



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

At King's Leadership Academy, we demand the highest standards of attendance from all our students so they may develop their full potential during their time at school. It is our aim to maintain a culture of excellence, attendance and punctuality. Missing out on education has a significant effect on students' life opportunities. Everyone associated with the school – students, parents, all teaching and support staff and external agencies must do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality maintain an integral part of the Academy's work.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest standards for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our school so successful. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and further aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good Attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence;
- Students make better progress, both socially and academically;
- Students find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with;
- Students find learning more satisfying.
- Students are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training

Attendance Procedures

Doors open

- The Academy is open for students from 7:35am.
- Pupils should enter the building via the pupil entrance and report to their designated silent reading room.
- Pupils are expected to be silent reading from 8:00am in their designated rooms.

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Registration

- Registers must be taken at the start of every lesson and at the start of Aspire time every day.
- Anyone taking students out of school for any reason must supply the Participation Coordinator with a list of names and then email the list to the appropriate members of staff.
- Staff must inform colleagues of any students taking part in events in school that require students to be off timetable.

Recording Attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the Academy day, 8:05am and again for the afternoon session at 1:45pm.

Outstanding Absence

Any outstanding or unexplained absence (coded N) will be followed up by the Participation Coordinator or House Leader via contact with parents. Until contact is made, the absence will remain unauthorised. If within two weeks, the Academy has not received a justifiable reason for absence, it will be coded as unauthorised (code O) and the parents notified.

Exit/ Entry to the Academy during the day

Students who need to leave during school hours must bring a letter from home and /or appointment card. Students must sign in and out of the Academy at the main reception and must not leave without authorisation. The Academy would encourage all appointments to be made after 2:30pm, so as not to impact on your child's learning.

Late Arrivals

Students who arrive after 8:05am are late and must report to the main reception and sign the late register. Once recorded, students must go straight to their current lesson. All students who are late, for whatever reason, are coded L and must complete a late detention the same day. If a student is late more than once in a 7-day period, further consequences will apply. Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their education but also that of others. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action.

Parents/carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted by the child's Academic Tutor, in the first instance, to discuss the importance of punctuality. If lateness persists, parents/carers will be invited to attend the Academy and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness in any 10-week period, the Academy may pursue legal action.

If a student is late after the registers close at 9:30am, the morning absence will be recorded as unauthorised, coded U and the parents/carers will be notified in writing. If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M.

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All these procedures are very important as in the event of a fire drill, it is vital there is an accurate record of who is on the Academy premises. It is equally important that all members of staff sign in and out at the main reception.

Home/School Contact

First Day Absence

The Participation Co-ordinator will organise phone calls home when reasons for absence are unknown. This will involve telephoning all parents/carers when contact hasn't been made. Parents may be contacted and invited in to discuss the situation with the Academic Tutor and/or Director of Participation if absence persists. There will be occasions when Academy staff carry out a home visit when there are concerns about a student's attendance.

Second Day Absence

All unknown absence will be followed up by telephone by the Participation Co-ordinator. Home visits will occur if there are attendance concerns and parents invited in to discuss the situation.

Third Day Absence

After three or more consecutive days of absence, the Academy requires the parents/carers to provide evidence of illness. This can be in the form of a prescription, medical letter or appointment card. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if this is not provided.

If no contact has been established, child missing in education procedures need to be started.

10 sessions over two consecutive half terms (5 days) of unauthorized absent.

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without explanation for 10 sessions over two consecutive half terms (5 days). If a child has not been seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the local authority must be notified that the child is at risk of missing.

Attendance Concerns

The attendance team meet weekly to discuss attendance concerns and punctuality. This information is shared with Heads of House, who then discuss them with the Academic Tutors in Pastoral Briefings. The attendance of students is tracked using the Academy's attendance protocol to ensure consistency between houses.

Long Term Absence

Students who are long term absentees for whatever reason, often find returning to school problematic. There are both academic and social difficulties which students may need time to

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overcome. For some students this may involve a personalised re-integration program. The program will be devised by the House Leaders, with support from Head of House and the Director of Participation.

Holiday Absence

Although some parents find themselves in difficult circumstances which require them to organise holidays in term time, King's Leadership Academy believes students should not miss school for this reason. Whilst we understand the difficulties parents/carers may have in organising holidays during the school holidays and the benefits to be had from term-time holidays, this type of absence is detrimental to a child's education. Parents/carers must inform the Academy in advance if they intend to take their child out of school for a holiday. This must be in writing addressed to the Principal and a letter will be sent home advising that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and coded G. Please be mindful that unauthorised absence can result in legal action being taken. Pupils who are below target due to holidays in term time, are at risk of not graduating to the next year in the following September.

Persistent Absence

Students who are absent 10% or more of the time at school, for whatever reason, are defined as persistent absentees. All persistent absentee students and their parents are subject to an Attendance Plan or home school contract in order to improve their attendance.

Promoting good attendance – Rewards and Incentives

Good attendance is acknowledged in assemblies and celebration events. Attendance is monitored weekly and students achieving above 97% are recognised and rewarded. The Academy's reward system recognises 100% attendance weekly, end of each Learning Cycle and at the end of the school year. Students are recognised with vouchers, fast track pass to Blackpool Pleasure Beach, and a 0% tax rate on their monarch statements. Postcards and/or certificates are issued each Learning Cycle to students achieving 100% attendance. Inter-house competitions also take place throughout the year.

Understanding types of absence

Students are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised absence:** This is when the Academy has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- **Unauthorised absence:** This is when the Academy has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parental request.



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Unauthorised absence can lead to legal action being taken. Truancy is dealt with seriously and sanctions will be enforced if a child is found to be truanting from the Academy.

The Academy can, if needed change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers.

Examples of this include:

- Where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday;
- A child is absent for 3 or more days and medical evidence is requested but never received.

Where a child has unauthorised absence, the Academy must enforce The Local Authority's

Code of Conduct: Issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence

Study Leave

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the school leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, students will be expected to attend school as normal.

Teenage Pregnancy

Support will be directed to keeping a student in school and wherever possible, her return to full time education as soon as possible after the birth. A student who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Attendance Guidance for Parents/Carers

At King's Leadership Academy, excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student.

100% attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes in attendance. Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly, make better progress both academically and socially. We ask support from parents/carers to:

- Ensure that their children are present at every opportunity
- Arrive on time
- Avoid allowing children to stay at home unnecessarily
- Avoid taking them out of school without authorisation

We monitor attendance closely and will follow up explained absence with parents/carers by telephone, letter or email. Where a student's attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact you to discuss ways in which the Academy can support you and your child. The expectation from the Academy is that all students will achieve 97% attendance or above throughout the year.

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The Academy perceives anything less than 97% attendance to be a concern and will contact the parents/carers to discuss ways in which the Academy can support you and your child.

The Academy attendance target of 97% is the minimum that we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

Reporting Absence

What to do if your child is ill

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required daily. If your child is too ill to attend school, parents/carers must contact the Academy as soon as possible. Please give your child's name, the reason for absence and how long you expect the absence to last. You must contact us each morning, before 8:05 if your child is absent.

If no one is available to take your call, please leave a message. You may receive a call back from a member of staff requesting further information.

On your child's return following an absence, parents/carers must write a letter, signed by you, to the Academic Tutor stating the reason for absence. This does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the Academy.

Please note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence, the Academy is required to start child missing in education procedures. The Academy will make all the reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including home visits and making enquiries to known friends and wider family.

What to do if your child has an appointment

We ask that where possible, you make routine medical appointments and other appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please provide a note from home and/or appointment letter/card to confirm the appointment. Your child should attend school before the appointment and return afterwards where possible. The absence will only be authorised for the duration of the appointment, including travel time.

Calls to parents/carers

We take our safeguarding responsibility seriously. If the Participation Co-ordinator has received no reason for absence and a student is absent from House time (8:05-8:50) calls are made daily to the contact numbers the Academy holds on record. Calls are made on a daily basis, even where your child has been absent due to illness on previous days. We cannot assume your child is still ill unless you have notified us. We would not wish to put your child at risk by failing to contact you. Please

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ensure your child realises the importance of attending Aspire on time and getting their present mark. Parents/carers can also support the Academy by ensuring we hold up to date contact numbers.

Punctuality

All students are expected to arrive at the Academy on time and be ready and punctual to lessons. This is a minimum expectation. Students should arrive for 8:00am. After this time, your child is late and will have to enter the Academy through the main reception where s/he will have to sign the late register. If a student is late, for whatever reason, they must make this time up. If they are repeatedly late, further action may be taken. We would be grateful for our support in ensuring that your child arrives on time.

Holidays in term time

Family holidays should take place during the school holiday dates. These are published in advance of the next academic year. Please be mindful that absence due to holiday is not, and never has been, a parent's entitlement. This is breaking the law and the Academy cannot legally grant permission for this.

If holidays are taken in term time, parents/carers must inform the Academy in advance to take their child out of school for a holiday. This must be in writing addressed to the Principal. The absence will be unauthorised and legal action may be taken.

Leave of absence for other reasons

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as shopping, birthdays, day trips, etc. If parents/carers wish their child to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave, special family occasions, or to participate in sport or musical competitions etc. application should be made in writing, in advance to the Director of Participation. It may be necessary for parents to apply for a performance license in such circumstances.

Persistent Absence

Students who are absent 10% or more of the time at school, for whatever reason, are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. The Academy monitors all absence thoroughly and the attendance data is shared with the Department for Education. If your child has persistent absence, both the parent/carer and the student will be subject to an Attendance Plan and/or home school contract to improve their attendance.



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Elective Home Education

Parents/carers wishing to home school, are required to notify the Academy in writing of their intention to educate at home. The Academy has a statutory duty to inform the Education Welfare Service. Parents/carers should continue to send their child to school until Elective Home Education has been approved.



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Registered Office: King's Leadership Academy, Hillock Lane, Woolston, Warrington WA1 4PF
Telephone: 01925 817939. www.greatschoolstrust.org