It is a protective factor for students who are vulnerable and a powerful predictor of future success and wellbeing. It is therefore the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, as well as trustees and local authority to improve students' attendance and remove any potential barriers to accessing education.

"Pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment."

1. 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Our link trustee for attendance is Mr Shamsu Miah.

3.2 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Ms Jihar and can be contacted via 0121 7737946

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The attendance officer is Mrs A. Khanom and can be contacted via 0121-7737496

3.5 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9 am.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the form tutor/head teacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30 am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40 and will be kept open until 9.00The register for the second session will be taken at 13.35 and will be kept open until 13.40.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The attendance register 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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- 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

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7).

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.

4.3 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.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

- After the register has closed, pupils will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. They must sign in at reception upon arrival after 9 am.

- Form tutors will oversee punctuality and set targets and break time detentions for their tutees.

- Persistent lateness will result in attendance team contacting parents/carers to resolve the issue and further sanctions.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where a pupil does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a home visit and subsequently contact the police for a safety and wellbeing check

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

- The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- This includes information via our biannual reports, bin-annual parents evenings and more regularly via the form tutor if attendance, punctuality and academic progress are of concern.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We appreciate that many of our students have families who live abroad and may have urgent needs to travel. Weddings and holidays are not considered as exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances include, visiting grandparents during terminal illness.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any existing absences from the current academic year will be taken in to account when considering the application for leave of absence. Any request should be submitted, using the absence request form, as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence and request a meeting with parents/carers before a decision is made. All decisions for leave are made by the head teacher and are final.

Should pupils not return to school after this period, they may be removed from school roll, unless the pupil is unwell on return, for which a medical note from a GP will be required. If there have been airline errors which cause a delay for return, official documentation will be required. No term time leave will be granted to pupils in years 10 and 11.

Hajj

For pupils performing Hajj, a maximum period of 4 weeks' leave will be granted. This leave is given only once during their secondary phase. For such leave, a period of six-week notice is required.

For all absences, pupils are expected to catch up on work missed. This will require parental support.

Where school is not informed of any extended (unauthorized) leave undertaken, pupils may be removed from school roll and the local authority informed. No requests for appeal will be considered.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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

- Study leave

5.2 Legal sanctions

If a pupil fails to attend regularly, the school will follow the FAST-track to attendance procedure, including court proceedings and parenting orders.

Step 1 – Informal meeting (early help)

1. The pupil has concerning level of attendance. Parents/carers are invited to an informal meeting to identify barriers and signpost to support services.

2. If there is no response from parents, a home visit is conducted.

3. If the pupil is still absent or the property is empty, the school will follow CME procedure.

4. The school will consult 'Right Help, Right Time' and complete a Family Connect form to request an early help conversation or make a request for support to CASS.

Step 2 – School Attendance Review Meeting

Pupil attendance has not improved. The school will call a formal 'School Attendance Review Meeting' (SARM) at the school, agree a Parent/School Contract and send the 'Formal Warning Notice' if needed.

Step 3 – Formal Notice

The pupil has further unauthorised absence after the SARM within a maximum 10 school week period. with an up to date attendance printout and the 'School Attendance (Legal Action) - Information for Parents/Carers' leaflet.

Step 4 – Refer to ELIT/Court section.

The pupil has a minimum of 10 further sessions of unauthorised absence since the Formal Warning Notice was issued.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We recognize the role of fostering a calm, safe, orderly and supportive environment for all our students to thrive and are able to learn.

We will work with parents and partners to build strong relationships and offer support to parents and students to ensure regular attendance and wellbeing.

Our whole school approach is focused on supporting young people to attend school ready to learn and to avoid punitive measures and enforcement for as long as possible.

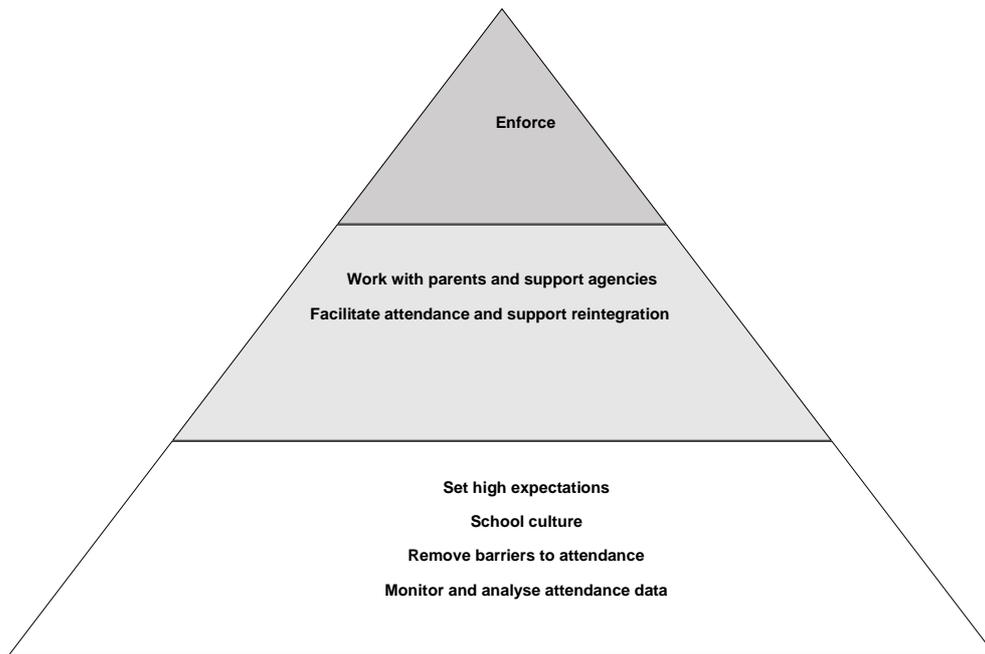This is achieved through consistent promotion of the benefits of good attendance.

At HKKG, we do this through:

- School culture: creating a safe, calm and supportive environment across the school. School is a place where students want to come and are ready and excited to learn. Our behaviour, anti-bullying, SEND and safeguarding policies and procedures are in place to ensure a consistent approach to wellbeing and learning. We recognize that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

- Building relationships: building a positive relationship between home and school to ensure good attendance.

- Expectations: senior leaders and attendance team greet students in the morning and ensure students arrive on time to lessons.

- Awareness and communication of expectations: assemblies, parents meetings, newsletters, information via our website. Discussion of the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and clarify the expectations of 'goo' attendance. Once a year, the school sends the 'School Attendance' whole school letter to parents/carers by pupil post, email, and by placing it on our school website and our admissions pack.

- Students with excellent attendance and punctuality are recognized and rewarded during in annual award evenings.

- Students are rewarded during termly ceremonies and special assemblies with certificates and prizes.

- Forms with best attendance record and punctuality are awarded with form parties at the end of each half term.

- Parents and students are signposted to support, advice and resources, via our website.

- Re-integration: In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests (article 6 of the UNCRC), a temporary part-time table may be needed to reintegrate a pupil. It will not be used to manage pupil behaviour or as a long term solution. Phased return to school can be used for students affected by emotional based absence and anxiety as well as adjustments to class room environment, time out sessions and pastoral support.

We will follow the following guidance on working together to improve attendance as a graduated and multidisciplinary approach:

1. **Expect** - Set high expectation from parents and students and a culture where school attendance is prioritized and students are ready to learn.

2. **Monitor** - rigorous and timely use of attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance. Analysis at student and cohort level.

3. **Listen and understand** - Work with parents and students to understand barrier to attendance and resolve those issues..

4. **Facilitate support** - Remove in-school barriers to attendance. help parents and students access support to overcome barriers outside of school, including initiation of EH support and family plans. Support pupils back into school following a long period of absence (form tutor, remote learning, use of support staff, and after school support)

5. **Formalise support** In case of persistent absence and voluntary support is not working, parents have not engaged with the support services. Parenting contract or an education supervision order may be used. Reintegration package.

6. **Enforce -** If absence persists further, or family is not engaged, it can be enforced with statutory intervention such as prosecution. Support can be intensified through statutory children's social care referral, especially for students with sever absence (<50%).

Enforce

Work with parents and support agencies

Facilitate attendance and support reintegration

Set high expectations

School culture

Remove barriers to attendance

Monitor and analyse attendance data

7. Attendance monitoring

Analyse data and identify patterns: Form tutors review attendance data regularly and set targets for their students, attendance officer shares attendance data with form tutors and teachers, attendance reporting to parents in bi annual reports, phone calls and letters to identify source of the problem and work together with parents. Early identification and interventions are important as attendance is a central part of our school's vision and day to day processes.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data 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

Attendance percentage	Person(s) responsible
97% -100%	Form tutors
91-97%	Form tutors and attendance officers
90% or below	Attendance officer and SLT

7.2 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. Use data to identify days and subjects where there is more absence.

- Vulnerable students and students with wellbeing and safeguarding needs, are monitored more closely and their lateness and absence are investigated more immediately to ensure a pattern of school avoidance is not emerging.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Conduct pupil attendance and behaviour review meetings with form tutors and senior leaders to discuss changes in patterns and effective strategies.
  - Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
  - Share yearly attendance and safeguarding reports with staff and trustees to review impact of whole school and individual interventions.
  - The SDP and safeguarding action plans take into account patterns of attendance to inform development plans and targets.

7.4 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, including early help support and referrals to children's services and counselling.
- Students identified as severe absentees are monitored more closely, with regular meetings with parents and students to ensure that attendance is improving.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually, by the head teacher and DSL. At every review, the policy will be approved by the board of trustees.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND)
- Curriculum
- Wellbeing

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