

RATIONALE

King Arthur's values good attendance. As a school, it is committed to providing the best possible education for each student but this cannot be achieved if attendance is poor. If a student is absent or late for school, they will miss out on information given by the tutor, including letters and newsletters. They will also miss out on assemblies which are important gatherings for sharing information, celebrating success and reinforcing our values. Students will fall behind with their work, not make the progress they should and therefore not develop to their full potential. Colleges and employers are not impressed with students who have a poor attendance record.

Students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is legitimate. Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence by the parent (the Education Act 1996 5444).

All students may sometimes be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with irregular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the student. If a student is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other legitimate cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Holidays in term time for which leave of absence has not been granted

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority Education Attendance Officer (EAO). The Local Authority Attendance Officer will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the Student's attendance have failed, this Officer can use legal action to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the Student. The maximum penalty or conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment upon conviction and the possibility of a Penalty Notice served.

PURPOSE

- To maximise learning
- To maximise attendance rates
- To acquaint parents with their responsibility for ensuring regular attendance and consistency between school and home expectations of behaviour
- To set the culture that unjustified absence and poor behaviour are not tolerated
- To develop self-discipline raising individual standards in attendance

- To support students for whom attendance issues are hindering inclusion
- The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible

GUIDELINES

- Parents and the school need to see themselves in partnership in the education of their children with respect to their attendance
- Parents responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired, equipped and in a condition to learn
- There will be close communication which ensures that the appropriate staff, management team and outside agencies have relevant student information at all times.
- Parents will be encouraged to sign the Home School Agreement contract which reinforces the need for high levels of co-operation and attendance
- Additional support will be provided for students with more challenging attendance difficulties

PROCEDURES

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Attendance Registers are required by law to be called twice a day; once at the commencement of the morning session and once at the commencement of the afternoon session. Registers close at 9.10am and 2.20pm – arrival after these times must be supported with a parental note in order for the session to be authorised.
- Procedures for the marking of the registers and associated administration along with the agreed rewards and sanctions are outlined in Staff Guidance Notes and the Staff Handbook
- Year Leaders are to monitor attendance records and make appropriate referrals. Tutors are to maintain an accurate attendance register ensuring where possible all absences are authorised by parental notification.
- The school office will contact parents when a student is absent and the school has not been informed. The absence will be verified with a written note, upon the pupil's return to school.
- Only the school, through an authorised representative, normally the Assistant Headteacher, can grant leave of absence for Students of compulsory school age. An application pack is available from the school office.
- On occasions the school, along with the EAO, will undertake Truancy sweeps
- The school operates a tracking system monitoring attendance and rewards individuals in this area

TRUANCY

In the event of a student truanting school the following procedure will take place:

- Parents will be contacted by the School Office
- Student to be returned to school as soon as possible
- Meeting with Year Leaders, Parent Support Advisor and parent to be arranged
- Appropriate detention set
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HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

King Arthur's follows the DCSF guidelines with reference to holidays during term time.

Informing Parents

- All parents receive guidelines regarding applying for holidays during term time annually
- Parents wishing to take their child on holiday during term time must complete and return a holiday request form before going on holiday
- Each request is considered and a decision is made in line with the DCSF guidelines
- If the school authorises, the absence will be logged as "authorised". The school does have the right to decline the application if it feels it is not appropriate and would be detrimental to a students' progress and attainment for them to be absent from school at the time requested.

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has adopted the following attendance targets:

- Whole school attendance targets are agreed annually with the Local Authority. These are expressed as a % of absence
- The internal target for an individuals' attendance is 95%

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

- The School Attendance Officer who has responsibility for the maintenance of all attendance records and analysis
- Teaching staff who register all students at the start of Periods 1 and 5
- Year Leaders who monitor individual attendance through weekly reports and progress reports
- Assistant Headteacher – Student Welfare who has whole school responsibility for attendance
- Parent Support Advisor
- Weekly meetings to discuss significant non attendance between various support teams

MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

The Governors Education Sub-Committee participates in the development and review of the relevant aspects of the Attendance Policy. The Senior Leadership Team will annually review the success of the policy.

LEGISLATIVE GUIDANCE

This policy has been drawn up with full regard for the 1998 Human Rights Act, which came into force in October 2000, and the 2001 Disability Discrimination Act.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Reviewed April 2009