

DANE COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE**

Philosophy

We believe education can only occur if students attend school fully and punctually and that there is a link between attendance and performance. We take into account the many reasons why students may miss school and aim to find a variety of solutions to the problem of absenteeism. We acknowledge the importance of reward systems, careful monitoring and effective sanctions. We also acknowledge that it is our responsibility to make our curriculum interesting and relevant to our students.

Aims

1. To encourage students to attain excellent attendance.
2. To continue to strive for the best possible attendance in cases where excellent attendance is not always possible because of circumstances such as medical conditions.
3. To eliminate as far as possible absence from school.
4. To maintain accurate attendance data with all absence followed up.

THE MANAGEMENT OF ATTENDANCE

The day to day oversight and monitoring of attendance will be the responsibility of the key stage manager. The Attendance Officer will be responsible for the maintenance of all data and the contacting of parents on the first day of absence, wherever possible.

We endorse a whole school approach to the promotion of good attendance and mentors should:

- a) Make it clear to students that punctuality and good school attendance is essential.
- b) Ensure registrations are completed punctually and accurately.
- c) Follow up absentees and reasons for absence.
- d) Give a sympathetic welcome and support to students returning from period of absence and facilitate catch up work.
- e) Be ready to talk to students about difficulties they are having in school and any problems they may have with attendance. Offer advice as appropriate.

STATUTORY REGISTRATION

The guidelines in the Staff Handbook will make clear:

- a) The symbols to be used to classify the reason for absence.
- b) Procedures for monitoring attendance.
- c) A criterion for what constitutes an authorised absence.
- d) Procedure for checking on whether an absence is justified.
- e) Action to be taken in respect of those whose attendance gives cause for concern.
- f) Registration takes place at 8.40am and 14.20pm. The register should be opened at 8.40am and 14.20pm and closed at 8.55am and 14.35pm after which an absence code

of U will be used. Registers must be completed and sent electronically by 8.55am and 14.35pm in order to comply with Health and Safety and Fire Regulations. The code L will be used if a student is late before the register has been closed. Lateness in this case, occurs when a student arrives after 8.40am or 14.20pm.

- g) Each lesson should be registered through lesson monitor by the class teacher.

LATENESS

Lateness is unsatisfactory conduct and may, if not discouraged, lead to absenteeism. Students who arrive after 8.55am should go to reception where reasons for their lateness will be recorded. Parents will be invited into school to discuss any persistent lateness of their child, which may be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Lateness is recorded on a googledoc which also records interventions.

IRREGULAR ATTENDEES

If a student finds school attendance a problem, the school will:

- a) Invite parents into school to discuss any issues.
- b) Make parents aware that if poor attendance continues, a referral will be made to the Early Help and preventative services.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

- All absences must be reported before 8.40am each day by calling the school absence line on 01843864941
- The school expects advance notification of absence where possible.
- Written notification giving details of all absences must be given to the school reception on the child's return to school. If the child has been absent with a medical appointment, an appointment card or letter should be provided.
- Unexplained absences will be unauthorised by the school.
- Absences of 5 days or more need to be supported by medical evidence. Without this the absence will not be authorised.
- Any form of unauthorised absence may be subject to a penalty notice from the Local Authority.

HOLIDAY REQUEST IN TERM TIME

Annual holidays taken during term time will not be authorised apart from in exceptional cases.

ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOUR SERVICE

The school has a named School Attendance Officer who will process straightforward attendance cases, including penalty notices. Attendance that falls below 90% triggers intervention. Some of the possible actions could be:

- a) A referral being made to the Attendance and Behaviour Service.

- b) Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the LEA.
- c) Prosecution of the parent/s/carer/s.

A POSITIVE APPROACH TO ATTENDANCE

1. The school will make the Sims monitoring system available to staff.
2. The Attendance Officer will maintain a careful database of all absence, on the basis of which rewards will be offered and support systems be put in place.
3. Parents will be involved at all stages if there are attendance concerns, and they will be invited in to school to discuss ways in which the school can support maintenance of good attendance.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

Penalty notices for unauthorised absence (for those in compulsory Education).

From February 2005 KCC (LEA) has introduced Penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions in a current term.

The following circumstances will be considered as appropriate reasons:

- a) Truancy, including truancy sweeps.
- b) Parentally condoned absence.
- c) Unauthorised holidays in term time.
- d) Persistent lateness after the close of register (in line with the school lateness policy).
- e) Excessive delayed return from extended holidays.

On receipt of the warning parents are given 15 days to ensure 100% attendance, otherwise a FPN can be issued. On receipt of the notice the penalty will be £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the LEA. Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued by the Attendance and Behaviour Service based upon requests from the Headteacher.

Under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 local authority officers, Headteachers and the Police have the discretionary power to issue Penalty Notices in the appropriate cases of unauthorised absence from school.

Penalty Notices may also be issued when parents have taken their children out of school for holidays in term-time without the school's authorisation. From 1 September 2013, Headteachers are unable to agree leave of absence during term-time unless they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

The power of issuing a Penalty Notice provides an alternative to the prosecution of parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and enables parents to discharge the potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty of £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days.

Should the Penalty Notice remain unpaid or have been paid only in part at the end of the 28 day period Kent County Council will prosecute the parents for the offence to which the notice relates, or, in specified circumstances (see section 6.1 below), withdraw the notice.

The payment of a Penalty Notice discharges the parent's or carer's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the same period.

Payment of a Penalty Notice within 28 days is £120 reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice.

Non-payment of a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution under the provisions of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or prosecution under Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

In reviewing this Code of Conduct, Kent County Council is consulting with Kent Headteachers and the Chief Officer of Kent Police. This complies with The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

This is a fluid document and will be reviewed by SLT on a regular basis.

This Procedure was in operation as from:

February, 2018

Andrew Fowler

Headteacher