

King James's School

POLICY STATEMENT

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy last reviewed (date)	June 2023
Ratified by Governors (date)	June 2023
Next policy review due (date)	June 2024
Due for review by Governors (date)	June 2024
Staff Lead	Deputy Headmaster

MISSION STATEMENT:

This policy will support the school by being reflective of the Governors' direction and School's development plan. It will be used in an efficient and effective manner by ensuring a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils are encouraged to be ready, respectful and engaged; securing a strong foundation for good attendance and time keeping that is essential to ensuring optimum learning and a key life skill required for any university, career, apprenticeship or further education.

Significant revisions since the last review:

Addition of "supporting students and removing attendance barriers, praising / monitoring attendance sections.
Addition of "registration".

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Attendance Policy at King James's School

Attendance Statement.

At King James's School it is our responsibility to provide all our students with a good education. Attendance is a crucial part of being able to deliver that effectively and at King James's School our expectation is between 100%-96% attendance each academic year (refer to Maintaining Good Attendance at KJS chart). The school shares this legal obligation with parents/carers and students themselves and will work together in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure that attendance is maximised, and the rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are avoided.

The foundation to securing a good attendance at King James's School is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils are ready, respectful and engaged. Great attendance and punctuality are essential to ensure optimum learning and is also a key life skill for any university, career, apprenticeship or in further education. Employers want to recruit people who are reliable. By setting good attendance and punctuality patterns from an early age, students can demonstrate this.

King James's School has a system of incentives and rewards which not only acknowledge the efforts of students who have improved their attendance and punctuality, but also celebrates exemplary attendance at individual, form, and year group level.

Poor attendance often leads to weaker overall academic performance as well as preventing students from taking part in wider school community activities and the important social aspects of school life. It may also be a signal for safeguarding concerns which the school has a legal obligation to report. Good attendance leads to great working habits and a positive mental attitude.

Supporting Students and removing attendance barriers.

At King James's School parents should ensure their children are at school for the start of the day 8.40am with the school finishing at 3.15pm. Mr McIntosh Deputy Head, is the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in School. The year group Pastoral Officer monitors on the initial day to day attendance with more detailed support from the Attendance Officer and if deemed necessary the Family Liaison Officer.

Support is available for all students struggling to attend school and help put in place via the Attendance Officer, Learning Managers, Pastoral Officer, Family Liaison Officer and SLT. Students who have been absent for any extended period will be reintegrated back into school with an individual bespoke plan for a reduced time to ease the transition back into the KJS community. All staff will work together to provide a caring and welcoming environment where students will feel valued and secure. All Staff at King James's School work continually with all students and their families to emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Praising Good Attendance.

The school also promotes attendance and punctuality through assemblies, letters, websites, boards around school, Tutor time, certificates (100% -96%) and awards at the end of year.

Monitoring Attendance.

The school monitors all students and especially those who fall below 90% and classed as persistent absentees. Regular structured meetings are held with the Attendance Officer, key members of staff, the families in order to identify /support those pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and early intervention is key. The school governors are actively involved with the legal attendance process.

King James's School Attendance Aims.

We are committed to:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- We will also support parents to uphold their legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. **“By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. Until the age of 18, a student must stay in full-time education for example at a school or college, start an apprenticeship or traineeship. As a parent you are responsible for making sure that this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly – even if they miss school without you knowing – the Local Authority may take legal action against you.” (DFE)**

Securing good attendance involves close interaction and joined up thinking in the curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral, mental health and wellbeing and effective use of resource. It cannot solely be the preserve of one member of staff but must be a partnership across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Unplanned absence.

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30 a.m. on the school absence form which can be accessed via the school website, which is then sent straight to the Year Group Pastoral Officer. King James's School will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure their absence is reported daily via the same form. The Pastoral Officer and Form Tutor will check in with the student when they return.

Parents / carers may not authorise their child's absence, only school can do this, from the explanation provided by the parent/ carer. If the pupil has had an extended period of absence through illness and/or 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 letter, 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 and/or the medical evidence is not sufficient, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This must be done via the school absence form on the school website and will be sent directly to the Year Group Pastoral Officer.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not viable, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and ensure the appropriate form has been completed via the school website.

Following up absence.

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the year group Pastoral Officer (First Contact) / Attendance Officer/ Family Liaison Officer (depending on the situation around the family) will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use.

To safeguard our pupils, parents/carers of students should contact school on daily basis regarding the student's absence giving a reason for the absence by 8.30 a.m. If school does not receive notification from a parent/ carer, a call /text message will be sent from the school for Safeguarding purposes, before 10am. In specific cases, the Attendance Officer or Family Liaison Officer will visit home.

Reporting to parents.

Attendance will regularly be reported to parents through termly trackers and is live on MCAS to be accessed each day. The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance with the statutory requirements and the values of King James's. We aim for exemplary attendance, which is vital for student educational progress, throughout each academic year.

If attendance is a concern, a parent will be contacted by the Attendance officer, Pastoral Officer, Learning Manager or Key Stage Directors more frequently to help, assist, and improve attendance, meetings arranged, with support given therefore ensuring the best attendance is maintained whilst their children are at King James's School.

Registration.

Students arrive on site for 8.40am ready to go to tutor time (8.45am – 9.10am) when registration is taken. Should a student arrive after 9.10am they are required to sign in at reception and then go straight to their first period 1 lesson when the lesson register will then be taken as the class starts. The register will be completed at the beginning of each lesson throughout the 5-period day. Registers are taken in accordance with the DfE register codes and procedures.

At 8.45am the school gates are locked and any students arriving late without reasonable justification will be issued with a lunch time detention. If they fail to turn up for the lunch time detention this will

then be escalated to a D60 (one hour) the following evening. Parents are notified via email/text on both occasions.

Three times a day at 10am/ 2pm and 3.15pm reception send a copy of all students who have signed in and out, this ensures optimum safeguarding and the ability for the appropriate staff (Attendance Officer/Pastoral Officers) to cross reference data for the registers such as medical appointments.

If a student has been marked present for the previous lesson but is absent at the next lesson registration, then a missing student email will be sent out to all Pastoral staff, Learning Managers and SLT to locate the child.

Should there be a problem in lesson with a student, the teacher can place an on-call email alert which then get picked up by Pastoral, Senior Leadership Team and any other available staff to assist with the incident.

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'. The Head considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness
- 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.

Holidays in term time will **not be authorised** unless specifically requested by the Head in the case of only **exceptional circumstances**. Parents/ carers should avoid booking family holidays during term time. Taking holidays in term time means that students will miss essential learning and could struggle to catch up on their return. If this is unavoidable, parents/ carers should **complete the holiday request form accessed via the website at least three weeks in advance**.

Legal sanctions.

Should all other areas to assist in KJS improvement of a student's attendance have been explored and unsuccessful (**as detailed on the KJH Maintaining good Attendance & the Attendance Strategy chart**), the Local Authority can fine parents through the Fast Track process for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. (For further information on the Fast Track process, please refer to **the information for Parents on the Rights and Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance**)

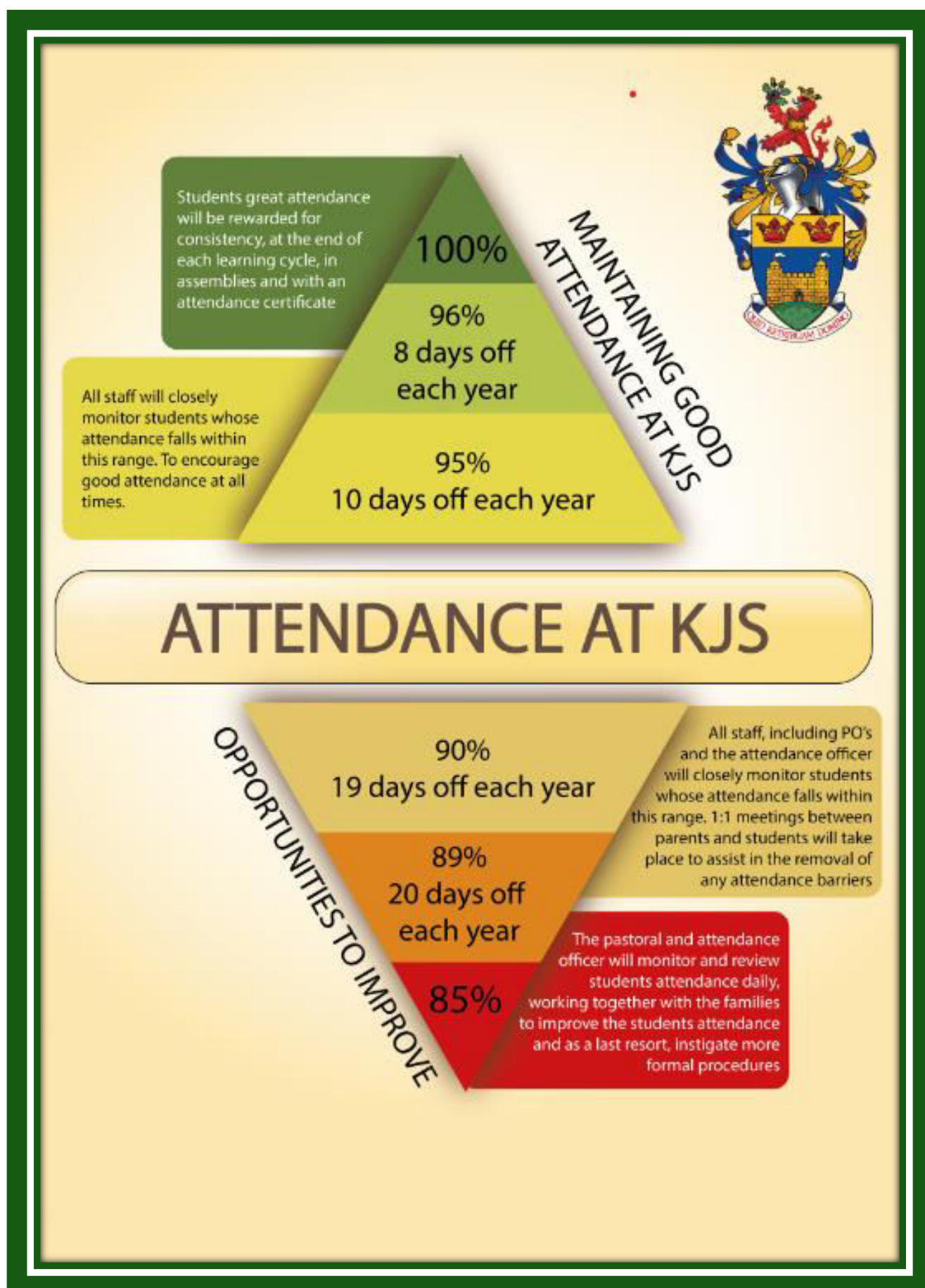
Legislation and guidance.

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

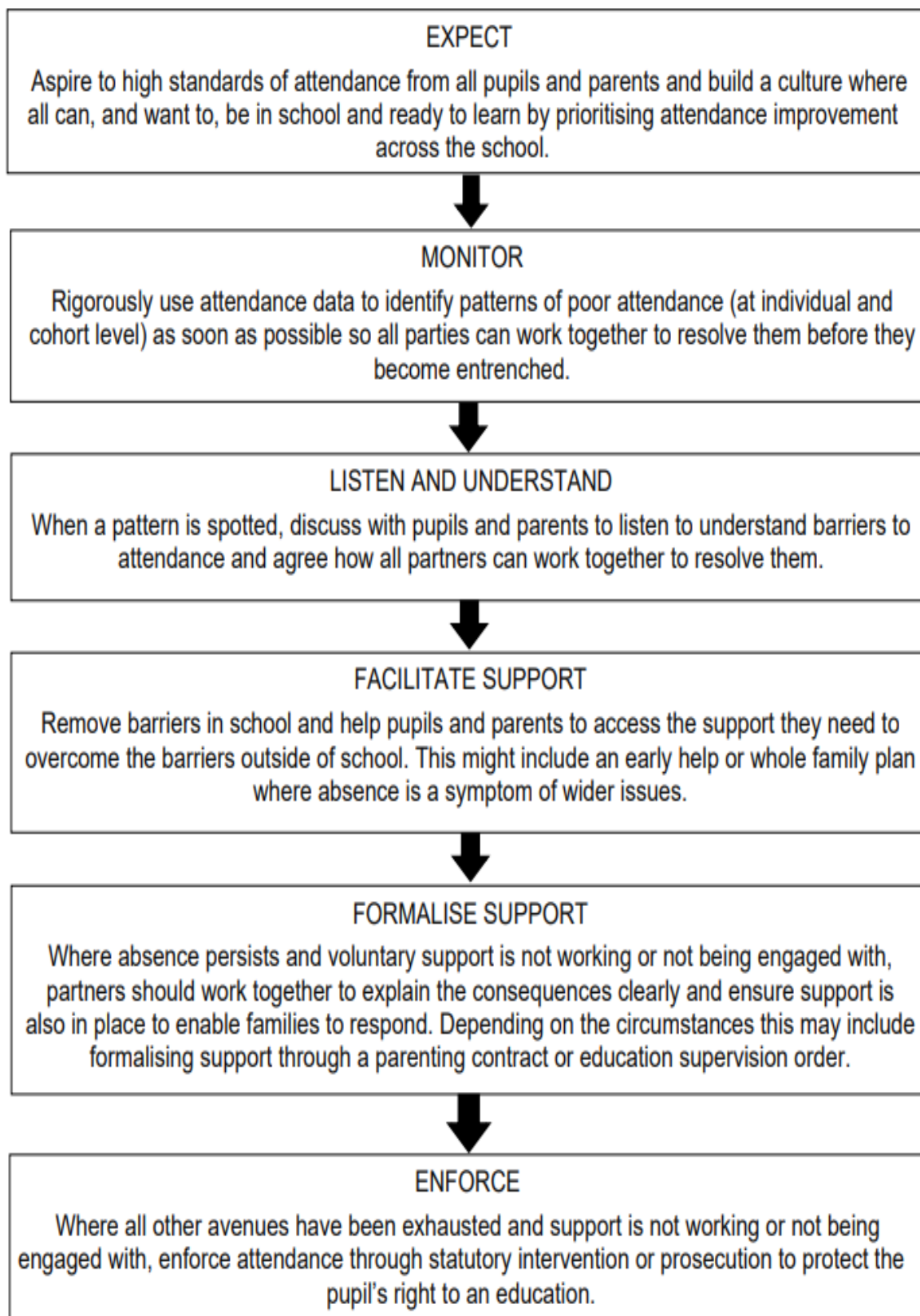
- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
- Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- School Attendance Support Pathway - Legal Document 2021
- Working together to improve school attendance 2022.

Policy Monitoring Arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, termly by the Head. If changes are made, the policy will be then approved by the full governing board.

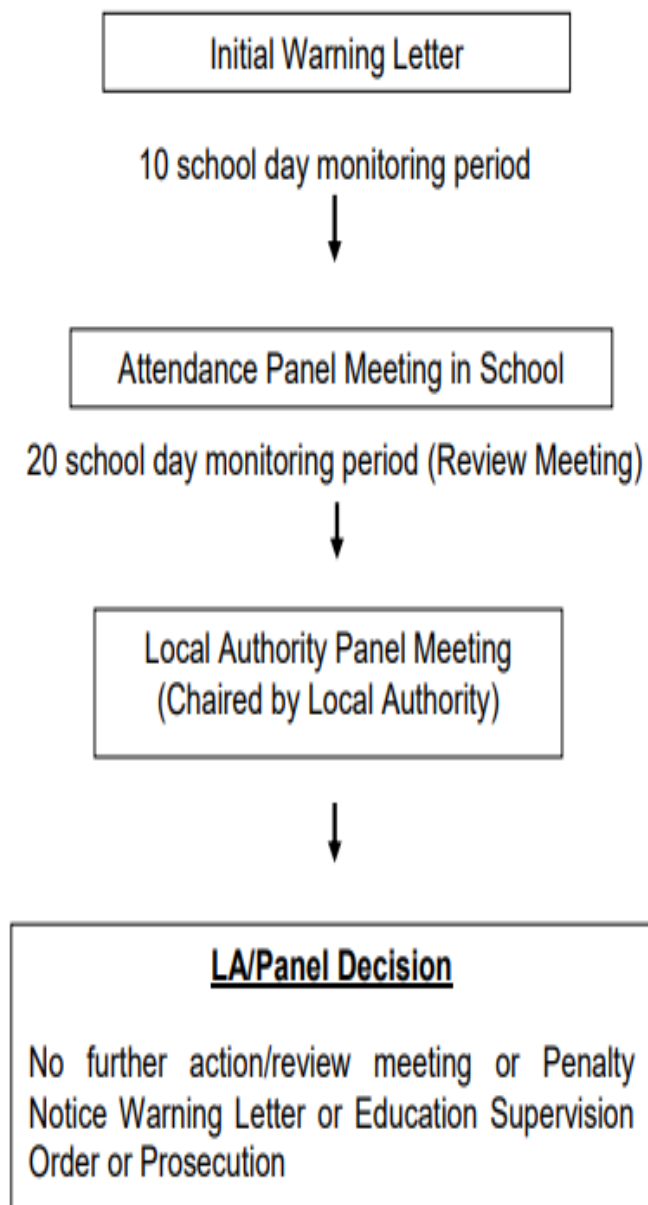


King James's School Attendance Strategy



North Yorkshire County Council Fast Track to School Attendance Process with their Attendance & Enforcement Officer. Please refer to the information for Parents on Rights and Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance attached.

School Attendance Procedure – Time Restricted



RESPONSIBILITIES – PARENTS AND CAREERS

All parents* who have children of compulsory school age are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive a suitable education. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their child at school.

Parent whose children are registered at a school or other educational establishment are then responsible for ensuring that they attend punctually, regularly, stay there as required and follow the school's rules with regard to behaviour. If parent/carer(s) fail to ensure this, there are a number of options open to the Local Authority and schools to secure an improvement in the child's behaviour and attendance and support parents to achieve this.

PARENTING CONTRACTS

The Local Authority (LA) and schools have powers to make formal agreements (Parenting Contracts) with parents to address their child's behaviour and/or attendance at school.

What is a Parenting Contract?

It is

- a formal agreement between a parent and either the LA or the governing body of a school
- a voluntary arrangement. Parents cannot be forced to make the agreement with the LA or school. However, if the LA later prosecutes a parent for the unauthorised absence of their child, or applies for a Parenting Order following a permanent exclusion, a parent's refusal to make this sort of agreement or failure to keep to its* terms can be used as evidence in those proceedings

• Intended to provide parents with the support they need and to encourage a positive working relationship between school, the LA and parents to tackle their child's persistent absence or poor behaviour in school and address any underlying causes

• Under the contract, the parent agrees to comply with specified requirements e.g. to ensure that the child attends school regularly and punctually over a specified period of time

• The LA/School will agree to provide specified support (tailored to the parents'/child's needs) to enable the parent to comply i.e. support through a referral to the Prevention Service

• Parenting Contracts can be drawn up as an outcome from an Attendance Panel Meeting as part of the schools formal Attendance Procedures. A Family Outreach Worker from the LA's Prevention Service may attend as support if agreed

**For the purposes of this document 'Parent' also refers to a person having Parental Responsibility or having care of a child.*

When can a Contract be offered?

- In cases of persistent absence as defined by the DfE (under 90% attendance)
- When a pupil is excluded from school (whether for a fixed term or permanently)

Why was it introduced?

- Recognition that parents need support and that some parents may need individualised support from the school or LA
- Helps parents build a productive relationship with the school/LA and access the support they need.

PROSECUTION - under the Education Act 1996

A parents' failure to ensure the regular attendance of their child at school is a criminal offence. The LA has the power to prosecute for this offence in the Magistrates' Courts under s444 (1) Level 3 offence or (1A) Level 4 offence of the Education Act 1996.

On conviction, parents can be fined up to £1000 (1) or in the case of an "aggravated" offence (1A) they can be fined up to £2500 and may also be liable to a custodial sentence of up to 3 months or a Community Order.

If a parent fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at an alternative provision the LA also has the power to prosecute them in the Magistrates' Courts. In this case the parent must first have been given notice in writing of the requirement of their child to attend the alternative provision.

PARENTING ORDERS

Parenting Orders are available following a successful prosecution of a parent for the irregular attendance of their child under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The LA may ask the court for an 'ancillary' Parenting Order or the magistrates may deem it appropriate themselves as an outcome of the Hearing. Schools also have powers to apply for a Parenting Order to address a child's behaviour in school.

What is a parenting order?

- It is a Court Order which compels a parent to attend parenting classes, and any other requirements as determined necessary by the court, for improving their child's behaviour or attendance
- In irregular attendance cases it follows a successful Prosecution in the Magistrate's Court and is in addition to any other penalty imposed
- In behavioural cases the application is a civil case and therefore does not involve a criminal conviction.

When can it be used?

- When a court is satisfied that it would be desirable in the interests of preventing further irregular attendance of a pupil at a school
- Where a pupil has been excluded for serious misbehaviour either permanently or for the second time in 12 months

• Where parenting is considered a factor in the child's behaviour and parents are unwilling to engage with the LA or school

Why was it introduced?

- Recognition that parents need support and that some parents may need targeted and individualised support from schools and LA's

• Some parents are unwilling or feel unable to engage voluntarily when Schools/LAs raise issues over their child's behaviour

• Parenting Programmes, or 1:1 Parenting Sessions, can help parents gain the skills and confidence they need to improve the attendance and behaviour of their child. Participating parents have said that they would recommend them to other parents in their situation.

ALTERNATIVES TO PROSECUTION - Education Supervision Order/ Penally Notice

1. Education Supervision Order – Children Act 1989

The LA has a duty to consider an Education Supervision Order (ESO) prior to taking a prosecution against a parent. The LA may apply for the Order instead of, or as well as a prosecution, as a means of ensuring regular school attendance whether a child is enrolled at a school or not.

An ESO is made in respect of a child in the Family Proceedings Court under the Children Act 1989 and makes the LA responsible (through an appointed Supervising Officer – usually the Attendance and Enforcement Officer) for advising, supporting and giving Direction to the child and his or her parents in order to make sure that the child is properly educated. Directions may include for example, a requirement for the parent and child to attend meetings with the Supervisor, or with teachers at the school, to discuss the child's progress.

Where parents persistently fail to comply with Directions, and those Directions are reasonable, they may be guilty of a Level 3 offence. In such circumstances the Supervising Officer must ensure that the matter is drawn to the attention of the Magistrates Court and, upon conviction, the parent will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. The Supervising Officer must also inform Children's Social Care (CSC) and, in such cases, CSC must investigate the circumstances around the child and consider whether it is appropriate for them to take any action to secure the welfare of the child.

2. Penalty Notice for Irregular attendance and exclusion

LA Officers, Head teachers (Deputy Head teachers or Assistant Head teachers if authorised by the Head teacher) or the Police have the power to issue Penalty Notices, however, the main responsibility is with the LA. (In cases other than unauthorised leave of absence in term time and exclusion, a Warning Letter will be issued where it is required that no further unauthorised absence is to occur by the child within the following 15 school days or the Penalty Notice will be issued).

What is a Penalty Notice

1. Irregular attendance

- Parents of a registered pupil whose child fails to attend school regularly are committing an offence (this includes the taking of leave of absence in term time (holiday) when the request is not deemed by the Head teacher to be an exceptional circumstance and therefore not authorised)

- Penalty Notices provide an alternative to a Prosecution for the offence in the form of a fine. There are 2 levels of penalty - £60 (if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice) and £120 (if paid after 21 days but no later than 28 days)

- Parents who pay the penalty within the time limits cannot later be prosecuted for the offence of their child's irregular attendance within the same time period to which the Penalty Notice relates

What if I don't pay?

- If a parent does not pay a properly issued Penalty Notice within 28 days, the LA will prosecute for the offence of irregular attendance under s444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

Can I appeal against a penalty notice?

- There is no right of appeal against the Penalty Notice, but if you should believe it to have been wrongly issued to you, you should contact the LA immediately. The Penalty Notice may be withdrawn if it has not been issued in accordance with the LA's Code of Conduct for the use of Penalty Notices or has been issued to the wrong person.

- If the Penalty Notice is not withdrawn and you do not pay, you will be prosecuted under s444 of the Education Act 1996 s444 (1). The court will consider the evidence and decide whether an offence has been committed. If found proven, the appropriate penalty will be determined by the court.

2. Exclusions

- A Penalty Notice can also be issued under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 if a child is seen in a public place in the first five days following a fixed term or permanent exclusion without a justifiable reason. Parents must have been informed of their duty and the time scale in writing by the school at the time of the exclusion

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ORDERS

If it appears to the LA that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, then procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order against the parent under s437 of the Education Act 1996 will begin. The Order will require the child's parent to register their child at a named school. If they fail to comply with the order the parent can be prosecuted in a Magistrates Court.



Information for Parents on Rights and Responsibilities

Relating to School Attendance

Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parenting Contracts

Prosecution: Education Act 1996 S444

Parenting Orders

Alternatives to Prosecution

- Education Supervision Orders Children Act 1989

- Penalty Notices

Irregular Attendance and Exclusions

School Attendance Orders

Contacts for Information