



Attendance and Unauthorised Absence Policy

Whole school	WEBSITE
Statutory?	Yes
Reviewed	October 2020
Next review	October 2022

INTRODUCTION

At King's Ely we believe that pupils can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly and arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that pupils should not be at school if they are unwell. All staff are responsible for the safeguarding and promoting of each pupil's welfare and are aware that frequent absence from school can sometimes be an indicator of abuse, neglect, radicalisation, bullying or the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences and the school places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents/guardians.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other school documents:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Drugs, Alcohol & Smoking Policy;
- King's Ely Statement on British Values and preventing radicalisation;
- Missing Child Policy (including procedures for children not collected at the end of the day/activity).
- Social Respect (Anti-Bullying) Policy & Strategy;
- Safeguarding (including Child Protection) Policy.

ATTENDANCE

- Information on procedures for when a child is late, sick or absent for another reason is given to parents/guardians in the Information Handbook for parents and pupils. This highlights the importance of pupils being at school on time and parents/guardians need to notify the school well in advance, if any absence can be foreseen.
- At the induction meetings held each year for parents/guardians of children about to enter the school, the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. The need for pupils to arrive at school on time so that each pupil can be given the best possible start to each school day is emphasised. The need for pupils to be picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left. In the case of children in King's Ely Acremont and EYFS, if a child is not collected, they will move to after-school wraparound care if parents have been contacted and are delayed. If parents or other emergency contact are not in school by 6:30pm, children will remain at school with two members of staff until the parent arrives or alternative arrangements are made by Cambridgeshire Social Care Team.
- Parents/guardians are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children which mean they become unhappy and may not want to come to school. Parents/guardians need to be alert to this.
- Parents are strongly advised to arrange their family holidays within the school holidays rather than in term time, so that their child's education is not disrupted. The Principal talks to those parents who persistently take their holidays in term time, reminding them of the

negative impact of such disruption upon their child's education. Pupils travelling from overseas are encouraged to make travel arrangements well in advance, whilst places on suitable flights are available. When returning home for the holidays, it is preferable that flights are arranged so that no lessons are missed on the last day of term. However, in some cases where there are few flights, pupils may be allowed to leave early on the last day of term. In this case, the pupils must always check with their teachers in order to catch up on work that has been missed. The School usually expects pupils from overseas to be at school until the end of term and is not usually willing to release them earlier without good reason.

- Parents are reminded that all pupils are required to attend those activities arranged on a Saturday for which they have opted. In addition, those School events and sports or other fixtures arranged on a Saturday are expected to be fully supported and attended by pupils as required. Parents are strongly urged to encourage their children to attend those school events scheduled on Saturdays as detailed in the Almanack.
- If a pupil is recorded as absent in the attendance register without explanation, the school office will telephone the parent/guardian soon after the start of school to enquire as to the reason for absence, in case the pupil has left home but failed to arrive at school.
- Pupils arriving late to school must report to the relevant office where their presence is recorded by the secretary/receptionist before they return to class. In the case of King's Ely Acremont pupils, parents/guardians should accompany the child to undertake this task.

Concerns about late arrival or a pattern of absences will be shared

If a pupil is regularly late for school or is often absent then the parents/guardians will be contacted so that a solution to the problem can be found.

ADMISSIONS REGISTER

King's Ely will carry out its statutory responsibility to inform Cambridgeshire County Council when a pupil is added or deleted from the admissions register at non-standard transition (i.e. where a pupil of compulsory school age leaves before completing the final year or joins after the beginning of the first year). There are fifteen official grounds for removing a pupil, set out in detail in *'School Attendance' (2019)* and *'Children Missing in Education' (2016)*. Furthermore, as per Government regulations, it is practice at King's Ely that, where a parent notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the new address; the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will normally live in future; and the date from which it is expected the pupil will normally live there, is recorded on the admissions database.

The School has the right to remove a pupil from its Admission Register in accordance with the terms and conditions of the School's Parent Contract.

In addition, in compliance with the safeguarding guidance on children missing education in *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, King's Ely will inform the local authority where the pupil is normally resident when the pupil is deleted from the admissions register at non-standard transitions.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

All staff at King's Ely are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. They are also concerned about each pupil's safety, welfare and happiness. Frequent absence may raise safeguarding concerns; therefore the school will take appropriate action immediately. In line with the school's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty¹, staff are aware of the signs that could indicate the potential radicalisation² of a pupil and are aware of the possible implications of extended travel by a pupil to conflict zones in terms of radicalisation, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

If truancy is suspected, the Head of section is notified, who then contacts the parents/guardians, either by phone, or by home visiting if necessary. Parents/guardians are encouraged to bring their child to school so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parents/guardians then the Head of section or Housemaster/mistress talks to the pupil concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that pupil not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher or tutor and appropriate action is taken.

It is important to note that, all schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or following an unauthorised absence of more than 10 school days (continuous). The School will comply with its statutory duties and local authority requirements with regard to reporting unauthorised absences. The school will not delete a pupil for non-return until the grounds for deletion are met.

The School will comply with its duties as a sponsor of pupils of non-UK nationals resident overseas at the School under a UK Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies Tier 4 (Child) Visa. The school will inform the UK Visa and Immigration of any unauthorised absences of 10 or more days, or failing to meet an average attendance of 80%, and of any unauthorised absences on the first day of term.

FIXTURES

It is school policy that, if a pupil is selected to represent the school, he/she must do so and this must take priority over social engagements. If it is impossible for the pupil to do so as, for example, the player has been selected to represent the county or has an essential family engagement; parents/guardians should alert the school well in advance. Permission should only be sought in exceptional circumstances (see **Section on Attendance**).

¹ A duty under S.26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 "*to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*".

² Radicalisation' refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

King's Ely recognises the importance of faith and religious observance in the lives of many of our pupils. We value the diversity and richness that all religions and cultures bring to the school community. The right to religious observance is protected in law and has the full support of the school.

Any requests for absence for occasions of religious observance must be made in writing to the relevant Head of section and with as much notice as possible, so that arrangements can be put in place for a pupil to catch-up on any work missed during his or her absence.

COVID-19

Attendance and Registration requirements were adjusted during the coronavirus lockdown period. King's Ely complied with those revised arrangements at that time.

From September 2020 the Attendance and Registration requirements in accordance with Government regulations were again in force and with which the School has complied in accordance with this policy.

APPENDIX ONE: ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION DATA:

1. The Attendance Register

The am/pm daily pupil registration records are taken via iSAMS and backed up daily and stored on two separate hard disk arrays (Server and Veams). This is kept in perpetuity in electronic/data format and accessibly by way of searching for particular records via the iSAMS system.

In addition, by way of a recurring calendar reminder, the Database Manager will run a report at least every 10 days to identify if there are any student registrations with a 'N-No reason yet provided' or any 'Not Yet Registered', using the report to followed up across all sections of the school so all pupils registrations are properly accounted for with a valid reason for absence. This further report/check every 10 days is in addition to daily checking/chasing by support staff in each section.

2. The Admissions Register (Pupil specific data within the iSAMS database)

The Database Manager ensures all the necessary fields on iSAMS are complete as per the necessary fields for the school's Admissions Register (as stipulated by the regulations/within the ISI Commentary on Regulatory requirements).

The Admissions Register pupil data within the iSAMS database is backed up each 24 hours to the main server storage as well as secondary bank of mirror storage drives in a building separate from the servers.

The Database Manager also does a separate monthly export (into Excel format) of certain data to their "Z Drive" (this is also backed up nightly and onto the mirror storage). The data exported is:

- The Admissions Register records for all current pupils
- Complete Pupil record export (including all associated contact details)
- Basic lists of pupil details by year groups and academic status (name, DoB, form group, gender, Day/Boarding). Essentially form lists.

These monthly export files are also stored annually on a CD and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for holding securely in a different building. These CD export records will be kept for at least 3 years.