



Attendance Policy

Kirk Hallam Community Academy



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1. Statement of Intent and Aims

Kirk Hallam Community Academy is committed to ensuring that all students receive a full-time education that maximises opportunities for a transformational learning experience. Regular attendance is a prerequisite for achievement and character development. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% for all. Absence, whether frequent or occasional can lead to academic underperformance, missed experiences, and may cause fractured social relationships, all of which set in motion an increased pattern of non-attendance and greatly hinder prospects and success.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality to attending lessons.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) document, '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on '[School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures](#)'. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) regulations 2006 \(and 2010,2011,2013,2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(penalty notices\) \(England\) \(amendment\) Regulations 2013.](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil their expectations and statutory duties.

- Regularly reviewing and discussing attendance data – helping school leaders to strategize improvement efforts.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.

3.2 Head Teacher and Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The Head Teacher and Designated Senior Leader for attendance are responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement in line with whole school priorities and intent and leading this across the school and amongst all Stakeholders.
- Ensuring that attendance improvement is approached in a strategic and considered way.
- Recognising the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts and ensuring it is built into strategies on key areas such as attainment, disadvantaged pupils and special educational needs.
- Implementation of this policy.
- Having oversight of data analysis and frequently monitoring the data for patterns and trends.
- Supporting staff with the monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and key groups.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to key Stakeholders.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through the data.
- Overseeing the delivery of targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Megan Williams (Deputy Head Teacher) and can be contacted via mwilliams@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk or 0115 9301522.

3.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer and wider attendance team is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.
- Ensuring the early identification of any attendance concerns and utilising the correct early intervention strategies.
- Working with the Local Authority to tackle key attendance issues and barriers.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Liaising with key staff members such as tutors, Heads of Year and the Safeguarding Team.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

- Advising the Headteacher/Deputy Head Teacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.
- Taking calls from parents about any absence on a day-to-day basis and recording this on BROMCOM.
- Following up on all absences that are not explained by contacting parents and carers on the day of the absence.
- Conducting welfare checks and home visits on those children who have not attended school for a prolonged period.

The attendance officer is John Law and can be contacted via jlaw@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk or 0115 9301522.

3.4 Heads of Year

The Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Working closely with the Attendance Officer to identify and monitor key individuals and groups within their year groups.
- Supporting the targeted intervention and support of pupils and families.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

3.5 Class Teachers and Form Tutors

- Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for recording attendance daily, using correct codes and submitting this information to the Attendance team via BROMCOM.
- Raising any attendance concerns with the attendance team.

3.6 School administration team

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Officer/Head of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Not take holidays during term time.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day and on time.
- Attend every timetabled session on time.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

As a school we absolutely understand the importance of accurate attendance registers. We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. We will also take a register at the beginning of each lesson. The register will mark whether each pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:35am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.20pm and will be kept open until 1:50pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school for the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school's main number 0115 9301522 and following the instructions to report an absence. It is expected that parents/carers make every effort to contact the school for every planned or unplanned absence and a reason must clearly be stated for why their child is absent.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other forms of appropriate medical evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not happy about the authenticity of an illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parent's/carers will be notified in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/Carers should notify the Attendance Team of any pre-planned medical appointments as soon as possible. Contact should be made via the attendance line extension and/or email to

attendance@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk and be supported with evidence showing appointment date and times. Parents can also email contact@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk but an appointment letter/card must still be provided.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Pupils who are late once in a week will be issued a 30 minute same day after school detention. This will be communicated to the student both verbally and via a printed slip on the school gate. Parents/carers will also be informed. Failure to attend the detention will result in an escalation in the sanction.

Lateness to school or internally to school lessons will be subject to continual monitoring and intervention by the Attendance Team to support improved punctuality. A fixed penalty notice can be issued to pupils' parents/carers where their child has more than 10 late arrivals after the registration period has closed and therefore have been marked with a U Code.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending without reason the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the house of the student or in exceptional circumstances contact the police. A text will be sent if phone calls are unsuccessful, this is to alert the parent/carer of this absence.
- A home visit will take place if no contact has been made within 3 days of initial absence. These home visits may be conducted sooner and communicated to other agency's should there be a concern for the child's welfare, this can include police and social care.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via letters and pupil reports. We will contact directly when there are concerns about attendance and/or punctuality.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event/s that is an emergency and exceptional in its entirety.

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. There is no entitlement to time off in school time to go on holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail) Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Promoting good attendance is a key priority for Kirk Hallam Community Academy. At the very heart of our strategic improvement plan an emphasis has been placed on ensuring that we align with our shared school vision to be, "unashamedly ambitious for all our students" alongside fostering "secure and trusting relationships". We understand that good attendance is pivotal to ensuring pupil progress both academically and in relation to the development of the whole child. We are committed to making

good attendance a central part of the 'Kirk Hallam Way' and ensure that high expectations are communicated frequently. Alongside this we strive to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance. We use school rewards, incentives and achievement assemblies to recognise and celebrate success.

7. Attendance monitoring

Kirk Hallam Community Academy monitors attendance through a focus on 5 key elements:

1. Expectations
2. Tracking and analysis
3. Identification and monitoring
4. Early Intervention and support
5. Escalation

This structure is built around the DfE *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* flowchart found on page 8 of the document.

The Deputy Head Teacher meets a minimum of weekly with the Attendance Officer to identify and discuss students of concern.

This meeting is designed to:

- Analyse the tracked data and identify key patterns and trends.
- Identify students of concern and plan key support and intervention strategies.
- Enable the prioritisation of vulnerable students and involve other key individuals and external agencies where appropriate.
- Quality assure the use of strategies.
- Help the formulation of further strategic planning.
- Formulate the content of the data shared with key groups such as SLT and Heads of Year.

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause of concern.

Pupil level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and we share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- > Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- > Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and then develop strategies to address patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where pupils miss 10% or more of school, and severe absences is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Add them to an Attendance Monitoring List.
- Send letters to parents.
- Hold regular meetings with parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement in school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers of attendance.
- Conduct home visits where necessary.
- Liaise with appropriate external agencies.
- Use parenting contracts where appropriate.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated and as a minimum every year by Megan Williams (Deputy Head Teacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the local governing body.

9. Truancy

Truancy from any lesson will be monitored frequently and closely. Any student that shows a constant pattern of this behaviour will receive a sanction. Parents will also be informed by phone call or letter and may be invited into school for a meeting to discuss an improvement plan for their child.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives last, register closed
B	Off- site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual register	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is taking part in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational activity	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip, organised or approved by school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		

G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges or replaced with an "O" if no reason has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with the reason for the pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Other		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register is set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term/bank holiday/INSET day