



THE NORTON KNATCHBULL SCHOOL **ACADEMY TRUST**

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed by:	Richard Hoyte, Assistant Headteacher
Approved by Education Committee	24th March 2022
Date of Review	Spring 2025

Principles:

- Students have the best chance of developing their full potential if they attend every class for which they are timetabled.
- Continuity of learning is seen as a major influence in the high achievement of students in this school.
- One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. The Norton Knatchbull School actively promotes 100% attendance for all of our students and we use a variety of termly and annual rewards to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Where absence from school is unavoidable, it is important that the home and school work together to ensure that this is as short as possible and that work missed is caught up.
- The school is responsible for monitoring attendance and is publicly accountable for the attendance statistics
- We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role, and a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and we promise to identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents/carers, students and other agencies to resolve attendance problems.
- Only the school can authorise absence; the law does not permit parents to do so.
- **Parental responsibility** – The responsibility for ensuring children attend school regularly and punctually rests with parents. To this end, it is desirable that parents should be the first line of contact whenever the child is absent from school. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school whenever and on the first day the child is absent.
- It is essential that parents/carers should be the first line of contact whenever the student is absent from school.

Detail:

The school day and registration procedures:

- Although school is open to students earlier, it is expected that students will normally arrive at school from 8.30 a.m. and the school can take no responsibility for students before that time unless separate arrangements have been made in advance.
- Unless staying to a supervised after school activity, all students are expected to be off site by 4.00 p.m.
- Students are expected to attend all school sessions and timetabled lessons, registering normally at 8.45 a.m. in the assigned registration room at the start of the day. In addition a register is taken in every lesson of the day, using our electronic system.
- A student who, for whatever unforeseeable reason (e.g. problem with transport, or weather) is unable to arrive on time for a morning session should, nevertheless, make every effort to come in later.
- Once registered, students are expected to remain on site until the end of school unless they have obtained prior permission to leave from their SSM.
- Permission to leave the site is normally only granted on the production of a note signed by the parents stating the reason for this
- Students leaving the site during the school day **MUST** sign out on leaving and sign back in on their return.

Lateness:

- The register remains open until 9.20 a.m. in the morning. If a student arrives late but before 9.20 a.m. they must sign in with their SSM and will be marked as late. If they arrive after these times, it will be recorded as late after the register has closed and this requires a note signed by parents stating the reason.
- Persistent lateness, not due to unavoidable reasons such as coach or train delays etc., will lead to parents being informed and a sanction being imposed on the student.

Leave of absence/holiday:

- If it is necessary for a student to miss school for a known reason, permission must be sought from the school two weeks before the event or as soon as is possible if this is not feasible. Such permission will only be granted in special circumstances. Permission will not be granted for attendance at sporting events, theme parks, day trips to France and other primarily recreational activities, except as part of an organised school party.
- All requests for leave of absence should be made in writing (letter or email), specifying the start date and return date for the required leave. The letter/email should give clear explanation of the special circumstances.
- Family annual holidays should be arranged to be taken during school holiday periods. Where this is impossible, leave of absence must be obtained. Granting of such requests should not be seen as automatic. The school is therefore reluctant to grant such requests except in very exceptional circumstances.
- No permission will be given for more than ten days' holiday in any one academic year. Any additional days of holiday or caused by a holiday (e.g. jet lag) will be categorised as unauthorised: irrespective of the amount of notice given.
- Students taking time off school will be registered as an 'unauthorised' absence if leave of absence could have been sought in advance.
- Holidays taken without the school's permission, or if the student fails to return on the agreed date, will mean absence is unauthorised.
- The accumulation over an academic year of 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence may make parents liable to a fixed penalty notice.

Absence through illness:

- If absence is due to illness or other unforeseen occurrence, parents should inform the school, as early as possible, to advise of the situation. This can be done in 3 ways:
 - Phoning the school and using Option 1 of the automated phone system.
 - Registering the absence on the school's MyEd app.
 - Emailing studentabsence@nks.kent.sch.uk
- If the absence continues beyond the expected return date, further contacts should be made by the parents to the school.
- If a student has missed school on three consecutive days and no explanation has been received from home, the SSM will call the parent/carer's contact number for clarification of the situation.
- On return, if there has not been detailed contact/communication between parents/carers and the schools as to the reason for absence a student must bring a letter from his/her parent to their Form Tutor, giving exact dates missed and detailed reason for absence. If insufficient information is provided to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. SSMs will communicate any concern that an absence may be unauthorised to parents and carers.

Catching up with work:

- If absence is known about in advance, a student should discover what work will be missed and seek to minimise the effect of his absence by completing work set in good time.
- When a student returns from absence he should discover what work has been missed and draw up a programme in conjunction with the subject teachers for its completion.
- Staff should ensure that gaps in learning are filled as soon as is practicable.
- If absence is long term, parents should liaise with the SSM who will co-ordinate the work to be set during the absence period.

Absence for exams:

- As far as is reasonable, students who miss internal examinations due to absence will sit them on their return or in advance if this is possible. No such provision can be made for external (public) examinations.

Fixed penalty notices:

- Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA Officers, Head Teachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004. From January 2005, Kent County Council will consider issuing Penalty Notices in the following circumstances:
 - a) overt truancy (including students caught on truancy sweeps),
 - b) parentally-condoned absences,
 - c) excessive holidays in term-time,
 - d) excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement,
 - e) persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed).

Availability of records:

- The school uses a computerised registration system which means that it is a simple matter to obtain a printout of a student's attendance record for the current academic year. If parents wish to consult such a record, for any reason, the school will willingly provide the printout.

Covid note (October 2020)

- Agreed absences as a consequence of Covid (isolation or quarantine, pending test results) will be recorded accordingly in line with school and national frameworks.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf These are not registered as absences but record the fact that the student is unable to attend because of Covid restrictions.
- Work will be collated and sent home by SSM along the same lines with students' absent for any lengthy period.