Kew Green Preparatory School

Attendance & Children Absent or Missing from Education Policy (including EYFS)

Introduction

For a pupil to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the school, they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Ineffective registration or poorly executed follow-up procedures can increase the risks of truancy and educational under-performance, which can negatively affect personal and social development among pupils. A child going missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or, in itself, may indicate that a pupil is at risk of significant harm. Consequently, attendance and registration arrangements are hugely important and must be regarded as such by pupils, parents and staff.

The school maintains its attendance registers in accordance with Statutory Regulations, as amended from time to time. The school adheres to Statutory Guidance when dealing with Children Missing from Education (updated 2024) and Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2022, updated 2024, where it applies to the independent sector). The School also complies with guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and information on the KRSCP website regarding school attendance, as well as School Attendance Regulations 2024. We take particular note of the guidance that provides clarity around when physical or mental health prevents a child from attending school, additional support for SEND pupils and part-time timetables. The school will work in a collaborative way with external agencies, in accordance with the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated 2023) and KCSIE 2025.

Aims

This policy aims to provide a clear, consistent and cohesive framework which conforms with statutory requirements and that promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of pupils at the School, as well as outlining clear procedures for identifying and addressing situations where pupils fail to attend regularly or punctually, or go missing, so that:

- Staff, parents and pupils are aware of, understand and can readily comply with statutory regulations and School rules governing attendance;
- Absences and instances of lateness are identified and recorded systematically and accurately and followed up quickly and appropriately in ways that promote high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Recording Information

The name of a pupil must be included in the electronic register on iSAMS from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils, the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

The school will inform their local authority (where the school is situated) when a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the Admissions Register on certain grounds. In summary, these are:

- When the child has been taken out of school to be home educated;
- When the family has apparently moved away;
- When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend;
- When the child is in custody for more than four months; and
- When the child has been permanently excluded.

The school will notify the local authority on a termly basis when they add or remove a pupil's name from/to the Admissions Register at non-standard transitions, i.e. where a compulsory school-aged child leaves a school before completing the school's final year or joins a school after the beginning of the school's first year. The lawful grounds for removing a pupil, including the original ones above, and the information to be reported to the local authority, are set out in detail in Children Missing Education (DFE, updated 2024). Schools are also under a duty to provide information to

the local authority for standard transitions if requested. Register data must be retained for 6 years from the date of entry, to support the school in looking back at attendance patterns across a pupil's school career; the school register is recorded on iSAMS which maintains its own backup procedures for school data.

Officers of the local authority, inspectors and the Secretary of State are entitled to access school registers and take extracts digitally or physically so that they can perform their functions under the Education Acts (e.g. to take forward attendance prosecutions or understand if a child in the area is missing education). The school must allow such access and taking of extracts on request.

Attendance

It is important that staff, parents and pupils are familiar with this policy. Regular school attendance from an early age creates a culture about the importance of education and learning so that all can benefit equally. Missing learning time leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and it is well-known that poor attendance leads to lower levels of achievement. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, beginning from the early years.

The legal framework

- Legislation specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) of statutory school age children to ensure they attend school. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs; either by regular school attendance or education otherwise such as home education.

- The same law requires the school to have an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024) requires a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance.

Parent/carer(s) responsibilities

- Follow the guidance and responsibilities laid out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2022, updated 2024)
- Encourage regular and punctual attendance, being fully aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives punctually, prepared for learning.
- Provide clear reasons for any absence which ensures the school can code the absence properly and accurately.
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence as early as possible and preferably before the start of the school day.
- Avoid making arrangements to remove children from school during term time.
- Respond helpfully and positively to any enquiry made by the school to ascertain the reason for any absence, including any safeguarding matter.

School responsibilities

- Follow the guidance and responsibilities laid out in in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2022, updated 2024), including proactively using data to identify susceptible pupils or groups
- Have a clear attendance policy that is understood by all
- Develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and reduces absence, including persistent absence (deemed as attendance below 90%).

- Work to ensure every pupil has good attendance so s/he can access the education s/he is entitled to;
- Act early to address patterns of absence and put support in place. Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Be mindful of SEND pupils, and those with physical or mental ill health, and provide them with additional support.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools and agencies in the best interests of the child
- Encourage parents to ensure their child attends all learning opportunities regularly and punctually.
- Keep accurate and efficient records of attendance and registration at school, including attendance at all after school and before school activities, and have procedures to follow up absence
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance (Kathryn Loh, Deputy Head and DSL).

We achieve this in the following ways;

- Teachers must take an electronic register once in the morning and once in the afternoon, using the codes in Appendix 1
- Mark all children not present by the designated time, taking account of previously known reasons for absence, and ensure parents are notified of these timings:
  The school gates open at 08:00 for those children registered for morning care and 08:20 for the rest of the school. The school gates remain open between 08:20 – 08:40 and registers are taken at 08:45. Any pupil arriving after 08:45 will need to report to the office and will be marked as late.
  Office staff must be made aware of all pre-arranged authorised absences (i.e. interviews for Year 6).
- Follow up un-notified first day absence with a telephone call to the parent/carer(s)
- Report on patterns of attendance at Proprietorial Meetings to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils;
- Run a weekly attendance report, to inform the Deputy Head (DSL) of absences.
- Specifically monitor any persistent absence (individual attendance below 90%), offering support as follows:
  - Secretary runs a weekly attendance report for the Deputy Head, which is shared with Section Heads
  - Pupils with <96% attendance are flagged and discussed at the meeting & followed up with families and class teachers where there are no mitigating circumstances
  - Pupils with <90% attendance are logged on CPOMS and the Deputy Head will reach out to the family to offer support, with monitoring (as per Support Meetings detailed in School Attendance Regulations 2024)
  - At <85%, referral is considered to Early Help or relevant children's services
- Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence;
- Close discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to identify children causing concern
- Close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where there are concerns of children being absent or missing from education – see later section of this document;
- Implementing any agreed improvement strategies such as referral to the local authority attendance services and/or children's social care in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures; and
- Provide parent/carer(s) with the timings of the school day and the calendar via the school website and any other usual methods in advance.

Late arrival

It is essential that, if a pupil arrives late, they should sign in at the school office so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times.

Leaving school early during the day

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff or their known parent/carer; or to attend a school visit, an off-site scheduled lesson, or a sporting fixture.
- If a pupil has to leave the school during the day for illness or a parent is required to collect them for a medical appointment, they are required to sign out at the School Office. Where there are known medical appointments, parents should notify the school in advance.

Requests for absence from parent/carer(s)

- The school, not parents, authorise absence. Requests to the school for granting permission for leave of absence to a pupil during term time must be made in writing in advance directly to the Headteacher. The Headteacher is only able to authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances relate to the application.
- We ask that parents make contact with the school when a child is going to be absent for ill health reasons in order that the school can keep records updated and importantly, so that the school can be kept informed of their progress to full health and anticipated return date. If necessary, the school may ask for medical evidence of any illness.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised if a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher in advance.

Persistent absentees

Persistent absentees are those pupils with attendance below 90%. The school will contact the parent/carer(s) if their child's attendance approaches that threshold, as detailed in the procedures laid out above. If attendance does not improve, the school will contact the local authority in accordance with local authority procedures.

Children Absent or Missing From Education

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It may also indicate mental health problems, concerns about substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, so-called 'honour'-based abuse, including risk of female genital mutilation or forced marriage.

Children who are missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes. The school will follow the statutory guidance 'Children Missing from Education' (amended 2024) and KRSCP's procedures.

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures. Where a child has an EHCP, the local authority will need to review the plan whilst working closely with parents. It is therefore important that staff are aware of KGPS's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures (KCSIE 2025).

School Requirements

School must enter pupils on the Admissions Register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily electronic register (iSAMS). School must inform the local authority if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly or misses 10 consecutive school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the absence codes statistically classified as unauthorised. School must inform the local authority if a pupil of compulsory school age misses or is expected to miss 15 days due to sickness. School should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority, and that in line with KCSIE 2025, Early Help support in school is provided to support families in order to promote the importance of attendance.

Where a pupil 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 pupil can be removed from the Admissions Register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
The school has a safeguarding duty in respect of its pupils, and as part of this will investigate any unexplained absences.

Where there are safeguarding concerns about any child, the school will always follow its Safeguarding Policy, which includes reporting to the local authority.

Agreed by the Board of Directors and made available to parents on the website.
This policy is available in large print format on request to the School Office.

Written by: Deputy Head
Read approved and agreed by: SLT and Directors
Shared with: Staff
Date: re-written November 2021
Reviewed: September 2025 (by DDSL)
Next Review Date: September 2026

Appendix 1: Register Codes (from Sept 2024)

Present Codes	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
Unauthorised Absence	
G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)

O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (e.g. holidays, INSETs and polling station days)