



Attendance Policy and Procedures

Kingsmeadow Community School: Attendance Policy

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1. The importance of school attendance

1.1 In the DfE guidance, '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)', it states: 'Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn'.

1.2 At Kingsmeadow we firmly support the DfE research and guidance. Good school attendance provides the foundation for both academic success and personal development which leads to improved future opportunities.

2. The law on school attendance and the right to a full-time education.

2.1 Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

2.2 Every child of compulsory school age must be in an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent, or those with parental responsibilities, to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by a suitable, alternative means of education.

2.3 Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

2.4 For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

3. School Information

Start of the school day	8.40am Students should be on school site for 8.40am with morning tutor starting at 8.45am. Students arriving at school after 8.45am will be marked late (L or U depending on time) and complete an afterschool detention the same evening.
End of the school day	3.15pm
In the event that your child will not be in School for the start of the school day for any reason (absence or lateness), please notify us as soon as possible (including the reason for absence). Pupils are expected to attend School for the full duration of the school day. If you	

know your child will need to leave school early for any reason, please notify us in advance. We cannot allow students to leave school without consent.

If it is unavoidable that your child will miss part of the school day, you must ensure that only the minimum amount of time is missed and that they either arrive at school or return to school as soon as is possible.

4. Scope and purpose of the policy

4.1 This policy applies to staff, students and parents/carers.

4.2 This policy meets the requirements of [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;

- [The Education Acts 1996 and 2002](#)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Crime and Disorder Act 1989](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Sentencing Act 2020](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Information About Individual Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 1933](#) and [1963](#)
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It also refers to Relevant government guidance;

- [Keeping Children Safe In Education 2026](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Elective Home Education](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)
- [Providing remote education](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#)

5.2 The responsibility of school governors:

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
- Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.
- Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.

5.3 The responsibility of the school Senior Leadership Team:

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners.
- If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service.
- Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.
- Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.

- Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.
- Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.
- Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked after children that support good attendance.

5.4 The responsibility of the Headteacher:

- Establishing a culture where high attendance is expected and accepted as the norm.
- Expecting good attendance and punctuality from all students and ensuring that all students understand the importance of good attendance.
- Creating and maintaining a Vulnerable Students Register and ensuring there is an Inclusion Meeting to discuss those students on a weekly basis.
- Ensuring academy compliance with statutory duties and consistency in the implementation of school policy
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands the importance of, and their responsibilities for, attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links to school attendance.
- Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training and professional development to deploy attendance systems effectively.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual students and the school as a whole.
- Establishing and ensuring implementation and robust monitoring of attendance to identify, report and support students whose attendance is, or has become, a concern.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting attendance figures to the school governing body recognising areas of strength and areas for further improvement.
- Ensuring that the school attendance strategy is communicated to all stakeholders, including staff, parents and students.
- Ensuring that the attendance policy is easily accessible to staff, pupils, and parents, including being published on the school website.
- Providing a copy of the attendance policy to parents with any initial information when students join the school and reminding parents of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.
- Liaising with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information and working collaboratively when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Providing appropriate support for all students, particularly those for whom regular attendance can be more challenging e.g. students with medical conditions, mental health problems and special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognising the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance (Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).
- Ensuring that the local authority is notified of any student who is regularly absent from school (where absences amount to more than 10 or more days, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised).
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record.
- Ensuring that all appropriate staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's services and other statutory safeguarding partners.
- Developing and implementing strategies to support students to return successfully to school after lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence.
- Overseeing any arrangements where students are not attending school on a full-time basis.
- Considering parental requests for term time absences and replying in a timely fashion.
- Ensure that where a pupil is known to have a Youth Offending Team (YOT) worker, any unexplained absences are promptly shared with the relevant YOT contact, in line with DfE expectations for multi-agency safeguarding collaboration.

5.5 The responsibility of the school pastoral team:

- Implementing the attendance policy with the Headteacher.
- Championing and improving attendance by ensuring that school strategy is implemented.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Keeping school leaders informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the local authority attendance officer (LAO) is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Facilitating the Inclusion Meeting and ensuring escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by students and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.
- Ensuring, where necessary, that students are included in year report to SLT.
- Ensuring that all attendance and absence data is recorded accurately.
- Ensuring that the school attendance strategy is implemented effectively and that robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up on absence and poor punctuality.
- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.
- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable students.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why and when the student will return.

- Maintaining the Vulnerable Students' Register and preparing information for the efficient running of the Inclusion Meeting.
- Producing half termly year group reports for SLT.
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement.
- Identifying students who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate

5.6 Responsibilities of the wider school staff:

- Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance
- Implementing the school policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently
- Where applicable, ensuring that the registers are taken as directed and that they are accurate and up to-date
- Using available data to mentor and support students to improve their attendance
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns
- Using CPOMs to report safeguarding concerns which may also have a link to attendance
- Emphasising to students the importance of punctuality and good attendance
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy
- Emphasising the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Applying rewards and sanctions consistently

5.7 The responsibilities of Parents / Carers:

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school.

Parents whose child is registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that, whenever possible, their child attends and stays at school every day that it is open.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children are punctual and that they attend the school each day it is open, dressed in full uniform
- Instilling in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Impressing upon their children the need to observe the school behaviour policy.
- Informing the school on the first day of absence providing the school with an explanation for the absence so that it can be coded correctly.
- Providing, where possible, contact details for at least two adults
- Informing the school of any changes to their contact details

- Booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible. Where it is not possible, students should attend school before or after the appointment where possible.
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- Actively supporting the work of the school.
- Taking an active interest in their child's education, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parent's evenings and other relevant meetings
- Working in partnership with the school, where applicable, to resolve issues and help the school to understand their child's barriers to attendance
- Proactively engaging with the support offered by school to prevent the need for more formal support
- Proactively engaging with formal support and external agencies where it is needed to prevent the need for legal intervention
- Treating staff with respect

5.8 Students are responsible for:

- Attending school punctually, in full uniform on every day that it is open.
- Attending school prepared for the day with appropriate equipment.
- Reporting to the school office if they arrive after registration.
- Engaging positively with staff to improve their attendance.
- Reporting any difficulties they are having in attending school.
- Treating staff with respect

6. Promoting attendance

6.1 School leaders regularly review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of students of all abilities. Our teaching and learning structures, ILPs (Individual Learning Plans) for students with SEND, targeted interventions for students falling behind and use of TAs and intervention tutors ensures that students are supported academically so they can access learning and therefore be more motivated to attend.

6.2 The school regularly reviews its strategies for promoting good attendance and awarding incentives. Celebrating good and improved attendance forms part of our praise culture. Incentives such as 'Have a Super Start to September', 'Do-Nut' Miss a Friday' and 'In It To Win It Draws' are designed to promote and reward good, consistent and improving attendance at different intervals throughout the academic year.

6.3 Each week an inclusion meeting is held within school to discuss the most vulnerable students and review interventions to overcome barriers to learning. Reviewing attendance, and discussing students whose attendance is declining, is an integral part of this meeting.

7. Monitoring attendance

7.1 The school maintains an attendance register and all students, including those of non-compulsory age, are placed on this register. The attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

7.2 Attendance will be marked and coded in line with the DfE Attendance and absence codes

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4f9ec6a6586e258d371bd0/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2026.pdf

7.3 The school will analyse attendance in order to support actions, decisions and practices around seeking to support improvement in attendance of groups of students and individuals. The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Data Compliance and Reporting - The school will comply with the legal requirement to share daily pupil level attendance data with the Department for Education through the Management Information System (MIS). This data sharing supports national efforts to monitor and improve attendance and enables access to the “View Your Education Data” (VYED) tool for near real-time monitoring of trends.
- The MIS will be configured to automate this data transfer securely in each academy, with no additional workload for academy staff. Student-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.

8. Reducing absence

8.1 The school will seek to work with students and their parents or carers in order to prevent poor or declining attendance. In particular we will seek to support students in avoiding persistent absence.

8.2 It is our intention that all school stakeholders are aware of the approach to managing attendance, particularly in cases where a student's attendance shows signs of decline or falls below our attendance thresholds. The DfE's publication 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' makes clear that all parties; including schools, parents, multi-academy trusts and local authorities should place a strong emphasis on school attendance. At Kingsmeadow we adopt a consistent and fair approach to determining when to activate our attendance procedures. All students are expected to attend every session. However, if a student's attendance falls below our threshold of 95%, or if anomalous patterns of attendance are discovered e.g. recurring absences on the same day of the week, attendance procedures will be instigated in-line with the table below.

Stage 1	Attendance Monitoring	Stage 1 letter is issued and attendance is formally monitored each day for 4 weeks. Your child will get their attendance card signed each morning by their tutor. If passed there is no further action, a letter stating the plan has been passed will be sent, and attendance will be looked at again at the end of that half term. If the plan is failed it progresses to stage 2 Head of Year monitoring
Stage 2	Head of Year	Stage 2 letter is issued and attendance is formally monitored each day for 4 weeks.

9. Planned and Unplanned Absence Reporting

9.1 If a student has an unplanned absence, such as through an unexpected illness, the student's parent/carer must notify school of the reason for the absence as soon as possible on the first day of an unplanned absence, and before 8.40am. Parents should be prepared to explain the reason for the absence so that this can be accurately recorded, coded and supported.

9.2 Any absence interrupts the continuity of a student's learning and should be avoided other than in exceptional circumstances. Wherever possible, medical or dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. Parents/carers should ensure that students are out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and therefore students are expected to

attend school before or after the appointment where possible. Parents should request a leave of absence by completing a Request for Absence Form. Parents/carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

9.3 Unexplained absences

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If staff are unable to reach any of the student's emergency contacts, we may visit the student's home or in exceptional circumstances, contact police.
- 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 academy will involve other agencies as and when it becomes appropriate. Please note, unexplained absences will always be recorded as unauthorised.
- In cases where there are wider concerns about the welfare of a student, the school may choose to contact social care or police to inform them of the unexplained absence.
- Where a student has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the school will report the absence to the local authority. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause
- In cases where there is a change of home address/potential change to home address and the child is not attending school a Child Missing Education (CME) will be submitted.

9.4 The Headteacher can only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. The decision to grant an absence is entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events that are unavoidable such as the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance. Medical advice from a health professional that states the parent, child or sibling has a special educational need and taking a holiday in term time is advisable. The Headteacher considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 school weeks before the absence. Applications must be made on a 'Leave of Absence Request Form'. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. Please note: Leave of absence will not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

10. Lateness to School

10.1 Lateness to school can also have a lasting detrimental impact on the education of a student. A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. This will be a code 'L' in the register and an after school detention will be completed the same evening.
- After the register has closed students will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. This will be a code 'U' in the register unless an authorised reason has been provided. This means that students will be recorded as absent for the full morning session and it will progress attendance procedures.

11. Reporting Attendance to Parents and Carers

11.1 The school will inform parents/carers of their child's attendance through MCAS. Parents and carers can check their child's attendance daily. Parents/carers are encouraged to proactively check and monitor their child's attendance and the impact on their academic progress and personal development.

11.2 Attendance at school is reported to parents in every written report.

11.3 Parents and careers may request an attendance record at the end of a school year.

12. Potential Actions to Address Attendance Concerns

12.1 At Kingsmeadow, our attendance protocols aim to promote attendance through encouragement and reward. When issues arise, the school aims to support students and parents to reduce any barriers that prevent good school attendance.

12.2 In order to promote good attendance, schools are required to inform the local authority of:

- any student who is regularly absent from school (where absences amount to more than 10 or more days, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised).
- any student recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

12.3 If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

12.4 Should an attendance concern lead to prosecution, it is the Local Authority that processes prosecutions and fixed penalty notices, not the school.

12.5 Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed

inappropriate in the circumstances of the individual case. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute parents and they must fund all associated costs, including in the preparation of court documentation.

12.6 Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

- Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

13. Links with other Policies

- [Behaviour policy](#)
- [Equality Objectives Policy](#)
- [Remote Learning Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Support for Students with Medical Conditions](#)

14. Acknowledgments

- [Gateshead Schools Admission Arrangements](#)
- [The Education Acts 1996 and 2002](#)
- [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance from the Department for Education \(DfE\)](#)