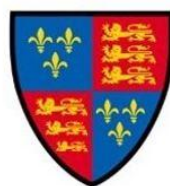




**KING EDWARD VI  
FOUNDATION  
BIRMINGHAM**

*Educational excellence for our City*



**KING EDWARD VI  
ACADEMY TRUST  
BIRMINGHAM**

## Attendance Policy

<b>Responsible Board/Committee</b>	Academy Trust and Foundation Board
<b>Policy Type</b>	Hybrid Policy
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Education
<b>Statutory</b>	Yes
<b>Publish Online</b>	Yes
<b>Last Review Date</b>	July 2025
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annual  This policy will not expire but will be reviewed as per its designated cycle. This policy remains effective whilst the review is taking place and will only become non-applicable once the updated version has been approved.
<b>Next Review Date</b>	July 2026
<b>Version</b>	2

<b>School</b>	King Edward VI High School for Girls
<b>School Policy Owner</b>	Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)
<b>ISGB Approval Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025

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# **1 Purpose**

## **Aim of this policy**

- 1.1 To support excellent levels of attendance for all pupils to enable the fulfilment of their potential at King Edward VI High School for Girls.
- 1.2 This policy has been prepared in accordance with the School's statutory duties relating to attendance, including those outlined in the Department for Education's statutory guidance, entitled Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024), which is referred to in this policy as the "DfE Attendance Guidance".
- 1.3 The Schools of King Edward VI Birmingham will also comply with the Birmingham City Council and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance on Elective Home Education (EHE) and involve services such as the Birmingham Special Educational Needs Assessment & Review Service (SENAR); Birmingham Children's Trust; Birmingham Education Safeguarding Team, and Birmingham Education Legal Intervention Team.

## **Key Principles**

- 1.4 High levels of attendance and punctuality are promoted and rewarded.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of everybody in the School to improve attendance and punctuality.
- 1.6 Where attendance or punctuality falls short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this, and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 1.7 Whilst every pupil has the right to a full-time education, high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils. The School considers the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be applied fairly and consistently, but in doing so, we always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families, who may have specific barriers to attendance. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend School. The School will work with pupils, parents/carers and other local partners to remove any barriers to attendance.
- 1.8 In the development and implementation of the policy, we recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and consider the provisions under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We seek to work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers to remove barriers to attendance. The Equality Act 2010 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of the protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership; pregnancy & maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
- 1.9 In implementing this policy, the School is mindful of both conscious and unconscious bias. This means in dealing with attendance, the School will:
  - Take the time to consider decisions, listening to and considering the issues that are raised.
  - Justify and document decisions, including the reasoning behind them.
  - Ensure clear guidance is provided on reporting concerns related to prejudice.

- Promote positive behaviours.
- Encourage engagement from a wide range of pupils, parents/carers, and interested parties.

1.10 Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents/carers or pupils have should be discussed with the Form Tutor or Head of Year. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents/carers and pupils should contact Sarah Shore-Nye, Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral).

## **2 Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 The School**

Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents/carers and pupils. The School treats pupils and parents/carers with dignity and adopts a positive approach to attendance, recognising that this helps to challenge parents/carers' misconceptions about what constitutes good attendance.

#### **2.1.1 The School will:**

- Develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance through Key Stage transition meetings, in regular letters from the Senior Deputy Head and at other curriculum-based events for parents. As a highly academic school, we find that explaining the impact of lost time, in terms of curriculum coverage and impact on academic attainment, to be one of our most useful tools for improvement, alongside stressing the impact on a pupil's personal and social development and wellbeing. Heads of Year, the Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form and Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral), will also use other communication points with parents to update them on their daughter's current attendance and lateness levels. The Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) will also report on current attendance levels when she responds to a request from parents for absence during term time. Pupils are asked to reflect on their attendance and punctuality in their twice yearly one to ones with their Form Tutor.
- Work with pupils and their families, building strong relationships, to support high levels of attendance and punctuality and understand any barriers to attendance.
- Investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate.
- Take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Share information, including returns information required to be shared in accordance with regulations<sup>1</sup> and the DfE Attendance Guidance, and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools in the area, and other partners on attendance issues including, confirming part-time timetables, requests for elective home education, dual registration, removal from school roll, new admissions to school roll (including in year) and making any other appropriate referrals/ submissions of information in accordance with local procedures, legislation, and guidance.
- Regularly monitor, review, and analyse attendance and absence data, including identifying pupils or cohorts that require attendance support and setting targets for the future.
- Ensure that all pupils can access full-time education, putting strategies in place where there is evidence to suggest that this is not the case.
- Ensure that governors and the School's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy.
- Ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures, including the DfE Attendance Guidance.
- Have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Provide any information requested by the Secretary of State.
- Regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- Support pupils who are returning to education following long-term absence.
- Ensure that effective systems are in place to record and report attendance data, including the accurate completion of admission and attendance registers, utilising an electronic management information system.
- Assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School to a designated senior leader, known as the Senior Attendance Champion.
- Observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in guidance issued by the Department for Education ([Summary table of responsibilities for school](#))

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<sup>1</sup> [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) to the extent not covered above or elsewhere in this policy.

## 2.2 Parents and carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- Ensure that their child arrives at the School on time, wearing the correct uniform, and with the necessary equipment.
- Promote the importance of regular attendance at home.
- Follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the School (see section 3.9 below).
- Avoid unnecessary absences.
- Keep the School informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance.
- Not take their child out of education for holidays during term time (see section 3.11 below).

Inform the School in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parents/carers with whom the child shall live.

- Observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education ([Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)).

## 2.3 Pupils

We expect pupils to:

- Attend the School regularly and on time.
- Be punctual for all lessons.
- Follow the correct procedure if they arrive at the School late (see *Registrations* and *Late Arrival* sections below).

## 2.4 Senior Attendance Champion

2.4.1 The Senior Attendance Champion ("SAC") at the School is Sarah Shore-Nye, Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral).

2.4.2 The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School and will:

- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for addressing absence, ensuring that all staff consistently follow these procedures.

- Evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and processes.
- Have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the School.
- Ensure that key attendance messages are communicated to parents/carers and pupils.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the Board of Governors.
- Work closely with the Pastoral Team to ensure a high level of scrutiny of attendance and lateness data and the ongoing development of the School's attendance strategy.

## 2.5 The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors will:

- Take an active role in improving attendance, recognise the importance of school attendance, and promote it across the independent schools, aligning with the School's ethos and policies.
- Ensure the School's leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends, and help School leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most, using termly meetings of the Safeguarding Governor and Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) as opportunities to do this, alongside ISGB risk and compliance meetings.
- Ensure School staff receive adequate training on attendance, including dedicated training for staff with specific attendance responsibilities and any additional training that would help support pupils or cohorts overcome common barriers to attendance.
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the independent schools.
- Discuss attendance data during termly meetings with pastoral leads and in Risk and Compliance meetings
- Require the School to report to the board of Governors on the School's attendance at regular intervals.

## 3 Procedures

### Registration

- 3.1 The School maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each pupil's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.

Registration session	Start time	End time
Morning	8.45 am	9.10 am
Afternoon	1.55 pm	2.20 pm

- 3.2 Pupils who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where pupils arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out in the *Late Arrival* section applies.
- 3.3 The register is marked using the national statutory attendance and absence codes, which can be found in the DfE Guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#).
- 3.4 Where a pupil attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, and engage parents/carers where necessary.

#### **Late arrival**

- 3.5 If a pupil arrives at the School after the relevant registration period has ended but within the relevant session, they must immediately go to Reception to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness, to enable the School to establish the appropriate attendance or absence code. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence and parents/ carers notified as appropriate.
- 3.6 Persistent lateness will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be addressed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

#### **Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation**

- 3.7 **Authorised absence** – absence will only be authorised where the School has given approval in advance for a pupil not to be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the School can authorise an absence; reason/s for absence are logged in the register comment on SIMS and update the code in line with statutory coding.
- 3.8 **Unauthorised absence** – absence will be marked as unauthorised where the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

#### **3.9 Reporting absence from the School**

- i. Where a pupil is to be absent from the School without prior permission, the parent/carers should inform the School by telephone (0121 4721834) or via email: [kehsabsence@keschools.org.uk](mailto:kehsabsence@keschools.org.uk) on the morning of the day of the first absence, by 8.35 am, and let the School know when they expect the pupil to return. For safeguarding reasons parents/ carers are asked to provide specific details of the pupil's illness/ reason for non attendance. If the return date is not



confirmed on the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the School on each day of absence.

- ii. Any unexplained absence will be followed up by the School promptly. After the close of the morning registration session the School will send a text message to the parent/ carer requesting urgent contact with School. If there is no response after 30 minutes, the Pastoral Secretary will ring parents directly. Priority is given to contacting parents of the youngest and most vulnerable members of the school community. If the Pastoral Secretary cannot obtain a response from parents/ carers they will refer the matter to the DSL/ DDSL.
- iii. In cases where the School requires clarification to accurately record an absence in the attendance register, parents/carers may be asked to provide the School with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor, to support an absence due to illness. If satisfactory evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

### **3.10 Appointments**

- iv. Medical, dental, and other essential appointments for a pupil should take place outside of school hours, where this is reasonably possible.
- v. Where an appointment must take place during school time, the pupil should attend the School for as much of the day as possible, and as much prior notice as possible should be given to the Receptionist.

### **3.11 Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)**

- vi. The School will grant permission for a pupil to be absent from School in the circumstances described in paragraph 37 of the DfE Attendance Guidance, which can be summarised as follows:
  - Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad.
  - Attendance at an interview for entry into another educational setting or future employment.
  - Study leave for public examinations.
  - Temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
  - Other exceptional circumstances.
- vii. Parents/carers should make every effort to avoid taking pupils out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time.
- viii. To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance, and in writing, addressed to the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) and, wherever possible, at least 4 school weeks ahead of the planned leave.

- ix. Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request and liaise with the Head of School as appropriate. The decision:
  - Will be confirmed in writing.
  - Is at the Senior Deputy Head's and Head of School's discretion.
  - Is final.
- x. Where permission is granted, the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.
- xi. If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the School, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, and parents may be subject to a referral to the local authority (see *Addressing poor attendance and punctuality* section below).

### **3.12 Religious observance**

- xii. We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Absence from the School will be authorised where a day of religious observance:
  - Falls during school time.
  - Has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs.
- xiii. We ask that parents/carers notify the School by writing to the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral), in advance, where absence is required due to religious observance.

### **3.13 Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

- xiv. There may be circumstances in which pupils cannot attend School due to COVID-19. The School will adhere to any current guidance issued by the Department for Education relating to the recording of attendance in relation to COVID-19.
- xv. If a pupil tests positive for coronavirus, and is absent from School, their absence will be recorded as illness.

### **Addressing poor attendance and punctuality**

- 3.14 The School recognises that poor attendance is habitual and therefore early identification, intervention, and prevention are crucial. The School regularly analyses data to both identify and provide immediate support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it. The School will use

data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or groups of who need it most. In doing so the School, led by the SAC, will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly and fortnightly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. This data will also be discussed in the weekly meetings of the Head of Year and their line manager (Assistant Head Pastoral/ Director of Sixth Form/ Senior Deputy Head).
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders.
- Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner.
- Use half termly Pastoral Team meetings to bring together the collective observations of the support staff involved in attendance: Heads of Year, School Nurse and SENDCO and work on whole school strategies and share good practice.
- Conduct a thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Review data held in Medical Tracker to scrutinise visits to the School Nurse and time out of lessons for medical reasons.
- Benchmark School attendance data at each level against local, regional, and national levels, including HMC and GSA schools through relevant committees.
- Monitor the impact of School strategies and actions on improving attendance for specific pupils and groups.
- Work with the local authority and other local partners to identify / individuals groups at risk of poor attendance using the thresholds for notification from the DfE Attendance Guidance.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of pupils whom the School and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable.
- Log attendance and punctuality interventions in CPOMS.

3.15 Our procedures for managing unexplained absences can be found in section 3.9 ii.

3.16 Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example, because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence;
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival;
- persistent truancy or lateness;

we will make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality. Support may include, but is not restricted to: intervention sessions with the Head of Year; access to sessions with the School Counsellor; liaison, led by the School Nurse with other agencies such as CAMHS, GP or

hospital team; advice and formal intervention, as appropriate, from the local authority attendance team; referrals for Early Help or Request for Support.

- 3.17 In cases where the School has been unable to establish a clear reason for absence and/or has welfare concerns about the pupil, a home welfare check may be carried out.
- 3.18 Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 3.19 Absence will be classed as 'persistent' where it falls below 90% across the academic year and 'severe' when a pupil is absent from School for 50% or more of their possible sessions. Absence at this level is likely to significantly hinder educational prospects, and we expect full parental cooperation and support to urgently address these cases. As absence is often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, the School seeks to work with local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful or not engaged with, the law protects a pupil's right to education, with a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts. Intervention steps may include implementing an attendance action plan, referring to other agencies, and/or establishing an attendance contract.
- 3.20 Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the School, and wider support in accordance with this policy is not appropriate or effective, the school may consider appropriate penalties, with due awareness of the National Framework for penalty notices.
- 3.21 The school will report pupils absence for illness for 15 or more days whether consecutive or cumulative to the LA, or actions in line with equivalent guidance as set out by the LA.
- 3.22 The School will report pupils who have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days and where their record shows one or more of the unauthorised codes have been used or where a pupil is regularly absent, to the LA in line with LA requirements.
- 3.23 The School follows the Birmingham City Council (BCC) Fast-Track approach to attendance. The School will refer to the BCC Education Legal Intervention (ELIT) team as appropriate.

#### **4. Legislation and guidance**

- 4.1 This policy is based on Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024), which is referred to in this policy as the "DfE Attendance Guidance".