



# Queen Katharine Academy

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Attendance	
<b>This policy should be read, and used, in conjunction with: -</b> All other policies related to Good Behaviour, Admissions, Anti bullying and Safeguarding	
<b>Rights of the child</b> (RRSA Article)	<b>Article 28</b> based on FAIRNESS and EQUALITY “Every child has the right to an education. Secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children’s human dignity.” This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The RIGHT to learn and be taught</li><li>• The RIGHT to be respected</li><li>• The RIGHT to be safe</li></ul>
<b>Reviewing By: -</b>	<b>Academy Committee</b>
<b>Last Updated / Reviewed &amp; Approved by Governors on:</b>	October 2022
<b>Date of next scheduled review: -</b>	October 2023
<b>Responsible officer / Member of Staff /</b>	<b>Role: -</b> Deputy Principal <b>Name: -</b> Veronica Giaquinto

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Queen Katharine Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending the Academy regularly and punctually young people are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. **High achievement and attainment depends on good attendance.**
- 1.2 The whole Academy community – pupils, parents and carers, staff and Governors at the Academy have a responsibility for ensuring good attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.
- 1.3 Ours is a successful Academy and every learner plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to achieve excellence. For pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at the Academy, on time, every day, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- 1.4 All staff (teaching and support) at our school have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 1.5 **Definition of a parent/carers in Educational Law**

It's important that schools and local authorities are aware that parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

For the purposes of education law, the department considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a stepparent, guardian or other relative.
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility

## **2. Attendance Manager**

- 2.1 A member of our staff will oversee direct and co-ordinate the Academy's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure that the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the Academy. The person, known as the Attendance Manager, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared weekly with the Deputy Principal and are made regularly available to all staff, pupils, parents and carers (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good attendance). The Attendance Manager, along with the Year Progress Team will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

### **3. Why regular attendance is so important for learning**

- 3.1 Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil absence disrupts teaching routines so may also affect the learning of others.
- 3.2 Ensuring regular attendance at The Academy is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer and permitting absence from the Academy without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### **4. Safeguarding**

4.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

4.2 Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend the Academy regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this Academy, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for learners encompasses: -

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

4.4 Failing to attend the Academy on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

4.3 Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils, all members of school staff and external agencies.

#### **4.4 To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment and rate or progress.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance.

### **5. The Law relating to attendance**

5.1 Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable: -

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs, he/ she may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

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.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an **additional legal duty** to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

5.2 The Isle of Wight Council v Platt case (2017) considered by the Supreme Court makes it clear that regular attendance shall mean attendance in accordance with the school rules. Therefore, any non-attendance which is not in accordance with the school rules will be deemed unauthorised. The school rules are determined by the school and are the days and hours that they are open for pupils to attend. Under this judgment all children registered at a school should attend 100% of the time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## **6. Absence Procedures and daily routines**

6.1 Our school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect all children to be in their first lesson by this time. Registers are marked at **8.45am** and close at **9.00am**.

Your child will receive an unauthorised late mark if they arrive after the register is closed. Your child will be given a 'U' code (unauthorised late) in line with regulations, and this may mean that you face legal action if they persist.

When your child is late, they miss the start of the day, they can miss work, and this will impact on their learning. Late arrivals also disrupt lessons for other pupils in the class, which is not fair on them or your child.

### **6.2 Parents/Carers**

#### **If your child is absent you must:**

- contact the Academy before 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence on **01733 383888** or via our absence email at :  
<https://www.qka.education/page/?title=Attendance&pid=23>
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

### **6.3 The Academy**

If your child is absent we will:

- On the first day of absence send a truancy call to you and then telephone you if we have not had a response;
- invite you in to discuss the situation with us if your child's attendance drops below 95%;
- refer the matter to the Attendance Manager if your child's attendance falls below **95%**.
- Take legal action if these are persistent absences which may be in the form of Penalty Notices issued to each parent/carer for each child.

### **6.4 If your child is absent and you do not contact us, we may, under our safeguarding policy:**

- Telephone, text or email you on the first day and every following day of absence if we have not heard from you

- Contact emergency numbers held on our database
- Undertake a home visit if no contact is received from you Invite you in to discuss the situation with us
- Call 101 (Police) and request a safe and well check if all other attempts to contact you fail to get a response
- Invite you to discuss the absences with us
- Take legal action if there are persistent absences, which may be in the form of penalty notices issued to each parent/carer for each child or legal action through the courts.

#### **6.5 Who to contact if you or your child/children have questions or concerns about attendance?**

- Your child's Progress Team
- More detailed support – speak to the Academy Attendance Manager. You can contact the school office by telephone 01733 383888 or email us on [info@qka.education](mailto:info@qka.education) and a call back or appointment will be organised for you.

#### **7. Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

#### **8. Managing Lateness – Guidance for parents**

8.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable.

8.2 The Academy Day starts at 8.45am and we expect all pupils to be in at that time.

8.3 Registers are marked by 8.45am and pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. Pupils should arrive at 8.40am to ensure they arrive for Lesson 1 on time.

8.4 At 9.00 a.m. the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if a pupil arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will be marked as a U code and this will **not** count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

8.5 If a pupil has a persistent late record parents will be asked to meet with the Academy to resolve the problem, but parents can approach the Academy at any time if they are having problems getting a pupil to the Academy on time.

## 9. Data Monitoring

9.1 We keep track all our children's attendance and absences thoroughly through regular reports from our Management Information System. We look at the reports on a regular basis to track any concerns that may arise due to unauthorised absences and to ensure that any interventions are timely and appropriate.

We routinely monitor attendance and absences to assist the Academy in providing the correct support to families where necessary.

We analyse all patterns of absence, both authorised and unauthorised\* and try to ensure that parents/carers are informed of any child's attendance that fails below the National Average to prevent your child becoming a persistent absentee (PA) which means that they have an attendance below 90%. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss **10%** or more schooling within an agreed period **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level may cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need full parent/carer support and co-operation to tackle this.

Our interventions at this stage may include, but is not limited to:

- writing to parents/carers if attendance drops below the school's threshold of 95%.
- requesting that they provide evidence to support absences
- calling a School Attendance Meeting
- making an Early Help Referral
- referring to the Local Authority for support

PA pupils are also tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we may also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

## 9.2 **Impact analysis**

As part of our data analysis and monitoring process we will regularly assess the outcomes of our support/interventions to measure the impact that they are having on the improvement of children's attendance and attainment. We will continue to meet with and engage with families to find out and help resolve any barriers to regular attendance, including signposting or referring to other agencies. We will regularly review cases to ensure that the school is providing the appropriate support. Referrals for legal action is a last resort, but sometimes cannot be avoided.

## 10. Understanding types of absence:

10.1 Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by parents/carers) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

**10.2 Authorised** absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

**10.3 Unauthorised** absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been authorised. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark;
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- day trips and holidays in term time are not authorised as an exceptional/unavoidable circumstance.

**Unauthorised absences can lead to the Academy Attendance Manager using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.**

10.4 Whilst any child may be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If your child 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 usually make things worse.

## 11. Persistent Absence (PA)

11.1 A pupil becomes a “persistent absentee” when they miss **10%** or more schooling within an agreed period of time for whatever reason. Absence at this level may cause considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need the parent/carer’s fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

11.2 At the Academy we monitor all absences rigorously. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

10.3 PA pupils are tracked and monitored rigorously through our pastoral system.

10.4 All PA, or potential PA cases are automatically referred to our Attendance Manager.

10.5 Parents/Carers of PA pupils will need to provide additional medical evidence in the forms of:

- Medical prescriptions / Medication
- A letter from a Medical Professional
- For pupils who have a long term medical condition, parents/carers will need to keep the Academy updated with regular medical guidance.

## 11. Leave of Absence – Guidance for parents

11.1 Taking leave of absence without exceptional circumstances in term time will affect your child’s education as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not allowing absence in Academy time. Therefore, as an Academy we ask parents/carers **not** to take children out of the Academy without permission of the Head of School as per the law and Legislation.

11.2 Leave of Absence request forms are only available from Reception.

11.3 The Academy will consider the request and respond in writing with a decision.

- 11.4 Remember that any savings you think you make by taking a holiday during term time are offset by your child's education.
- 11.5 There is **no** automatic entitlement in law for time off during term time, to go on holiday.
- 11.6 All applications for leave of absence must be made **4 weeks in advance**. In making a decision about whether to authorise this leave, the Academy will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of absence.
- 11.7 It is important that parents/carers understand that we will **only** authorise such absences in **exceptional circumstances**.
- 11.8 Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the Academy and/or different from that agreed by the Academy, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions, such as a Penalty Notice Fine.

## **12. Procedures relating to absences during Academy Term Time.**

- 12.1 Where there is an unauthorised leave of absence, there are no exceptional circumstances and which has not been authorised by the Academy, a request for a Penalty Notice will be generated.
- 12.2 Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquires have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Academy will inform the Local Authority and the pupil could be removed off roll after 20 days.

## **13. Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be requested from the Local Authority by the School:**

- 13.1 A Penalty Notice can be issued if one of the following criteria can be met
- 13.2 Level of unauthorised absence leads to an unauthorised absence rate of **10%** or more within a period in any 8 school weeks (A maximum of 2 Penalty Notices may be issued in an academic year).  
Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed that contributes to a level of unauthorised absence at **10%** or more.
- 13.3 Lack of adherence to the dates agreed for any authorised leave of absence without reasonable justification.  
A single unauthorised absence event of at least 2 consecutive school days (4 consecutive sessions)  
Pupils identified in a public place during school hours whilst excluded (during the first five days of the exclusion period) without reasonable justification.
- 13.4 For further information regarding Penalty Notices please refer to the **Peterborough City Council Code of Conduct** which is available on the Peterborough City Council Website.

## **14. Payment of Penalty Notices**

- 14.1 Details of arrangements for the payment of penalties will be detailed on the Penalty Notices. Penalties should be paid in full, in one instalment, to the Local Authority and are retained to cover costs of issuing, enforcing or prosecuting recipients who do not pay.



14.2 The penalty is £120 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, but reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, as set out in The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period the Local Authority, in accordance with the Department of Education, must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice. Prosecution is for the offence to which it relates rather than for non-payment of the Penalty Notice.

The decision to prosecute ultimately lies with Peterborough City Council Legal Services, who will consider whether the prosecution is in the Public Interest.

## **15. Escalation of Procedures**

### **15.1 When we escalate cases to higher level legal interventions**

The Academy will make every effort to support families/children whose attendance is causing concern. However, there are some circumstances where despite every effort from the Academy, the Local Authority and extended work through multiple agencies this has failed to improve the attendance. At this point the school may instigate, or request that the Local Authority instigates a more formal legal intervention.

If this occurs a case may be prepared and presented to the Magistrates Court for prosecution under Section 444 (1) or 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996.

The outcome of these cases will be determined by the courts, of which can be:

- where convicted under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, you may be fined up to £1,000.
- where convicted under Section 444(1a) Education Act 1996 you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.
- Impose a Parenting Order

## **16. Deletions from Register**

15.1 Under Section 8 (1),(h),(i),(ii),(iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 should your child fail to return to school by the time that registration ends on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of absence the school is permitted to delete your child's name from their register.

15.2 This is possible if your child(ren) have not returned by the date specified because the following applies under Section 8 (h) – that he/she/they will have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days and

- (i) at no time as the 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(s) is/are unable to attend the school by reason of sickness, or any exceptional cause;

## **17. Those people responsible for attendance matters in this Academy are:**

- Veronica Giaquinto Deputy Principle – Behaviour Attitudes and Personal Development  
[Veronica.giaquinto@qka.education](mailto:Veronica.giaquinto@qka.education)
- Sue De Matteis - Attendance Manger  
[sue.dematteis@qka.education](mailto:sue.dematteis@qka.education)

- Progress leaders
- Tutors
- Academy Committee Members

## **18. Academy Committee**

18.1 Our academy trust board and Academy Committee will have high expectations for attendance at our Academy.

It is their role to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure that our school leaders fulfil their expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge and help to focus our improvement efforts where needed most
- Ensure all our school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

## **19. References**

- The Education Act 1996, 2002 & 2011
- Working together to improve school attendance (Guidance) May 2022
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018,
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010, 2011, 2013 & 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, 2012 & 2013Children Act 1989 & 2004

## Appendix 1:

### Monitoring of attendance.

Below is the basis of our intervention pathway. We treat each child individually and therefore each case may take a different route depending on the barriers, the needs of the family and any other circumstances which may be impacting on regular attendance. We try to take a holistic approach to dealing with and resolving barriers to non-school attendance and use legal interventions as a last resort.

