



ATTENDANCE POLICY (INCLUDING CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION)

Policy area

Students, Safeguarding

SLT Lead

Assistant Headteacher, Personal development and well-being (Fiona Parsons)

Last Updated

July 2024

Last Approved

October 2024 (by Education Committee)

Next review

May 2025

KING ALFRED SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the King Alfred School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This policy has been written with regard to the following guidance and legislation:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- [Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- Guidance for parents on school attendance 2023
- [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance 2024](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

Attendance at school is important for a variety of reasons in a student's life. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance or continued lateness can all undermine a student's experience, academic progress, social experience and sense of being part of the KAS community. This policy applies to the whole school including the EYFS years and Sixth Form. A copy is sent to all parents and is also available on the website.

The school recognises that students may sometimes have difficulties in attending regularly for a variety of complex reasons, e.g. medical conditions, including physical and mental health, and social and emotional factors. In line with our child centred philosophy, we will always seek to understand the underlying reasons for non-attendance, and work constructively and supportively with the family and child.

However, it is a **parental responsibility** to ensure that their child attends school.

The school day runs from 8.55 am – 4pm in the Upper School and from 8.55 am – 3.45pm (Lower School, Manor Wood and 9.05am – 3.30pm Ivy Wood). Attendance is expected during these hours.

Attendance registers are maintained electronically and kept for at least six years from the date of the entries, in line with the latest regulations. Back-up copies are automatically generated overnight and are retained for at least six years.

Registers are completed using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system prescribed by law.

The school's Senior Attendance Champion is Fiona Parsons who can be contacted at fionap@kingalfred.org.uk.

2. NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL ABSENCE OR LATENESS

All student absences should be notified in accordance with school procedures.

Registration:

The school is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily – once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

The school day begins with registration at 8.55am in form rooms in Upper School or classrooms in Lower School. Registration is a legal requirement and a child who misses it must check in at the relevant Reception. Ivy Wood parents may check in on behalf of their children.

The afternoon registers are taken. Registers are taken on SIMS in classrooms at 8.55am.

Lateness:

If a student is going to be late a parent should call the front desk on 020 8457 5200. However, the student should, as appropriate, also sign in at Reception or report to the Lower School Office on arrival.

Absence due to sickness:

In the Upper School absence due to illness should be reported before 8.45am on **020 8457 5297** or email absence@kingalfred.org.uk copying in the Form Tutor.

In the Lower School absences due to illness should be reported by email to lowerschool@kingalfred.org.uk or by calling **020 8457 5243**.

Parents may be asked to provide a doctor's note in some circumstances.

Parents should inform the school of any significant change or influence in their child's life which may impact on attendance or learning. This should be done via the Form Tutor (US) or class teacher (LS).

Other absence:

In line with National guidelines, the school is unable to authorise absence for holidays during term time. If there are special circumstances which requires travel, such as the bereavement of a family member, parents should request authorisation by contacting either the Head of Lower School (LS) or the Head of Year (US).

Any other requests for absence that are not due to medical illness should be addressed to the Head of Lower School (LS) or Form Tutor and Head of Year (US) with as much notice as possible.

3. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

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. It is the schools responsibility to identify pupils who are regularly absent to support problems as they first emerge.

In accordance with the official School Attendance Guidance (DfE October 2014), King Alfred School will inform the appropriate local authority of any pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous **period of 10 days or more**.

If a student is unable, or expected to be unable, to attend school for 15 days because of sickness (whether consecutive or not) the school will notify the local authority.

The school will inform the local authority, in advance where the circumstances are known, of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register, in accordance with the circumstances (e.g. home education, illness) set out in *School Attendance*.

Children Missing From Education

Staff must report to the DSL and deputies any unexplained absences, any regular pattern or absences, any agreed absences that are prolonged and any indication that a pupil/family have a planned absence in term time that has not been approved by the school. The school will hold at least two contact numbers for the child. The Head and DSL will discuss such absences with Barnet Social Care Services.

In addition, the following circumstances will also be reported to the local authority where the child lives:

- Ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence).
- Failure to attend school regularly (see KCSIE).
- If a child has been taken out of school to be home educated.
- If a child has been certified as medically unfit to attend.
- If a child is in custody for more than four months, or has been permanently excluded.

This duty arises as soon as the grounds above are met and in any event before deleting a child's name from the admission register.

In the case of a child leaving the school when the next school is not known, the circumstance will be reported as soon as possible to the Local Authority in which the pupil lives.

4. MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE – LOWER SCHOOL

The attendance of each child is monitored by the Head of Lower School. Class teachers also keep a watchful eye on attendance. Most parents call or email the school if a child is absent. If however, no communication is received, a call or email is made/sent to the parents of the absent child on the day of absence. If the attendance level falls below **90%** we begin to make enquiries and keep a close eye on attendance. If the school continues to have concerns, then the parents are called to be alerted to the degree of absence. If the attendance level continues to fall, the Head of Lower School contacts the parents and offers a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can be supportive.

5. MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE – UPPER SCHOOL

Staff at KAS place a high value on attendance and all school staff have a legal responsibility to keep accurate records of pupils' attendance. Most parents call or email the school if a child is absent. If however, no communication is received, a call or email is made/sent to the parents of the absent child on the day of absence. The Form Tutor, Head of Year and Assistant Head, Personal development and well-being check attendance regularly and whilst particular circumstances of individual pupils and families will always be taken into consideration, parents and carers can expect the following series of actions to take place.

1. Students with attendance below 90% for the academic year: Contact by email or telephone from the Form Tutor or Head of Year to advise that a student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern. Discussion of a student's circumstances and an agreement to improve attendance.
2. Students with attendance below 85% for the academic year: Meeting between parents/carers and appropriate pastoral staff. Discussion of student's circumstances and agreement of an attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets to be put in place. Additional support applied as necessary.
3. Students with attendance below 80% for the Academic Year: Meeting with parents/carers and senior staff. Discussion of student's circumstances, including possible consideration of amendments to the student's academic programme. Agreement of high-priority attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support applied as necessary. At this point a home visit from members of staff to the student at home may be implemented at the school's discretion.
4. Students with attendance below 70% for the academic year: Formal review with the Assistant Head Pastoral, Head of Upper School and/or Head. This may include consideration of repeating the academic year and a review of the student's place in the school.
5. Where a student has been through points (1), (2) and (3) above then improved their attendance only for it to decline again, it is at the discretion of the school to decide which stage of the process the student should be placed upon, involving student and parents accordingly. Outside agencies such as an Education Welfare Officer, a GP or a Counsellor may be contacted at any stage in order to support the pupil.

6. MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE – SIXTH FORM

As the Sixth Form prepares students to leave formal schooling for Higher Education or employment, more flexibility and freedom are granted to students to enable them to prepare for life beyond the school.

1. Students in the Sixth Form can request missing morning registration registration if their first lesson is after morning break. Permission is only granted by the Director of Sixth Form if academic progress, attendance and punctuality are all good.
2. Students with attendance below 90% of their lessons for the academic year: Contact by email or telephone from the Form Tutor to advise that a student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern. Discussion of a student's circumstances and an agreement to improve attendance.
3. Students with attendance below 85% of lessons for the academic year: Meeting between parents/carers and one of the Assistant Heads of Sixth Form. Discussion of student's circumstances and agreement of an attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets to be put in place. Additional support applied as necessary.
4. Students with attendance below 80% of their lessons for the Academic Year: Meeting with parents/carers and Director of Sixth Form. Discussion of student's circumstances, including possible consideration of amendments to the student's academic programme. Agreement of high-priority attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support applied as necessary. At this point a home visit from members of staff to the student at home may be implemented at the school's discretion.
5. Students with attendance below 70% of their lessons for the academic year: Formal review with the Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form and/or Head. This may

include consideration of repeating the academic year and a review of the student's place in the school.

7. SENSITIVE OR COMPLEX CIRCUMSTANCES

In cases where attendance is affected due to psychological, emotional, social or other health related issues, parents should liaise as soon as possible with the class teacher in Lower School or the Form Tutor and Head of Year in Upper School. For more sensitive or complex cases, parents of children in Lower School should contact the Head of Lower School (Karen Thomas, karent@kingalfred.org.uk) or for Upper School, the Assistant Head, Personal development and well-being (Fiona Parsons, fionap@kingalfred.org.uk).