

Sixth Form Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

The school reserves the right to amend this policy at any time in the academic year and to direct formal disciplinary procedures at any level, as appropriate. The contents of this policy will be disseminated and shared with all students during their induction period and is available online.

King Ecgbert School Mission & Ethos

At King Ecgbert School, we believe in:

- Academic excellence for all
- Showing respect at all times
- Having high aspirations and personal goals that go beyond our time in school

At King Ecgbert School, we are committed to providing outstanding education for all in a safe, happy and positive learning environment.

Academic excellence for all

Together, we strive for personal and academic excellence: King Ecgbert School wants the best outcomes for every member of our school community, whatever their background or role in our school.

Showing respect at all times

Our inclusive and diverse school community is one in which:

- every individual is welcomed, understood and valued;
- we respect each other and embrace our diversity;
- we actively promote fairness and social justice;
- our staff and students care about their community and together we all care about the wider world and our place in it.

Having high aspirations and personal goals that go beyond our time in school

Together, we are committed to educating, supporting and encouraging every individual to develop the skills and character that will help them become the best they can be and make a real difference in the world. We expect every member of our own school community to become active, successful members of the wider communities we are part of: Sheffield, the United Kingdom and the global community beyond.

Together, we are King Ecgbert School.

Policy Aims

High levels of attendance and excellent punctuality are both characteristics of students who achieve above or in line with their potential. Research shows poor attendance and punctuality has a serious detrimental effect on outcomes. Attendance and punctuality figures are included in any academic report issued and can be included in any reference written by the school relating to a student's progression to higher education, apprenticeship or employment. An exemplary record of attendance says a huge amount about the individual: that they are dedicated, well-motivated, organised and someone who takes their responsibilities seriously.

Research

Evidence shows that 'If we extrapolate across a three A level programme, the typical student with attendance below 85% will perform at least two grades lower than a student with attendance above 95%. In competitive university entrance and other contexts, two grades represents a life-changing difference.' Source: The Sixth Dimension

Average Earnings by Absence Band

Table 8: Average Earnings by Absence Band

Absence Band	Number of Pupils (n)	Average earnings at age 28 (2024 prices)
0-1%	33,530	£32,200
0-9.9%	366,139	£29,800
10-100% Persistently absent	145,088	£19,500
50-100% Severely absent	5389	£10,100

As table 8 shows, persistently absent pupils earned more than £10,000 less on average (2024 prices) than those who were absent less than 10% of possible sessions. This rises to almost £20,000 less for those who are severely absent. These figures do not control for any socio-economic characteristics which may affect earnings.

Source: Department for Education 2024

To maximise learning and student potential sixth form students must attend every lesson and organised enhancement activity. Non-attendance and poor punctuality will not be accepted by the sixth form and may result in students being asked to leave sixth form. We do look at every student on an individual basis and take into account any formally verified extenuating circumstances.

Students should aim for 100% attendance across the year. A student whose attendance drops below 95% will be reviewed by this policy.

Exam Entries:

The Education & Skills Funding Agency in its publication 'Funding Guidance for Young People 2024 to 2025' states:

- i. institutions can apply reasonable conditions of attendance in order to qualify for free examination entry
- ii. institutions can charge for examinations and resits if attendance drops below a certain threshold without genuine reason.

Therefore, expecting students to pay their own exam fees of ~ £100 per subject.

If we deem that attendance for a student falls below 90% without genuine reason, we will communicate this with families and can proceed to remove students from automatic entry and ask that families pay per subject. This would always be done in consultation with families and have an appeals process as part of this policy.

Safeguarding:

As a sixth form provider we have a duty of care and students safety is paramount to us. A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly; failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter. Section 175 of the

Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and Governing Bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Holidays during term time:

These will NOT be authorised. Amendments to the 2006 regulations stipulate that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. For further information regarding the new regulations please see: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

In the event a holiday is arranged, parents/carers must complete a Request for Leave form so that we know a student is safe and well. Further information about authorised and unauthorised absence below.

Bursary / Financial Hardship

Students with family income of less than £21,000 are eligible to apply for the bursary to support individuals with books, trips and other educational support. If a student is in receipt of the educational bursary, their attendance and punctuality may have an impact on any payment opportunities. If families are experiencing temporary financial hardship through redundancy or a change in family situation we may still be able to help, so please get in touch.

Punctuality & Attendance

We have a strict punctuality procedure, which includes talking to the student first to assess reasons for lateness and given a verbal warning. If poor punctuality persists students will do a break duty detention and after school if escalation continues.

Expectations

Students will:	
Attend all lessons during the school day including supervised study, sessions and assemblies	
Be able to self-certify illness five times throughout the academic year (three times before Christmas) medical evidence is required after this point.	
Submit all BTEC work on deadline days, this includes if you are absent. Work must be emailed in.	
For planned absence:	Inform the Sixth Form Attendance Officer in advance of any planned absence (authorised absence list is below)
	See academic staff in advance and organise collection and completion of any work that is missed
For unplanned absence such as illness:	Call school on the morning of each absent day by 8.30am and speak to the Attendance Officer
	Email academic staff and organise the collection and completion of any work that is missed

Parents will:
Fully support the Sixth Form in administration of the Sixth Form Attendance policy
Keep the school informed of any absences
Not book appointments or holidays during school time knowing the hugely detrimental effects on learning

Attendance Officer will:
Ensure records are up to date and accurate
Inform staff of students who are absent

Actively monitor any student who falls below 95% attendance
Communicate, support and build relationships with families to support improved attendance
Produce weekly reports for the sixth form team and academic staff
Congratulate students and families when attendance is positive
Send letters to students and families to inform them of attendance concerns
Co-ordinate payment of the bursary for eligible students

Form Tutors will:
Take an accurate register at the start of each form period
Promote the importance of attendance and punctuality
Mentor the students in their form
Write accurate references that reflect the student
Make sure missing marks are accounted

Sixth Form Team will:
Support the Attendance Officer when individual students need to go on report.
In conjunction with the Attendance Officer liaise with families with students that consistently fall below 95%
Ensure that attendance is reported accurately on reports and references
Pastorally support individuals who for extenuating reasons fall below 95% attendance and support in agreed SMART targets surrounding attendance and punctuality
Pastorally support students after a prolonged absence
Annually review the attendance policy
Create opportunities to catch time up or sit detentions if required

Academic teaching staff will:
Take an accurate register at the start of each lesson
Promote the importance of attendance and punctuality in all lesson
Where possible enforce punishments for being late there and then, such as keeping a student over break
Support students to catch up by responding to emails and organising work.

Authorised absence

This may include:
One university visit a year - all universities hold Open Days at weekends, and you should attend these where possible
Hospital appointments
University, college and job interviews

Driving test
Religious observations – limited to one day in accordance with whole school policy

Unauthorised absence

This includes:
More than one university open day in an academic year
Regular doctors / dentist appointments - these can be arranged outside of lesson time
Training for work commitments - unless agreed in advance with the Sixth Form team
Driving lessons
Holidays or day trips
Looking after siblings / grandparents
Absence which cannot be explained
Parents / carers keeping students off school unnecessarily
Studying at home
Truancy

Three stages of concern

Attendance will be reviewed by Head of Year and Attendance Officer on a weekly basis. The following procedure shall be triggered at the start of each new half term omitting September. The school will implement the following stage system in cases where a level of attendance drops below 95%.

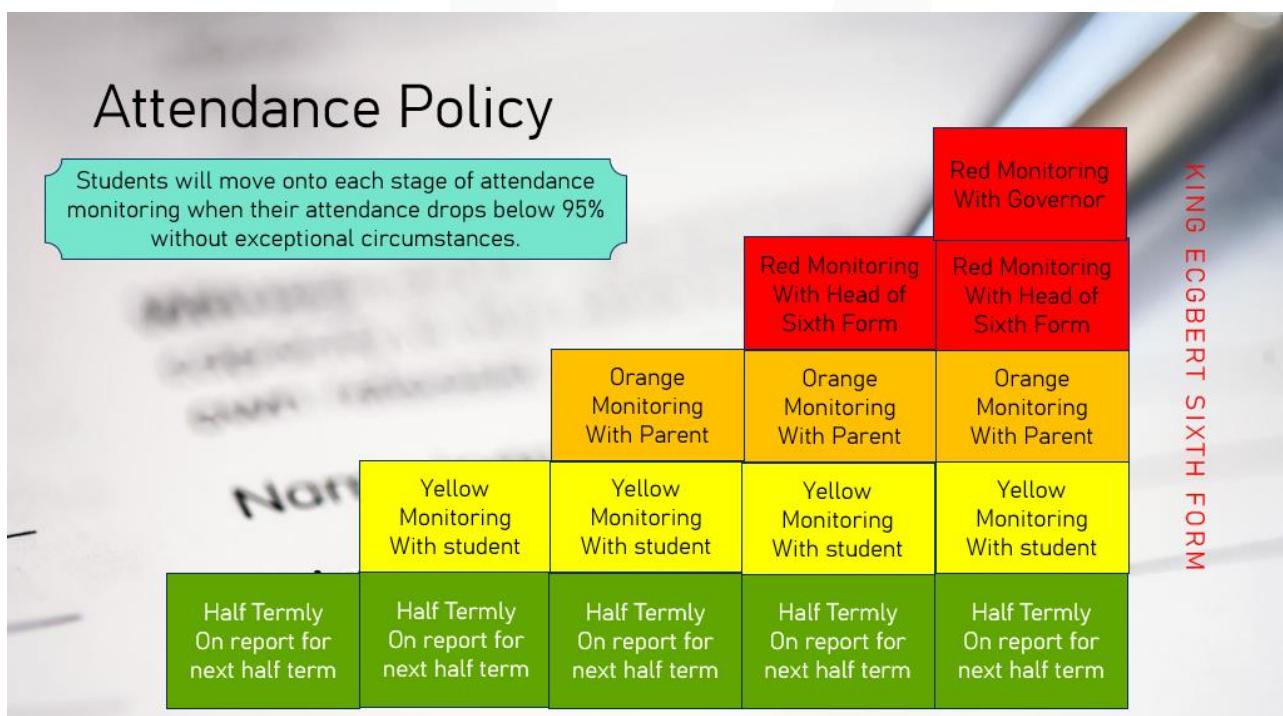
Stage One – Initial attendance concern and engagement required
Student falls below 95% in first half term including authorised absence unless exceptional circumstance
Parent and students informed via student meeting, letter and phone call home from the Attendance Officer.
Students place on YELLOW report for half term where the attendance for this period must be 95% or higher.
Form Tutors are made aware so they can monitor and mentor them over the period
After the half term if the student is successful, they are removed from YELLOW report and the Attendance Officer calls home to congratulate the student and family.
After the half term if the student is unsuccessful, they progress to Stage two – Pastoral intervention

Stage Two – Intervention needed
Parent informed via letter and meeting organised
Student and family invited into school to meet with the Attendance Officer and Head of Year.
Set of action points are agreed between the family and staff to support the student in attending more frequently. SMART goals and achievable targets are agreed.
Students placed on AMBER report for the next half term where the attendance for this period must be higher than the agreed percentage.

Student reports in each day to the Attendance Officer.
After the half term if student is successful, the student is then moved back to YELLOW report and Head of Year calls home to congratulate student and family.
After the half term if a student is unsuccessful, they progress to Stage three – Director of Sixth Form formal procedure.

Stage Three – Disciplinary procedure
Parent informed via letter and meeting organised
Student and family invited into a meeting with Head of Year and Director of Sixth Form.
Set of action points are agreed between the family and staff to support the student in attending more frequently. SMART goals and achievable targets are agreed.
Students placed on RED report for the half term where the attendance for this period must be higher than the agreed percentage
Student reports in each day to Sixth Form office
After the half term if the student is successful, they are moved to AMBER report and Director of Sixth Form calls home to congratulate student and family
After the half term if student is unsuccessful, they progress to meeting with the Director of Sixth Form, Governors, resulting in a final formal written warning and repetition of stage three

Note: Repeat offenders do not return to stage one, instead they return to their previous stage.



Reasonable adjustments

Students with mental and physical health/wellbeing conditions are entitled to reasonable adjustments and support under the Equality Act, 2010. We want to ensure consistent and fair treatment in situations where a student's health or wellbeing may be negatively impacted by continuation of study.

Reasonable adjustment means ensuring that there are reasonable steps to ensure students are not placed at a 'substantial disadvantage' due to their disability or difficulty. Reasonable adjustments are intended to remove barriers to learning and promote success. It is important, however, to be clear about what is reasonable in an educational setting and the limits to the individual support that can be provided within a sixth form school.

Our staff provide outstanding care for all students, but there will be times when a student's physical or mental health are so affected that they are no longer able, despite support both internal and externally, to maintain reasonable academic progress. It must be noted that:

- There must be medical evidence to support a request for reasonable adjustment.
- All reasonable adjustments should be financially reasonable and practical. For example, arranging catch up work for short absences, re arranging coursework deadlines / internal exams.
- All students are on full-time programmes of study designed to be delivered in a classroom situation where students are expected to be physically present. We are not a distance-learning centre, and whilst on a temporary basis it is reasonable for subject teachers and support staff to be flexible with attendance due to ill health, prolonged periods of absence cannot be sustainable.
- We are not able to provide regular one to one academic support for prolonged absence
- There may be times when the nature of a student's ill health can require support beyond the expertise or capacity that we can reasonably offer.
- Occasionally a student's ill health may present a health and safety hazard to either themselves or others.

There are therefore occasions where, for one or more of the reasons above, it will be our judgement that, in the best interests of a student, continuing at sixth form is no longer the best option. This will always be done in collaboration with families and in a timely manner.

The appeals procedure

A student has the right to appeal against a decision to withdraw their school place under this policy and will be informed of this right. If a student wishes to appeal against the decision made, they must do so in writing to the head teacher within 5 working days of notification of the decision. An appeal hearing will normally be held within 10 working days of receipt of a request. The appeal will normally be heard by the senior leadership team.

Other related policies can be found on our website

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Access Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Educational Visits Trip & Procedure
- Equality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy