



Kingsway Infant School

'Where learning is fun!'

Attendance and Absence Policy

May 2023

Headteacher's may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances', according to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Attendance and Absence Policy

At Kingsway Infant School, we want the whole school community – Governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality. Good attendance helps the children in our school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality, embracing the concept of equal opportunities for all. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children and provide an environment where we all feel valued and welcome.

- This policy is written to reflect Education laws and guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE)
- Attendance figures and targets will be reviewed annually to reflect both County and National targets
- The school will review systems for improving attendance regularly to ensure it is line with achieving targets

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between the school, parents/carers and pupils.

Kingsway Infant School will:

- provide a safe learning environment;
- ensure that attendance records are maintained according to government legislation and guidance on a daily basis and
- follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality.

Parents/Carers will:

- ensure their child attends school regularly, arrives on time, properly dressed, equipped, and ready to learn;
- inform the school on the first day of absence, the reason for their child's absence and update each day thereafter;
- maintain regular contact with school staff where necessary and
- ensure the school is kept informed of any change of contact details.



Pupils will:

- attend school, follow the school rules and be ready to learn.

School Times

- Pupils should not arrive before 8.50am
- Classroom doors open from 8.50am
- Register is taken at 8.55am after this time you are late
- Register closes at 9.10am
- Afternoon session commences 1.10pm* and register closes at 1.25pm

Lateness

Any pupil arriving after close of the register will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation e.g. attending an early morning medical appointment.

NOTE

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the close of register will be marked as present but recorded as 'late before registers closed'.

Lateness is regularly monitored by the Headteacher, Attendance Officer and the Governing Body.

First Day Response

• Notification in person or by phone on **01923 675005**, must be provided by the child's parent/carer by 9.30am on the first day of absence. There is an answerphone to leave a message before the office opens or you can email:

admin@kingsway.herts.sch.uk.

- Absences may be authorised by the Headteacher or a nominated person acting on their behalf.
- The school may decide not to authorise absence even when a reason is provided.
- Shopping, holidays, birthdays, car trouble and unfortunately even unwell family members are not valid reasons for absence.
- If no reason for absence is provided by 9.30am the school will telephone parents/carers to request an explanation.
- If there is no response after **three days** or sooner in some cases, the school will contact the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

Illness

In line with Health Protection Agency guidelines, a period of 48 hours absence is required for any pupil with vomiting or diarrhoea. Such absence due to illness is authorised.

Frequent Absence

- The school will monitor and deal with emerging attendance issues.
- Where there seems to be a pattern of absence, the school will alert parents by sending a letter and attendance certificate. If this process is unsuccessful, the school will refer to the Attendance Improvement Officer.



Continuing Absence

- The Headteacher and Administration staff monitor attendance weekly to check for any pupil whose attendance is below 94%, parents/carers may be formally notified if attendance is below this level.
- If the absence rate is consistently below 94%, a letter is sent to both the parents/carers who have Parental Responsibility (PR). If the pupil's attendance does not improve, parents/carers will receive a second letter and may be required to provide a medical certificate for any illness absence.
- The school is not responsible for any financial expenses incurred.

Persistent Absence Definition

Attendance below 90% is defined by the DfE as persistent absence.

Fixed Penalty Notices

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate notice would be issued to each parent/carer for each child.

The rate **per parent/carer, per child** will be £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay may result in a criminal conviction and/or a fine up to £1000 per parent/carer plus Local Authority costs.

If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute for the original offence of failing to ensure the child's regular attendance at school. This is a criminal offence and upon conviction may result in a fine up to £2,500 (each parent/carer) and a **criminal record**.

If there are two parents/carers in a family, both parents/carers will be fined for each child.

A fixed penalty can be issued if:

- 15 half days (sessions) of unauthorised absence are recorded in the current and/or previous term. The absences may have occurred in a block or a series of odd days and/or unauthorised holiday.

Absence letters/emails

- Letters/emails received from parents/carers explaining absence will be kept on file.
- These must be sent in or absences may not be authorised.



Leaving and returning to school during the day

- When leaving or returning to school during the school day, parents/carers must collect or return their child(ren) using the main school entrance and sign in/out.

‘Leave’ in term time

Leave is not authorised in term time. Approval will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances and is dependent on the reason for absence and previous absence records.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities that arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure their child(ren) receive their education.

Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

- Kingsway Infant School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.
- Kingsway Infant School works with individual pupils and their parents/carers to improve poor attendance.
- When the attendance does not improve sufficiently and after discussion with the AIO, the school may make a formal referral to Children’s Services.

Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child’s education as well as reflecting badly on the school. It also gives children the wrong messages about the importance of education, which may lead to problems later in schooling. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later in life.