



Kensington Junior Academy

Attendance Policy 2023-26

Contact Details

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Our Vision

At Kensington Junior Academy, our vision for attendance is deeply rooted in our commitment to nurturing academically, socially, and emotionally adept 21st-century citizens. We aim to INSPIRE our pupils, fostering an environment where they are motivated to strive for success. Central to our philosophy is instilling in our pupils the unwavering ability to BELIEVE in themselves. We are dedicated to providing every pupil with the opportunities they need to ACHIEVE success, both academically and personally.

Introduction

We believe that good attendance at school has a direct impact on good progress and achievement. It is important for children to attend regularly in order to maximise both their learning and their social and emotional development. Children who miss a lot of school may feel left out and will not have the same shared experiences as their classmates and may find it difficult to follow what is going on in the classroom. Missing school trips, special events and break time may affect their ability to make friends at school, being in school gives students more time to interact with teachers and classmates. Irregular school attendance is a contributory factor in social exclusion and underachievement. We expect children to attend regularly and arrive on time.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to 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 either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Aims

- Ensure that everyone understands the importance of regular attendance
- Ensure that our practice actively promotes excellent attendance
- Support children and families where attendance is a concern
- Communicate effectively at all levels in order to improve attendance

Legal Requirements

The law requires all schools to maintain an admission register containing the personal details of every pupil in the school, information regarding parents/carers and the date of admission. Such information will be entered on to the register on the pupil's first day of admission.

Schools must notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register in-year and must provide the local authority with relevant information held. This duty is for in-year admissions only and does not apply to pupils who are added at the start of the school's youngest year (ie YR/Y3/Y7).

Where a pupil leaves the school must record the date of leaving and the name of the receiving school. In the exceptional case where this information is not known they the school will inform the local authority via their missing children service. Schools must inform the local authority when removing a pupil from the admission register. For reasons for removal of a pupil from the school admissions register see APPENDIX 1

On receipt of official notification of a parent/carers intention to home educate, schools must inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register.

Responsibilities

➤ Trustees and Local Governing Bodies

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting schools to prioritise attendance and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Ensure school staff receive training and support on attendance
- Receive regular attendance data updates

➤ Headteacher

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance
- Ensure that robust processes are in place to follow up absence and identify those at risk of persistent absenteeism as well as those already identified
- Liaise with SLT Attendance Officer /admin
- Write/approve standard letters to be sent out by Attendance Officer
- Speak to parents/carers identified by Attendance Officer as appropriate

➤ Dedicated Senior Leader for Attendance

- Hold weekly attendance monitoring meetings
- Support Attendance Officer/admin to undertake their duties regarding attendance
- Ensure that attendance records are completely accurately
- Build relationships with parents/carers to ensure good channels of communication

➤ Teachers

- Mark electronic register at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and submit to office by 9.00am and 1.10pm
- Seek reasons for absence from parents/carers and inform the admin office accordingly
- Continually promote the importance of good attendance

➤ Attendance Officer / Admin

- Monitor registers to identify children who are absent without explanation
- Seek reason for absence from parents/carer by telephoning/texting by 10.00am on first day of absence
- Repeat contact on following day if necessary
- Build relationships with parents/carers to ensure good channels of communication
- Provide regular feedback to class teachers as appropriate
- Run weekly absence report to identify children whose absence falls below 95% for discussion and agreed actions at attendance meeting

- Maintain records accurately and appropriately
- Send out standard letters for regular lateness or regular patterns of absence
 - o Below 95% - monitor
 - o Below 92% - 1st warning letter – at risk of persistent absenteeism
 - o Below 90% 2nd warning letter – at risk of referral to Education Welfare Service
- Provide regular feedback to SLT and class teachers

➤ **Parents**

- Ensure that their children attend every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies
- Ensure that their child arrives on time
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (eg sickness), via telephone, text, email or in person
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance (eg family crisis, family funeral, legal proceedings etc)
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible
- Proactively engage with the support offered to improve their child's attendance where necessary

Attendance Registers

- Registers are taken at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions
- They are a legal requirement under current Government legislation
- Registers are automatically updated when children are admitted
- Registers remain open for 10 minutes after the official session start time. Pupils are marked as late (L) if they arrive after the official start time but before the registers close.
- Registers are then electronically submitted

Routines

- Parents/carers are expected to contact the school office if their child is absent for any reason
- A first day call/text is made by 10am if no reason for absence received from parents/carers. This forms part of our safeguarding and child protection procedures
- This is repeated the following day if the child is still absent and if we have not been able to make contact
- In some circumstances a home visit may be made to establish reasons for absence
- Electronic registers are checked every day for unexplained absences
- Absences are authorised if appropriate with concerns/queries passed to SLT
- If a child's absence is related to, or raises, a safeguarding issue then this will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and they may seek advice from the Social Care Duty Team. This should be recorded on MyConcern.

Monitoring

- Absence reports are reviewed regularly
- If attendance falls below 95%, they are monitored as a concern and we may speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns
- If attendance falls below 90%, we will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns. Our attendance officer will then investigate which may involve a home visit or a letter home.
- If there is no improvement following previous actions and attendance remains below 90%, we consider a referral to the Education Welfare Service.
- Patterns of non-attendance, e.g. regularly absent on Fridays will be monitored and parents/carers contacted to discuss concerns

- Whilst we acknowledge that a child is not compulsory school age until 5 years old, we know that engagement in education at this stage in a child's development is crucial. Good attendance is a school requirement of all children on roll so attendance records and interventions will occur for all children on roll, at any age, if attendance is a concern

Reasons for Authorised Absence

- Illness
- Medical appointments – but only if it is not possible to book these for after the school day
- Any other reason can only be authorised by senior leaders in individual circumstances where it is deemed to be a significant and acceptable reason for absence.

Any other absences may be recorded as unauthorised which could lead to investigation. Holidays during term time will be marked as unauthorised and may lead to a fixed penalty fine.

Religious Observance

At Djanogly Learning Trust we celebrate our diverse communities and respect our family's religious and cultural differences. We will authorise one day for each religious festival (to a maximum of three days in any one academic year). Regulations state that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days will be treated as unauthorised.

Children with Significant Medical Conditions and/or SEND

DfE statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions specifically states that children should not be penalised for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition eg hospital appointments. Staff will engage proactively with parents to understand barriers and offer support.

The ambition for good attendance in order to ensure good academic progress will be maintained for children with significant medical conditions as for all children. School staff will put in place additional support and adjustments where applicable in order to maximise attendance.

We will not send attendance letters or take further action against any child or their parents where absences are related to a significant medical condition. In such cases children will be praised for their attendance and staff will ensure that every effort is made to support any gaps in learning during these absences. We will work with parents/carers to agree an individual target for attendance or improved attendance as appropriate. This may not be the right approach in all cases and will be agreed with parents/carers.

Children with a Social Worker

Children with social workers are at greater risk of poor attendance and punctuality. School will carefully monitor attendance of children with a social worker and looked after children, working with social care and virtual schools' teams in order to ensure that all partners recognise the importance of good school attendance and their role in ensuring that these vulnerable children attend regularly.

Persistent Absentees

These are defined as children whose attendance falls below 90%.

School staff will 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, school will signpost and support access to any required services.

This may include other agencies; specifically social care as such extended absences may trigger a safeguarding concern. School staff will take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the LA and other local partners.

Referrals will be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service and appropriate actions taken. This may include formal meetings and lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal action. Parents/carers may be taken to court where they could be issued with a fine or even a custodial sentence.

Leave of Absence Requests

All requests for leave of absence will be considered by the academy leader (or deputy in their absence). Full consideration will be given to requests, but these can only be authorised by the academy or executive leader and then only if they believe there are exceptional circumstances or compassionate reasons that justify the leave. The child's current attendance record and individual circumstances will form part of the decision-making process.

Parents/carers should make their request in writing giving expected date of return and reason for the absence. Any child who does not return by the agreed date of return will incur unauthorised absences until such a time as they return. This could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued against the parent.

If a child does not return for an extended period, there will be an investigation to ascertain whether the child will be returning or not. The Attendance Officer will work with Education Welfare Officers at the local authority and the school reserves the right to remove a child from the school roll should parties agree that this is an appropriate action, as per Trust Admissions Policy. The child would then be classified as 'missing in education' and reported to the LA accordingly. This may also result in a referral to social care should the school deem the child to be at significant risk of harm.

Parents/carers who take leave of absence without contacting the school or without authorisation, will have the absences recorded as unauthorised and this could then result in the school taking further action to investigate, which may result in a referral to Education Welfare Service which could result in a request for a penalty notice.

Late Arrivals

- Gates are locked at 9.00am each morning so children arriving after that time need to enter by the main entrance
- Registers will be closed at 9.10am
- Children must make themselves known at reception so that they can be marked present and a school meal ordered for them.
- Their time of arrival will be noted and recorded
- If children are regularly late, we will:
 - Speak informally to parent/carer about our concerns
 - Send a letter to parents/carers
 - Make a request to the Education Welfare Service for a penalty notice if appropriate.

A penalty notice can be applied in the case of persistent lateness where parents/carers have not responded to communications from the school or where there is no improvement despite intervention from staff.

Penalty Notices

A penalty notice will incur a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increased to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Penalty Notices are issued per parent per child. Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised absence, un-agreed leave of absence, lates and exclusion (seen in a public place).

APPENDIX 1 – Regulation 8 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**Deletions from Admission Register**

8.—

1. The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age shall be deleted from the admission register—

- a. where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local education authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local education authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school;
- b. except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school;
- c. where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion;
- d. in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school;
- e. except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered;
- f. in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday in accordance with regulation 7(3), that —
 - i. the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
 - ii. the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - iii. both the proprietor and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is;
- g. that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- h. that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and
 - i. at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
 - ii. the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - iii. both the proprietor of the school and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is;
- i. that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period;
 - i. at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
 - ii. the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - iii. both the proprietor of the school and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is;

- j. that the pupil has died;
- k. that he will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and the relevant person has indicated that he will cease to attend the school;
- l. in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school;
- m. that he has been permanently excluded from the school; or
- n. where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.

2. In a case not covered by paragraph (1)(a), (j) or (m), the name of a child who has under arrangements made by a local education authority become a registered pupil at a special school shall not be removed from the admission register of that school without the consent of that authority, or if that authority refuse to give consent, without a direction of the Secretary of State.

3. The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil not of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the admission register—

- a. that he has ceased to attend the school, or, in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school;
- b. that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and —
 - i. at no time was his absence during that period agreed by the proprietor;
 - ii. the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - iii. the proprietor of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is;
- c. that the pupil has died;
- d. where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school; or
- e. that he has been permanently excluded from the school.

4. For the purposes of this regulation—

- a. a pupil shall be treated as ordinarily residing at a place where the pupil is habitually and normally resident apart from temporary or occasional absences;
- b. "reception class" means a class in which education is provided which is suitable to the requirements of pupils aged five and any pupils under or over that age whom it is expedient to educate together with pupils of that age;
- c. children are to be regarded as having been admitted to a school to receive nursery education if they were placed on admission in a nursery class;
- d. the permanent exclusion of a pupil from a maintained school does not take effect until the proprietor has discharged its duties under regulations made under section 52 of the Education Act 2002(1), and—
 - i. the relevant person has stated in writing that he does not intend to bring an appeal under those regulations;
 - ii. the time for bringing an appeal has expired and no appeal has been brought within that time; or
 - iii. an appeal brought within that time has been determined or abandoned;
- e. the permanent exclusion of a pupil from an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts does not take effect until the proprietor has discharged its duties in relation to a permanent exclusion under the agreement entered into pursuant to section 482 of the Education Act 1996(2) and
 - i. (i) the relevant person has stated in writing that he does not intend to bring an appeal;
 - ii. (ii) the time for bringing an appeal has expired and no appeal has been brought within that time; or
 - iii. (iii) an appeal brought within that time has been determined or abandoned