



Attendance Policy

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Key School Contacts:

Designated Leads for Attendance:

Senior School: Main Lead
Email: TWhittemore@kirkstonehouseschool.co.uk
Telephone number (term time): 01778560350

Lower School: Support Lead
Email: Gwingrove@kirkstonehouseschool.co.uk
Telephone number (term time): 01778560350

Key staff/contacts

Main School Office to report absence:
Email: info@kirkstonehouseschool.co.uk
Telephone number (term time): 01778560350

Admissions:
Email: admissions@kirkstonehouseschool.co.uk
Telephone number (term time): 01778560350

Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Email: EWilson@kirkstonehouseschool.co.uk
Telephone number (term time): 01778560350



Aims:

The Attendance Policy at Kirkstone House School applies to both Senior and Lower School.

We aspire to high levels of attendance from all pupils and believe that good attendance is essential for all pupils and believe that good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their well-being, attainment and life chances.

The aims of the policy are as follows:

- to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance for all pupils including those with SEN;
- to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
- to recognise the connections between attendance / absence and pupil well-being, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding;
- and to help promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

Scope and Application:

This policy applies to the whole School and is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

Regulatory Framework:

This policy has been prepared to meet the school's responsibilities under:

Education (Independent School Standards) regulations 2014;
Education and Skills Act 2008;
Childcare Act 2006;
Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) 2006;
Equality Act 2010; and
Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE August 2024);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2024);
- School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);



- Children missing education (DfE, September 2016)
- Supporting children with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, September 2022);
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February, 2023);
- Remote education guidance (Df E January, 2023); and
- SEND Code of practice: 0-25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

- Policy on Safeguarding and child protection;
- Risk assessment policy for pupil welfare;
- Missing pupil procedures;
- SEN policy;
- Disability policy;
- Behaviour and discipline policy;
- School rules and
- Parental contract.

Publication and availability:

This policy is published on the School website.

This policy is available in hard copy on request.

A copy of the policy is available for inspection from Mrs Nightingale's office during the School day.

This policy is available in large print or another accessible format if required.

Definitions and interpretation:

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

- References to 'attendance' include references to attendance for all or part of the timetables school day.
- References to a Parent means: all natural parents whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil and any person who has care of a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil.)
- DLA means the School's designated lead for attendance.



Responsibilities:

The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School.

To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice.	DLA and Headteacher reporting to the Proprietor.	Review as required and at least annually.
Monitoring the implementation of the policy and collation of data.	DLA with office support.	As required and at least termly.
Seeking input from interested groups such as pupils, staff and parents to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy.	DLA.	As required and at least annually.
Formal Annual Review	Proprietor.	Annually.

The importance of good attendance:

The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance, it recognises:

- the importance of good attendance alongside good behaviour, as an important part of the School's vision, values, ethos and day to day life;
- the need to view attendance alongside individual needs such as for those pupils with SEN and medical conditions; those who suffer from anxiety; those who have historically had poor attendance and those who are disadvantaged or have had a negative previous experience in education;



- the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts such as anti-bullying and supporting mental health;
- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to all pupils and parents;
- the importance of monitoring as a continuous process in order that strategies can be adapted as required;
- children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues such as: neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

Challenges to attendance:

Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively, sensitively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, third parties and local authorities to address them. We are mindful of the fact that some pupils who join the School have a record of non-attendance elsewhere or have been out of school for medical / mental health reasons. The School will therefore always act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to pupils' needs. The School will offer specialist support to pupils who are experiencing mental health issues. The School will respond to non-attendance in a consistent and proactive way and with reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions.

The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address these issues.

Staff responsibilities:

The DLA

The Proprietor has appointed a member of staff to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in each section of the School: Lower and Senior.

The DLA's responsibilities are:

- to formulate a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- to evaluate and monitor expectations and processes;
- to have oversight of and analyse data;
- to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.



The DLA in Lower School will monitor attendance but will report directly to the DLA.

Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance:

Form Tutors have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

- have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- liaise with the School Office for reasons of absence and record these with the appropriate register code;
- look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and lateness and inform the DLA of any specific concerns;
- liaise with parents and other members of staff such as subject teachers to ensure excellent communication in relation to absence or punctuality;
- inform the DLA and Headteacher of any known future absences;
- support all pupils in helping them to understand the importance of attendance and punctuality.

All staff:

The School ensures that all teaching staff and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and punctuality and are consistent in their communication with pupils, Form staff the DLA and parents.

Teaching staff will deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly and consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to lessons in line with the School's behaviour policy.

School arrangements:

The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of this policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendix 1-3.

Monitoring attendance:

The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:



- monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends in order to provide targeted support for pupils and families;
- using this analysis to provide information to class teachers tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils;
- providing pastoral and SEN staff information about attendance (including the DSL);
- conducting analysis of half termly, termly and full year data to identify patterns and trends;
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented;
- providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support the work of the School.

Pupil responsibilities:

School attendance is important to pupil attainment, well-being and development both within and beyond the classroom. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and to manage poor attendance. Pupils should be aware that they are expected to:

- be present in person for the duration of each day;
- punctually attend their timetabled lessons /study;
- remain on the School site unless they have specific permission to leave and to sign in and out at the main School office;
- engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy.

Any unexplained absence from lessons during the School day will be followed up.

Persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

- support to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
- working closely with parents;
- reporting to other agencies such as children's social care;
- liaising with other third parties such as Autism Outreach CAMHS etc.

If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage them or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff.

Usually pupils will talk to their Form Tutor but they are encouraged to talk to whomever they feel most comfortable. The Head of Pastoral Care who is also the School's Designated Attendance Lead has an open- door policy and she is available to talk to pupils at lunchtimes and breaktimes.



We always aim to ensure that each pupil is helped according to their individual needs.

Additional needs:

The School recognises that many of our pupils have some kind of additional need. Pupils often join us having experienced difficulties in other schools and some have been school refusers. We therefore place great emphasis on working closely with pupils and their parents to build trust and working together to put the right support in place.

The School will make reasonable adjustments to enable pupils to feel most comfortable in attending regularly. This may take the form of an adjusted timetable or in some cases, re-organisation of the pupil's school day.

Working closely with parents and also external support agencies is an important part of this process. This includes ensuring that provision outlined in EHCPs is accessed. Pupils who have wider social, emotional or mental health issues have access to support both in School and through external counselling arranged by the School. We understand that Attendance can be adversely affected by such wider issues and does not stand alone as a consideration for the School. Where appropriate a referral can be made for Early Help.

Parent / Carer responsibilities:

The law entitles every child of compulsory age at 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 to make sure their child receives that education. This means that pupils 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 School.

The School will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing and wider development and provide clarity on the short term and long- term consequences of poor attendance. Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.



Training:

The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their roles. This will involve staff understanding:

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances and
- the school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance role, including Form Tutors, administration, senior leaders, SENCO. This should include:

- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;
- the process for working with third parties to provide intensive support to pupils who need it;
- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data and
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts in achieving and maintaining good attendance.

Record keeping and confidentiality:

All records kept in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

The information created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has personal privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

Version control:

Authorised by:

Mrs C L Jones
Headteacher
On behalf of the Proprietors

Date of adoption of this policy:

1st September 2024

Date of next review:

July 2025 or earlier as required



Appendices:

Appendix 1

School Arrangements

Reporting Absence

1. If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should telephone on **each** morning of absence. The Main Office should be contacted from 8.00am and before 8.45am. 01778560350.
2. Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.
3. Absence will be recorded appropriately on the attendance register.
4. If a pupil is absent and their parent has not contacted the School, the parent will be called to find out the reason for absence in accordance with the Missing Pupils procedure.
5. If a pupil's attendance is low or they are frequently late to School, the following may be used:
 - sending letters to parents / carers;
 - inviting parents / carers into School for consultation and to offer support;
 - pastoral meeting for pupils arranged.

Applications for authorised absence

Applications for routine absence during the School day e.g. for medical appointments must be made to the School in writing and in advance. Applications must be addressed to the Headteacher who will also notify the DLA and Form Tutor. Apart from illness (including mental health), no pupil should be away from School without prior permission.

Routine appointments should, wherever possible, be made during school holidays or out of school time.

Absence will be authorised for religious observance and parents should make this request in advance and in writing.

Only exceptional circumstances will warrant an authorised leave of absence from School. Each request will be considered individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances; the pupil's attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.



Appendix 2

Admissions Register

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the School will:

- maintain an admission register of pupils admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
- inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points (except after the end of Year 11).

The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.

Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
- the ground (prescribed in regulation 8) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.



Appendix 3

Attendance Register

Attendance of compulsory school-aged pupils is recorded and monitored in accordance with the statutory requirements and the School has adopted the national codes system to enable it to monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations.

The attendance of pupils of non-compulsory school age will be recorded in the same way so attendance can be monitored, unexplained absences are investigated and the School can ensure their safety and welfare.

The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily (for pupils - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session).

On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:

- present;
- absent;
- attending an approved educational activity;
- unable to attend school due to an exceptional circumstance.

Recording absence

Absence will be recorded using national absence codes correlating to:

- authorised absence;
- excluded (while still on the admission register);
- holiday authorised by the school;
- illness;
- medical or dental appointments;
- religious observance;
- study leave;
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence.

Remote education

The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons. The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.



In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:

- ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional.
- If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;
- if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
- setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

There is no specific code for remote education and in these circumstances the attendance code used will be "authorised absence". Separate records will be maintained to monitor a pupil's engagement with this activity and plans for their reintegration to class.

The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

Unauthorised absence

The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
- the reason for absence has not been provided;
- a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.



Register Codes 2024

Code /\:	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session.
Code L:	Late arrival before the register is closed.
Code K:	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority.
Code V:	Attending an educational visit or trip.
Code P:	Participating in a sporting activity.
Code W:	Attending work experience.
Code B:	Attending any other approved educational activity.
Code C1:	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code J1:	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.
Code M:	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.
Code S:	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination.
Code X:	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school.
Code C2:	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.
Code D:	Dual registered at another school.
Code C:	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance.
Code T:	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
Code R:	Religious observance.
Code I:	Illness (not medical or dental appointment).
Code Q:	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements.
Code Y3:	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Code Y4:	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed.
Code Y5:	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Code Y7:	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
Code G:	Holiday not granted by the school.
Code N:	Reason for absence not yet established.
Code U:	Arrived in school after registration closed.
Code Z:	Prospective pupil not on admission register.
Code #:	Planned whole school closure.



Appendix 4

Supporting Pupils

Support for pupils with a social worker

The DLA will know who the pupils who have or have had a social worker are. There is an understanding in School of how the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that pupils are experiencing or have experienced can impact on attendance. The School maintains a culture of high aspiration for children with a social worker and seeks to provide a wide range of support to enable them to achieve good attendance.

This may include: providing additional academic support; additional pastoral support and adjusted timetables. The School understands that even when social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

The School will work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

Support for Looked After and previously Looked After pupils

The School will have high expectations for these pupils and their attendance will be monitored by both the DLA and the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after pupils. School will work directly with parents to maintain good home-school links and attendance will be discussed at review meetings. Pupils will have up to date Personal Education Plans which are developed in partnership with social workers and carers.

Support for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

The School will use data to identify pupils at risk of being persistently absent. It will then 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, the School will signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as a lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.

If the issue persists, the School will 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 the Lead practitioner is outside of the School, we will continue to work with the local authority and partners.

Support for persistently absent pupils

Support will continue as for pupils at risk of being persistently absent and in addition where absence does become persistent, that additional targeted support is put in place with the view to remove any barriers. Where necessary, this includes working with partners.

Where there is a lack of engagement, more formal conversations will take place with parents and there will be clarity in respect of a possible need for legal intervention in the future.

If support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, the School will work with the local authority on legal intervention.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, support will be intensified through a referral to statutory children's social care.

The School will work with any schools where the pupil has previously attended and schools of any siblings.

Severely absent pupils

The School will continue support as for persistently absent pupils and will agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority. This may include contributing to a whole family plan; consideration for an EHCP, or alternative educational provision.

The School will be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the School, children's social services and other statutory safeguarding partners.