



# **THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY 2017/18**

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<b>Signature of Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Signature of Headteacher</b>

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## INTRODUCTION

**At the King Alfred School regular attendance is classed as attendance of 95% or more.**

All staff share a legal responsibility, alongside the students, parents/carers and the Local Authority in respect of ensuring as full an attendance at school as is possible of our students.

The first clear responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive an efficient and suitable full time education either at school, or otherwise rests with the parents/carers. Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends and stays at school. They risk prosecution if they fail in this duty.

Regular school attendance is vital if our students are to benefit fully from the opportunities we have to offer, and to be successful in their future employment or education. The school evaluates pupil attendance by session, and as a percentage over the year.

A school's effectiveness in other areas can be an important element in promoting positive attendance. Stimulating teaching and an ethos in which all members of the school community are valued, will help to stimulate high levels of attendance.

The King Alfred School recognises that poor or irregular attendance interrupts and disrupts learning and progress for all students, and is linked to behavioural issues.

Abbreviations used in this policy:

HOY – Head of Year, AO – Attendance Officer, EWO – Education Welfare Officer

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Attendance Officer:

- Ensures that all registers are completed correctly, and draws attention to any inconsistencies in the registers.
- Inputs any outstanding data and maintains the system.
- First day calling.
- Distributes lists of attendance to tutors, Heads of Year every 3 weeks with notes if there has been previous action taken.
- Maintains all records regarding attendance.
- Liaises with the EWO and other relevant bodies regarding interventions and concerns.

### Tutors

- Complete am and pm registration directly into SIMS.
- Complete the absence record and keep HOY and AO informed of relevant information through the return of lists as well as informal discussions.
- Identify patterns of non-attendance in the tutor group and for individual students, and intervene to ensure good attendance.
- Contact parents if there is a specific concern.

### Heads of Year

- Lead and manage the year teams in ensuring good attendance.
- Identify patterns of non-attendance in the year group and intervene to ensure good attendance. Support the tutors and maintain the professional relationship between the King Alfred School and home.
- Monitor the work of the year team in attendance.
- Direct interventions that ensure and promote good attendance.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies about specific concerns.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies to devise strategies to ensure and promote good attendance.

### Pastoral Deputy Headteacher

- Monitor and support the HOY in their leadership and management of year teams.
- Support Heads of Year in establishing interventions and monitoring the effectiveness of these.
- Line management of the Attendance Officer.
- Responsible for ensuring that monitoring takes place.
- Ensures the Attendance procedures and policy are in place and implemented.
- Liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies as appropriate.

### Headteacher

- Responsible for authorising term time leave.
- Liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies as appropriate.
- Has legal responsibility for the central record keeping of registers and as such creating exhibits for parental prosecutions.

## LATENESS

The school day starts at 8:40am and finishes at 3:10pm. Students are required to register with their Tutor by 8:45am for morning registration and with their Period 4 class teacher by 12:35pm for afternoon registration.

Students are required to sign in at the Attendance Office if they are late. Assemblies regularly stress the importance of signing in and this is monitored through spot checks by Heads of Year.

The Attendance Officer enters students who are late on SIMs. Form tutors mark registers on the computer directly into the SIMS attendance module. Students are expected to attend a break detention if arriving late before 9.20am and attend a break and lunch detention if arriving late after 9.20am on the same day.

The register will remain open until 9.20 am and 12.30 pm. If a student has not registered by then they are marked as an unauthorised absence unless the parents/carers subsequently provide a written explanation. Persistent lateness is dealt with by Heads of Year and parents/carers will be advised by letter that any further absences will be unauthorised if the student is not in the King Alfred School by 8.55am.

If students are persistently late to school their case would be referred to the EWO and could result in a Penalty Notice being issued or court action.

Route delays on buses happen occasionally. These are marked as \ in the register and are not counted against the student's attendance.

Lateness to school or lessons is something the school must not accept. Tutors and class teachers must reinforce that lateness is unacceptable and where it persists inform and involve parents/carers.

Parents will receive a notification advising them of late detentions.

## PROCEDURES TO ENSURE GOOD ATTENDANCE

- **First Day Calling:** Wherever possible parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence or the Attendance Officer calls Priority students. These are students who are known truants or who are being monitored by Heads of Year.
- **Absences:** Parents must contact the school on 01278 764088 by 8.30am on any occasion of absence. The King Alfred School authorises the absence via the AO. If there are concerns about ongoing absence the King Alfred School will be in contact with the family to raise awareness of their concerns by letter. Absence may become unauthorised if further information is not provided at the school's request (see Medical Reasons below). Should absence continue, the King Alfred School will offer a meeting to the family to explore the barriers to attendance and to plan action to resolve any identified issues. The King Alfred School will make full use of the

Education Welfare Service and refer cases where attendance continues to be a concern after this meeting.

- **Medical reasons:** If the King Alfred School needs more information about a medical condition, or if the King Alfred School is not satisfied with a reason, consent is sought from the parent/carer to contact the GP directly. If permission is not given, the King Alfred School will expect the parent/carer to provide necessary medical information themselves. If this is not forthcoming, the necessary two contacts are made before the EWO is informed.
- **Truancy:** Heads of Year conduct spot checks on students to check for truancy. Teachers are required to maintain electronic registers and use SIMS data to check absences, particularly of known truants. Students will be expected to spend at least the equivalent of the time missed in detention and this will be arranged by the Head of Year.

## **MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE AND INTERVENTION**

- Every 3 weeks, the Attendance Officer prints out a list of attendance figures for each tutor and HOY. Lists show attendance across the tutor group/year group. These figures show sessions missed due to authorised or unauthorised absence.
- Lists to tutors request that tutors annotate and return to Heads of Year showing any relevant information about sessions missed by students, or general concerns.
- Categories for intervention are generated by HOY who then authorise a letter to be sent/contact made with the EWO. If attendance continues to be poor, action is taken by the EWO.
- Referrals to the EWO are completed before the visit and most will be completed by the Attendance Officer. All documentation has been agreed with the EWO and notification of which letters have been sent will be emailed prior to any visit by the EWO.
- The Attendance Officer/Heads of Year will record the action taken and this will be emailed to the EWO. The EWO will therefore have full electronic records when they visits the King Alfred School. This leads to a more efficient use of the EWO's time.
- The King Alfred School intervenes early with potential poor attenders and rewards good attendance.
- The King Alfred School recognises that many students can achieve good attendance and seeks to promote and celebrate this achievement. This is done in assemblies and certificates and prizes are awarded for good attendance. There are also termly/half-termly rewards for 100% attendance such as the 100 Club. The Attendance Officer produces monthly attendance bulletins. These show % attendance, most improved attendance, sessions missed and % of lateness for each tutor group in each year.

## **LIAISON WITH THE EWO (EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER)**

The King Alfred School has regular liaison and communication with the EWO. The Attendance Officer and the member of SLT responsible for attendance meet with the EWO and discuss students with poor attendance and appropriate intervention strategies are offered. Parents may be offered a Parenting Contract Meeting or requested to attend a meeting with the EWO.

Prior to the EWO involvement, schools are required to take the following steps:

- Send letter to parents/carers raising concerns about attendance.
- Invite parents into meeting if attendance remains a concern. Parents will be made aware of EWO referral at this meeting
- Make a referral to the EWO

The King Alfred School must supply the following documentation:

- Up to date attendance print out – from Attendance Officer
- Copies of letters
- Minutes of any meetings with the family

The EWO makes initial contact by letter and details the Legal Penalties that can be imposed by the LEA. Second contact is made if there is no improvement. Parents are requested to attend a meeting with the EWO. Further steps can include fixed penalties and in extreme cases, prosecution.

## **TERM TIME LEAVE**

Any term time leave must be requested in advance, in writing, direct to the Headteacher, and this should come from the person with whom the child normally resides. The Headteacher will then determine whether the reason is exceptional. The King Alfred School will only authorise term time holiday for those request which fit the exceptional criteria.

The King Alfred School may request a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave that is over 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and where the child's attendance falls below the schools definition of regular (that is, below 95%).

The King Alfred School continues to adopt the clarification of 'exceptional' as set out by Somerset County Council in 2014, namely:

- Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad
- Police, Fire Service staff being told when they can or cannot take leave
- If a close family member has a terminal illness and it may be a last chance to be together, especially if the family member lived overseas
- Parents having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period.

In addition in 2015 Somerset County Council further clarified the definitions for leave in term time as:

- Rare
- Significant

- Unavoidable (an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time)
- Short

Any other requests, such as educational or sporting trips/visits will be looked at on an individual basis on receipt of a written request. The following criteria would, in such circumstances, be taken into account:

- Number of days requested
- Is the request in reasonable time (received at least three weeks prior to first date of proposed absence)
- What will the student be missing during the period of absence? (e.g. exams, controlled assessments, key revision period etc.)
- Is it in the child's best interests?
- Current attendance of the student

Somerset County Council (SCC) supports schools:

- In expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school regularly. Any absence from school will impact on educational achievement, success in later life and longer term health and well being
- In ensuring the law is upheld. Parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where they are on roll. Schools must explain their stance on term time leave in their attendance policy so that parents/carers are clear on expectations and potential consequences, such as any unauthorised absence including taking term time leave not agreed with the school, can result in legal action being taken including Penalty Notices and court prosecution.

If a child has been absent from school due to illness/other authorised circumstance, but the school has reason to believe that the absence would not in actual fact fit that criteria (e.g. the student is actually on a holiday etc.) the school will request additional supporting evidence and unauthorise the absence unless this evidence is received.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES**

This protocol is encompassed within the Safeguarding the Welfare of Students & Staff suite of policies.

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

To be reviewed September 2018. Additional amendments to be made as required with reference to statutory guidance and legislation.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE

Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour, DfE

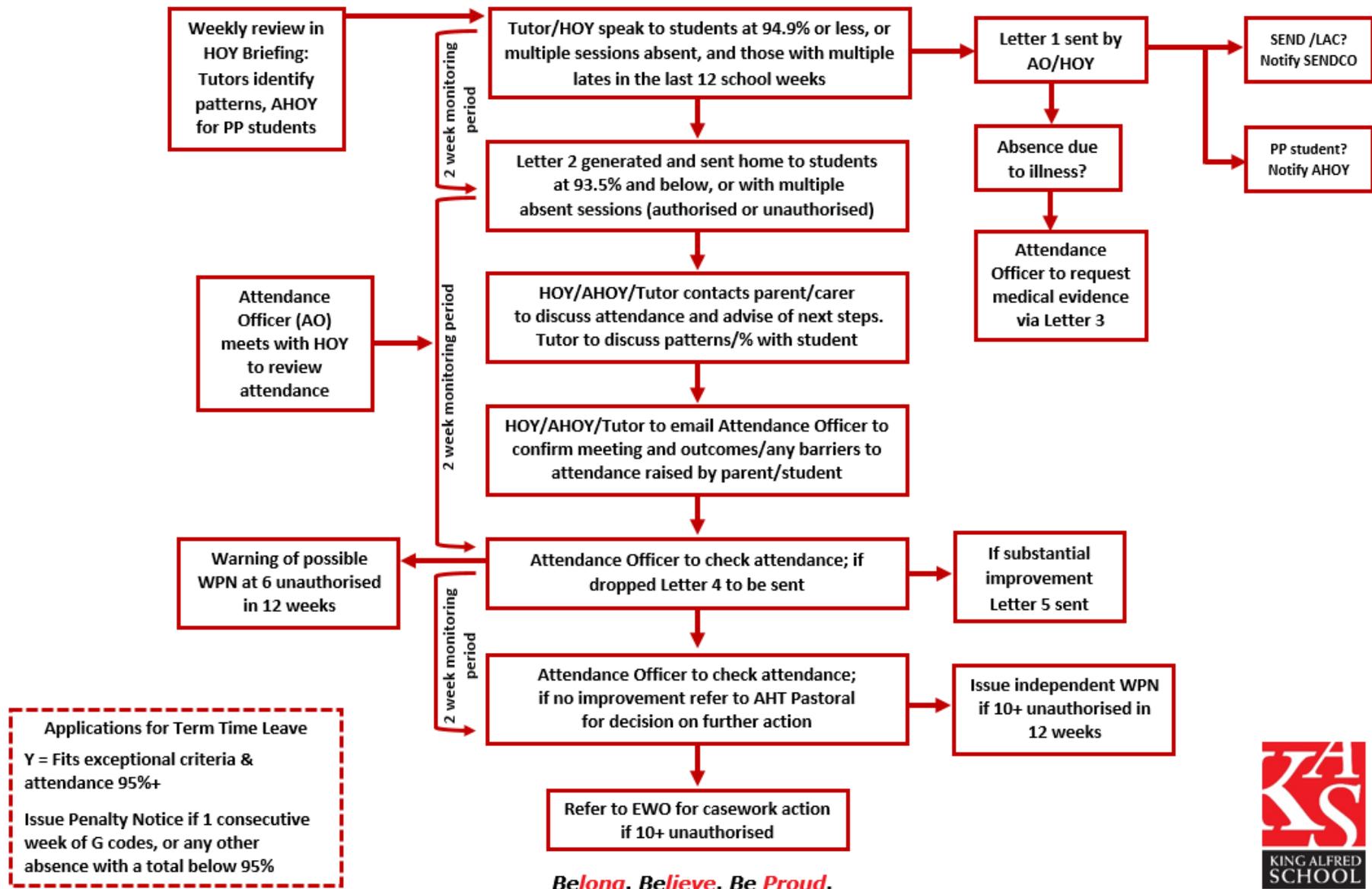
School attendance, DfE

Term Time Leave: Advice for Schools and Parents, Somerset County Council

Children Missing Education, Statutory guidance for local authorities, DfE

**APPENDIX 1 – ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART**

**KAS Attendance Process Flow Chart**



**Belong. Believe. Be Proud.**

