



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a whole-school policy, within the framework of which the Nursery, Junior School and Infant School plus EYFS policies operate as appropriate.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY STATEMENT

At QEGS, Blackburn we are committed to promoting the welfare of our pupils\* through regular school attendance. We know that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on pupils' attainment and overall progress in the school. The link between good attendance and high levels of achievement are undeniable. Poor attendance and lateness may also be detrimental to the social adjustment and development of pupils.

We expect parents/carers to ensure that pupils attend school and that they are punctual.

\* The term 'pupils' includes Sixth Form students throughout this policy

### General

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise.

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Pupil Registration Regulations 1995, the School must keep an attendance register. **The School records the attendance of pupils electronically.**

The School is registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### Aims

- The School is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The School will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim.
- The attendance policy aims to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the School have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the School.
- The School aims to deal promptly with the causes of poor attendance and lateness.

### Taking the Register



Pupils of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register all pupils (including those over compulsory school age) twice a day.

The register is updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition, all teachers must check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so. **If a pupil is not in lessons, the teacher must report this to reception straight away.**

Those taking the register are presented with a range of options giving reasons for the absence and must choose the appropriate one when they are absolutely sure of the reason; otherwise N should be selected until the reason can be pursued.

All Tutor Group registers will be closed ten minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

**Staff, parents and carers must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils, by their behaviour and attitude, the importance of good attendance.**

### **Specific Responsibilities**

The Board of Governors will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes
- receive reports from the Headmaster
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Headmaster's report
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the School, and is known by the parents

The Headmaster will:

- include attendance targets as part of the Development Plan
- monitor progress
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the School
- determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested
- notify parents as appropriate that, if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, his/her parents commit an offence
- liaise with the Local Authority over persistent absentees
- liaise with the Local Authority and social services as appropriate when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school; in certain circumstances, it will be appropriate to inform the Prevent team (Channel) or the police.
- make an annual report with statistics to the Board of Governors



The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will:

- oversee the attendance arrangements
- work with Heads of Year and Form Tutors to ensure the efficient running of the system
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up
- deal with issues of inadequate registering
- arrange appropriate training for staff
- keep the Headmaster informed of the effectiveness of the policy
- advise the Headmaster on any strategies that could be initiated or improved

The Assistant Head (Data) will:

- provide half termly attendance data for all Year groups.

Heads of Year will:

- ensure that all pupil absences are noted and absence notes received from parents in their son/daughter's homework diary.
- ensure that all registers are accurately completed
- make regular checks on absence notes
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- contact parents over pupil absences where appropriate
- review attendance for the year group every half term. Take appropriate action.
- reinforce good practice at year team meetings.
- interview students, where absence or punctuality is a concern and take appropriate action.
- work with the parents/carers of students to address the issues
- for students who are late three times in a week - organise for them to receive a Thursday detention. Lateness is defined as after the register has been taken and Form Tutors monitor this.
- ensure that the Form Tutors set individual attendance targets with pupils.
- provide Form Tutors with up to date attendance records.
- conduct formal interviews, three times a year, for students whose attendance is below expected levels.
- make reports to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) on the efficiency of the system - liaise with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) over training needs

Form Tutors will:

- ensure that pupils are registered accurately and punctually
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes and check planners after pupil absence
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes



- keep the Head of Year informed of any signs of suspected truancy
- inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences, bearing in mind any safeguarding or 'prevent' issues that may need to be brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Person.
- Conduct termly attendance reviews with students in the form.

Classroom Teachers will:

- check the attendance of pupils at their lessons or activities
- inform the Form Tutor of the names of pupils who are absent without notification.

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence. 'Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session.
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to School. This should be written in the pupil's homework diary.

Parents are required to:

- ensure that the pupil arrives on time each day.
- let the School know if the child is going to be late.
- promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- not take their son/daughter on holiday during term time.
- inform the School of the reason for absence. Absences can only be authorised by the School. provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address.
- notify the School when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of absence.
- telephone the school on subsequent days of absence (unless arrangements for a long-term absence have been agreed e.g. when there is a broken limb or surgery).
- keep the School well informed, in cases of lengthy absence, so that work can be sent home in certain cases.
- provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen. Pupils will not be allowed to sign out of School if they do not have a note from a parent/carer.
- provide a note or sign the pupil's homework diary confirming reason for absence when the pupil returns from sickness. This should be on the first day of the pupil's return to school.

### **Absence Procedures**

**If a pupil is absent the following takes place.**

**Day 1. If no communication is received from parents, an email (KKS) message is sent out asking the parents to get in touch. The family home will be contacted and if no contact is made with the parent, a message is left on the answer phone.**



**Day 2. The above procedure is repeated.**

**Day 3. If no contact is made from home a discussion is held between the Form Tutor and the Head of Year. The likely outcome is a home visit.**

**Day 4. The area Learning and Access Manager will be contacted.**

### **Lateness**

**If a pupil is late they must report to the School Reception. This is recorded on the register. If a pupil is repeatedly late it will be treated as a disciplinary matter. The Head of Year and Form Tutor will work together to help the pupil to improve their punctuality. Parents are likely to be involved in this process.**

### **Inspection**

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will ensure that the School Attendance Registers are available for inspection by HMIs, registered inspectors and other approved agencies.

### **Leave of Absence**

Leave of absence can be granted only by the Headmaster. Requests must be made in writing to the Headmaster.

### **Holiday Leave**

The Headmaster is not allowed to grant leave for holidays. Parents must ensure that holidays do not encroach into term time and failure to do this will mean the Headmaster is obliged to inform the LA who may choose to levy a fine.

### **Short Term Leave**

The School can legally grant short term, exceptional leave for family reasons (e.g. weddings or funerals of close relatives). It is for the Headmaster to determine the reasonableness.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering, no absence needs to be recorded but they must sign out at reception and back in if they return during the school day.

The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Headmaster will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the appropriate Head of Year. The Headmaster may also seek advice from other appropriate agencies before coming to a decision. **Authorised absence means that permission has been granted in advance by the Headmaster. Unauthorised absence means that the Headmaster has not granted permission for absence.**



It would be beneficial to explain 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absence here to provide clarity for parents and carers.

### **Religious Observance**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a document with advice on attendance for schools and LAs. It explains that the day being taken as absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

The Headmaster will review each application but will try to accommodate reasonable requests (e.g. he will allow one day for example for Eid, Diwali, Day of Atonement etc, providing parents request this in advance).

The School expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

### **Taking a Pupil off the Register**

The Headmaster will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Education Act Regulations.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Headmaster will review the working of the policy with SMT and make an annual report to the Board of Governors.

**We monitor pupils' attendance at school on a daily basis. If a pupil does not attend for three school days and we are unable ascertain their whereabouts, we contact the area Learning and Access manager and follow the advice given.**

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**Reviewed and approved by Board of Governors:**

**October 2016**

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