



Kirkbie Kendal School Academy Trust

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Member of Staff Responsible for review:	Assistant Headteacher (CBr)
Governors' Committee/SLT Responsible:	Curriculum
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Change Record		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	Curriculum 5 Dec 17	Inclusion of evidence of medical appointments and request for further information regarding unexplained absences. Changes to letters to incorporate process for Post-16 students
1.2	Curriculum 20 Mar 18	Inclusion of reference to direct contact with Sixth Form students. Inclusion of reference to electronic means of contact. Removal of outdated letters.
1.3	Curriculum 4 Dec 18	Inclusion of reference to Fixed Penalty Notice Fines Change of title from Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to Pastoral and Attendance Support Officer (PASO)
1.4	Curriculum 8 Dec 20	Minimal changes. 'morning and afternoon lunchtime register and form time registers' under 'We encourage attendance by:'. Insertion of 'lunchtime or' afterschool detentions under 'Punctuality'

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“Kirkbie Kendal School promotes the safeguarding and welfare of children in its care; all policies support the Child Protection Policy.”

ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Regular school attendance is crucial to ensure students make progress at school and engage with their education. In order to achieve this, we will take appropriate action to ensure that all students achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted on as quickly as possible.

AIMS

Kirkbie Kendal School aims to ensure that:

- All students have an equal right, and access to, an education in accordance with the National Curriculum, or agreed alternative.
- No students will be deprived of their education opportunities, by either their own absence or lateness, or that of other students.

It is recognised that:

- The majority of students want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peers, and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society.
- Some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported in meeting their attendance responsibilities.
- It is the duty of parents/carers to secure education for compulsory school age students as required by law (ref Section 7, 1996 Education Act).

EXPECTATIONS

Kirkbie Kendal School expects that all students will:

- Attend school regularly.

Arrive punctually and be appropriately prepared for the day as stated in our Home School Agreement which parents/carers are asked to sign when their child starts school.

- Carry out any work provided by or via Kirkbie Kendal School during an authorised period of absence (and by any other alternative education provider/s).

Kirkbie Kendal School expects that parents/carers will:

- Fulfil their legal responsibilities and ensure their child/ren attends school.
- Support their child in attending school on time and ready to learn.
- Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible.
- Inform a member of staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school.
- Contact school, as soon as the child is absent confirming the absence by letter and/or doctor's note upon return, or as required in specific circumstances

- Seek permission from the school for leave of absence only in “exceptional circumstances”, and not repeatedly.
- Provide evidence of medical appointments (eg appointment card) if absence during the school day is required for this purpose.

Parents/carers and students can expect the following from Kirkbie Kendal School:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact when a student is absent without explanation.
- Action on any attendance problem notified to the school.
- Referral of specific attendance issues to the School’s Pastoral and Attendance Officer, supporting pastoral staff, and agencies where appropriate (Appendix 1).

We encourage attendance by:

- Consistent, clear communication with parents/carers and students about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance.
- Setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with Governors, teachers, parents/carers and students.
- The accurate completion of each lesson register and morning and afternoon form time registers.
- Acknowledging excellent attendance (100%) through school reward systems.

Kirkbie Kendal School responds to non-attendance by:

- Contacting parents/carers on the first day of an absence if no reason has been received. (This will usually be by text message, but could use alternative methods of communication).
- If there is no response to the first contact a further request for information may be sent to enquire about the unexplained absence.
- Where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging the school staff will work to help resolve any difficulties.
- Where there is no, or limited, response to school intervention and where the absence or pattern of absence has persisted without explanation the school may refer to the Pastoral and Attendance Officer (PASO) (Appendix 1). The school may also at this point and/or investigate the first day contact as advised by and agreed with PASO and convene an Attendance Panel (Appendix 2). (For post-16 students, contact will be made with the appropriate persons. Students aged 18 or over will be contacted directly).
- Where there is no, or limited, improvement in attendance a referral may be made to the Inclusion Officer /Children’s Services/Local Authority and/or other relevant action taken to secure attendance (Appendix 3).

PUNCTUALITY

We expect punctuality, this means registration in Form Groups promptly at 8.45am and 2.05pm. We respond to lateness by implementing the Behaviour Policy and communicating via the Student Planner, Form Tutor, Head of Year, Attendance Administrator and senior staff. There is a series of possible actions, for example, monitoring lates per week and applying relevant sanction (usually lunchtime or after school detention).

If lateness persists, causing a child's attendance to drop below 90%, sanctions may be escalated to the following:

- Fixed Penalty Notices to the amount of £120.00 per child (reducing to £60.00 if paid within 21 days), issued by Cumbria County Council.
- An Education Supervision Order issued by the family court.
- Prosecution of parents in a Magistrates' court.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Kirkbie Kendal School believes regular attendance to be vitally important and parents/carers are asked for their active support in this matter. Leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence. The Headteacher will not authorise an absence where a student will miss an examination. The Governors have issued the following statement about holidays in term time:

'Removal of students from school during term time can cause disproportionate damage to their education and has an adverse effect on future achievement. It is, therefore, expected that parents will not arrange family holidays except during school holidays. While Governors recognise that there may be considerable educational opportunities to be had from travel, they feel that these cases are the exception rather than the rule. The Headteacher has been asked therefore to actively discourage parents from causing their children to miss schooling.'

In the event that parents withdraw their children from school during term time, Governors reserve the right to request that Fixed Penalty Notices to the amount of £120.00 per child (reducing to £60.00 if paid within 21 days) be issued by Cumbria County Council.'

At Kirkbie Kendal School, we will continue to consider all applications for leave of absence individually. "Exceptional" circumstances, where an absence may be authorised are considered to include:

- Serious illness of a close family member.
- Funerals.
- Forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting.
- Representation in national or county sports or performing arts events or similar.
- Other exceptional family circumstances.

Circumstances that are **not** deemed "exceptional" include:

- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad.
- Visiting relatives.
- Family day trips (to exhibitions, theatre, agricultural shows etc).
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays.

When making an application for leave of absence during term time parents/carers will need to cite the **exceptional circumstances** on the school form submitted. Any requests must use the correct form, available on the school's website or directly from the Attendance Officer. The School may ask for further information

when such requests are made, and will challenge any unexplained absences to ensure the register is correctly maintained.

RELATED POLICIES

Behaviour for Learning

Safeguarding/Child Protection

Reference: School Attendance Guidance, November 2016

THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING FORMATS:

PAPER
ENLARGED PRINT
EMAIL
WEBSITE

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Referral to the Pastoral and Attendance Officer.

Appendix 2 - Kirkbie Kendal School Attendance Panel Policy.

Appendix 3 - Flowchart

REFERRAL CRITERIA TO THE PASTORAL AND ATTENDANCE OFFICER (PASO)

Criteria:

Where a student's access to education is restricted, for whatever reason, it may be that the School's PASO will need to take some action and engage in work with the child or family or other appropriate agency, such as the Local Authority. This restricted access to education can include: reduced attendance rates, post registration truancy, increasing punctuality problems, exclusions, illness or unexplained absence or not being in a fit state to learn. These are examples and not an exhaustive list.

Students with attendance rates under 90% over a sustained period are considered by the DfE to be Persistent Absentees and are considered for Early Help.

If a student is likely to need attention from the PASO, a decision by the Head of Year and the Deputy or Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) will be made about deployment of PASO time.

The School's PASO will make contact with parents/carers and students and undertake home visits as appropriate.

The Pastoral and Attendance Support officer can facilitate the processes for the following legal and financial sanctions against parents, if their child fails to attend school:

- Fixed Penalty Notices to the amount of £120.00 per child (reducing to £60.00 if paid within 21 days), issued by Cumbria County Council.
- An Education Supervision Order issued by the family court.
- Prosecution of parents in a Magistrates' court.

KKS ATTENDANCE PANEL POLICY**FORMAT**

School and Education Welfare Service (as appropriate) look at students' attendance and agree which parents/carers/appropriate persons are to be called to an Attendance Panel by following the agreed criteria. (In the case of students aged 18 or over, contact will be made directly with the student).

CRITERIA

No entrenched attendance issues. This is a preventative, early intervention strategy. Do not use them as a last resort. There should be some evidence of the parent being able to exert a good degree of control and influence over their child(ren).

Student attendance should be no less than 85% at the outset. At KKS it is recommended we begin this process at approximately 90-85% on HOYs' guidance with EWS advice (taking into account individual circumstances, eg possible family holiday etc).

PROCESS

The approach is a preventative, supportive measure and can be used for referred and non-referred students. For example, students already referred to the EWS can become involved with an Attendance Panel as part of an agreed programme of intervention. If successful, the referral closes; if unsuccessful it can be a valuable part of the evidence for formal proceedings. However, if the EWS is asked to undertake any work with the student beyond the panel meeting then a referral is required.

School writes to parents/carers/appropriate persons inviting them to attend the panel, stating date, time, venue, offering a 20-minute appointment maximum.

The panel will consist of no more than 3 members, a mix of the following:

Deputy Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher – Governor - HOY - Pastoral and Attendance Officer (PASO) (as appropriate).

- Discuss attendance % targets.
- Each case will be individual and therefore appropriate realistic and achievable targets will need to be set in the agreed actions, eg request GP notes, reduction in lates.
- Parents/carers/appropriate persons need to be made aware of the possibility of legal proceedings taken against them if attendance does not improve.
- The PASO will complete and share a summary of the Attendance Panel.
- Review will be at the next six-week attendance and if there is improvement, school will write home. If there are still concerns, a further Panel will be convened.

When everyone agrees set targets, inform the parents/carers/appropriate persons that they will receive a copy of the agreed actions as will the school. A copy for the PASO's file.

