

Attendance Policy

2024-25



INTREPIDUS

KAA MISSION STATEMENT

INTREPIDUS

(adj.)

Definitions: Undaunted, fearless, bold

KAA has at its core the pursuit of the very highest standards in education, both inside the classroom and beyond it. We believe all children can exceed their expectations, no matter what their prior attainment and experiences. At our school no child will be labelled; we will treat them all as intelligent and individual. Through our ethos, our extended curriculum and our entrepreneurial approach we will develop students into confident, rounded individuals, equipped for anything that life throws at them. Our motto – **INTREPIDUS** – will help us to realise our ambition.

As KAA staff we aim to:

- Create a culture of high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all
- Build a strong community based on fairness and personal responsibility
- Welcome, value and respect all who come in the school
- Be reflective and committed to our ongoing development as teachers and leaders, in our continuous strive for excellence
- Promote positive dialogue and partnership with our community

Our four core values are:



We know that they will guide our work to create an outstanding Academy which can transform the lives of our students.

Policy Mission Statement

Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) seeks to ensure that all students receive a full time education that maximises opportunities for them to achieve their full potential in the context of the Every Child Matters agenda: being healthy; feeling safe; enjoying and achieving; being able to make a positive contribution and, ultimately, to achieve economic well-being.

Students play a vital part in ensuring the success of the Academy. We aim for an environment that enables and encourages all members of the community to aspire to excellence. Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage, therefore for students to gain the greatest academic and social benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Academy staff will work with students and their families to ensure that each student attends regularly and punctually.

To meet these objectives, we have an efficient and effective system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide information, advice and support.

It is worthy of note that:

- It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is irrefutable:
 - *Of students who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve five grade 5-9 GCSEs including English and maths.*
 - *Of students who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve five grade 5-9 including English and maths.*
- Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school and employment

AIMS

- This policy aims to clarify the expectations we have of our students and procedures involved in the reporting of absences and lateness
- To maintain a high percentage of student attendance (97%) and punctuality (98%) at KAA
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
- To provide a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data to promote timely and effective intervention at all levels within the Academy
- To maintain positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy
- To recognise and take in to account the needs of individual students following significant periods of absence

Statutory Duties & Responsibilities

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring regular attendance at KAA is the legal responsibility of parents in the first instance and condoning absence without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in legal action.

Partnership

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents / carers, students and all members of Academy staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Register students' attendance at **every** lesson

- Report to parents / carers on how their child is performing at the Academy, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Reward outstanding or significantly improving attendance
- Provide parents and guardians with a platform for checking and monitoring attendance figures (SIMS Parent App)

The following services are amongst those available to work with parents, students and teachers to ensure excellent attendance can be maintained throughout a student's school career:

- Place2Be therapists
- Early Help
- School Nurse
- Educational Psychologists
- Learning Mentor

Guidance for parents and responsibility measures in relation to attendance are set out by the DfE and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. **Parents must call in to explain any absence by 8am on every day of absence but this does not authorise the absence. Please ensure that you include any symptoms/details of the illness, rather than simply stating feeling unwell.** Absences **will not** be authorised without this information. Authorisation is given by the Attendance Officer and typically requires medical evidence.

Please note: A student's attendance percentage will decline for both authorised and unauthorised absence.

Authorised Absences

These are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as serious illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably fall in school time), emergencies or other unavoidable causes. Authorised absences are **still counted as an absence** and **will** affect pupil attendance data. The Academy may authorise a maximum of three days' illness over the entire school year without medical evidence, however this is at the discretion of the Attendance Officer and other staff responsible for the attendance tracking of the student and is likely to be determined by their individual attendance history. For periods of illness over the maximum threshold, parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence.

We advise parents to book medical or dental appointments outside of school hours, where this is not possible, we require parents to provide the school with evidence and this will not be authorised until evidence has been supplied. Evidence may be in the form of:

- Appointment card or letter
- Copy of a prescription that was prescribed on the date of absence
- A compliment slip from the surgery / hospital (signed and dated)
- Packaging of prescribed medication with student name and date visible
- A text message indicating the date, time and patient name

Unauthorised Absences

These are absences which the school does **not** consider reasonable. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (this includes due to perceived unresolved issues within the school)
- Anxiety in regards to Covid-19 despite the Government issuing contrary guidance and being explicit in regards to compulsory attendance
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the register closes
- Shopping (including for items of school uniform), looking after other children, or birthdays
- Day trips
- Exceptional leave in term time which has not been agreed with the Academy
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Children acting as carers

Parents **must** contact the Academy on every day of student absence. If this does not happen, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Absence in the first or last week of any half term will be recorded as unauthorised holiday unless medical evidence is supplied. See authorised absence section for what constitutes appropriate evidence.

Regular Attendance

Whilst a child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the Academy, the parents/carer and the child.

Parents can support their child by:

- Ensuring regular and early bed times
- Supporting children in completing their independent learning at home
- Having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- Providing a healthy breakfast or encouraging them to attend the free breakfast club in school
- Reporting any academic or social concerns promptly to the Form Tutor or Director of Learning
- Retaining open & honest communication with the Academy
- Being positive about school (even if their own experience was less than positive)
- Engaging with external services support

If a child is reluctant to attend school for any reason, a parent should speak to their child's form tutor in the first instance. If for any reason, this continues then parents should contact their child's Director of Learning and consult the KAA website for relevant policies.

Punctuality Procedures

- The Academy is open from 8am and all students must be in school by 8.30am
- The attendance register is taken at 8:30am
- The attendance register closes at 9:10am, lateness past this time is marked as an unauthorised absence

- If there is a genuine reason for a student being late to school (e.g. a significant transport issue or the student was ill first thing in the morning but arriving later), then parents are expected to call the reception before 8am to explain this in full. If an acceptable reason is provided this will ensure that the student does not receive a detention and the parent will not get a text message from the school.

Punctuality Detention System

1 st Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch
2 nd Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch and a 45-minute detention
3 rd Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch and an 60-minute detention

If a student is persistently late to school, parents/carers will be required to meet with their child's Director of Learning and the student may be placed on punctuality report. Further issues may result in a restriction of further privileges and opportunities.

Punctuality is very important, and arrivals after the close of the register will be treated in the same way as absence. This may also mean that parents could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to Early Help if the problem persists.

Students are expected to arrive on time to all lessons during the day. Failure to do this will result in a detention. Repeated failure to be punctual to lessons may result in the student being placed onto a punctuality report. Parents will be contacted and the student will be issued a 30-minute immediate detention for each further instance of lateness to lessons.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

If a student is unable to attend school for any reason, parents are expected to follow the below procedures:

- Parents are expected to contact the Attendance Officer via email attendance@kaa.org.uk or telephone on **0207 313 5800 ext.1**, before 8am, on each day that their child is unable to attend school. **Incidents of this should be rare and infrequent.** Please leave a voicemail stating (clearly) your name and relation to the student, the student's name, student's year group, and the reason for the absence. **Please ensure that you include any symptoms/details of the illness, rather than simply stating feeling unwell.** Absences will not be authorised without this information. If you would like to speak to the Attendance Office, please request a call back in your message or email attendance@kaa.org.uk (however note this is not always possible).
- It is always best to make medical appointments outside academy hours. If this is not possible, parents should email the Attendance Officer at attendance@kaa.org.uk and provide a copy or screenshot of the appointment card/letter from their GP, hospital or other medical professional, as soon as they are aware of the appointment. Alternatively, students can bring the information to school and inform the reception team. It must be noted this will count towards an authorised absence.
- If a student is absent from school and parents have not informed the school of the reason, a text message and email will be sent out to parent's mid-morning. It is an expectation that the parent will call or email the school following this message to speak with the Attendance Officer regarding their child's absence.
- If a child is absent from school for 3 days and the parent has failed to contact the school with a reason, the Director of Learning or a Senior Leader will contact the parents or - where necessary - conduct a home visit

- If a child's attendance becomes a concern, the parent will receive a letter from the Academy informing them of this
- If attendance continues to decrease, parents will be invited in to a formal meeting to sign an attendance contract
- The attendance contract will be reviewed after 6-weeks and if there is no significant improvement, the parents may be invited to meet with a senior member of staff. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to parents, or referral to the Early Help service.

It is essential that the Academy has up-to-date telephone numbers, postal addresses, and email addresses for parents/carers, in order to ensure that contact can be made without delay whenever necessary. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that the Academy are notified of any changes.

Attendance Rewards

The Academy will reward excellent and significantly improved attendance in many different ways throughout the year, including but not limited to:

- House Points distributed each half term for excellent attendance
- Certificates and badges for students with 100% attendance
- 100% attendance raffles at each rewards assembly
- 100% attendance rewards trip at the end of the academic year
- Termly attendance reward activities

Exceptional Leave

Taking holidays (exceptional leave) in term time is illegal and will significantly affect a child's education and progress. The Senior Vice Principal / Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Under no circumstances will requests for holiday in term time be granted.

It is, however, acknowledged that there may be special circumstances where a parent feels that their child needs to be taken out of school. In these circumstances, parents should complete the online exceptional leave of absence form at least 2 weeks prior to the requested date. The Senior Vice Principal or Principal will then consider the circumstances and write in response with reference to national recommendations.

Exceptional Leave is likely to be refused in the following circumstances:

- When a child is in year 11, 12 or 13
- Where the Academy is aware of any truancy
- Where there are trends/patterns to requests
- Where the student's attendance is of concern

Reasons for exceptional leave will be logged on the student's record and shared as part of any transfer/transition process.

Where the decision is taken to refuse permission for an exceptional leave of absence, the absence will remain unauthorised should the parent ignore this decision. The Academy will also refer this for a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Reintegration Following an Absence

Any absence from school will result in the loss of learning for a student. They are therefore expected to independently complete any work and homework that they will have missed. Absence is never accepted as a reason for students to have incomplete class or homework.

Students can find information on homework and classwork on KAA online and in relevant Google classrooms.

If a student is absent for an extended period of time for a medical reason, the Director of Learning will organise work for the student to complete during their absence to ensure that learning remains as uninterrupted as possible.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES / LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Education Act 1996 states that legal action can be taken when parents fail to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Academy will work with the local authority (LA) to overcome barriers and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents and a fine being imposed. Failure to comply with the court's ruling can lead to a community order or imprisonment. This process is led by the LA. The Academy in collaboration with the LA may explore a range of interventions. More information regarding RBKC attendance processes, intervention and support can be found here:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/education-and-learning/supporting-school-attendance>

KAA Fixed Penalty Notices

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

In accordance with the recently published DfE guidance related to improving school attendance, the Academy will issue its own fixed penalty notices (FPN) to address persistent absence, as an alternative to prosecution. This will be implemented where;

- a) Support interventions have not been successful or engaged with, unauthorised absence is above 10%, and overall attendance continues to not meet expectations
- b) A student is absent from school due to an unauthorised term time holiday
- c) Where, despite notification, a parent allows their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. There is no right of appeal by parents against a FPN. The payment must be paid direct to the LA. The Academy does not profit from or receive any financial benefit from any FPN applied. If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28 day period, the LA must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice.

All FPN will be issued in line with the RBKC code of conduct, The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/1867/made>) and the national framework (pending publication 2024-25).

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Form Tutor (FT)

The main role of the FT with regards to attendance is one of relationship building with both students and their parents. Form tutors will be expected to carry out the following tasks:

- To follow up on medical evidence for absences
- Contact parents regularly regarding attendance on instruction from the DoL
- Call home if a student is absent for a period of 3 days
- Reintegration – upon return from an absence check the pupil has caught up on missed classwork and homework
- Speak to the DoL immediately regarding student attendance concerns
- Pass on information from parents concerning attendance to the oOL and Attendance Officer immediately
- Update classroom attendance display on a regular basis
- Share attendance data with tutees each half-term and ensure they record personal data in their planners

Director of Learning (DoL)

The main role of the DoL is to monitor year group attendance and decide upon necessary interventions on an individual basis. Alongside this, DoLs are expected to:

- Share FT good practise across their year team
- Attend regular meetings with the Attendance Officer and discuss concerns with SVP Pastoral
- Effectively disseminate attendance data to FTs
- Organise and attend contract meetings with parents
- Liaise with the Key Stage Safeguarding Officer regarding any related cases
- Complete Early Help referrals
- Attend termly Early Help meetings
- Arrange & attend TAF meetings
- Contact home for continued poor attendance
- Implement and monitor attendance/punctuality reports where appropriate

Attendance Officer

- Authorise / un-authorise absences
- Respond to Exceptional Leave of Absence requests
- Receive daily absence calls/emails
- Send In-Touch attendance alert messages daily
- Monitor register completion
- Attend regular attendance meetings with DoLs
- Attend TAF meetings where appropriate
- Prepare attendance reports for Trustee meetings and on request from SLT, with the support of pastoral admin staff
- Work alongside pastoral support staff to target engagement with PA students and families

Classroom Teachers

- Complete class registers accurately ensuring:

- Registers are accurately completed within the first 10 minutes of every lesson, every day. Most importantly MR/Prep by 8.45am, P1 by 9.10am and P5 by 14.10pm
- If a student is late, the code is changed to L and the number of minutes late is entered when they arrive
- Email the Attendance Officer and oncall if a student is in the lesson but there is an incorrect pre-populated code on SIMS – do not write over a pre-populated code
- Email Oncall if a student is not present, however earlier registers indicate they are in school
- Ensure that students are reintegrated after a period of absence (including 1 day) by providing students with work to catch up on and informing them of any homework missed. It is an expectation that students who are absent complete all work missed.
- Provide work for students who are absent for long term illness and mark appropriate work in line with department expectations / via Google Classroom.
- Contact parents of 6th form students who are absent from lessons

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Government position remains clear that attendance to school is mandatory. Therefore, the Academy expect all students to attend and will apply all the usual attendance related procedures should a student not meet this expectation. This includes persistent absence and inconsistent attendance (*as specified in this policy*).

SUMMARY

The Academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its Attendance Policy to parents and to promote attendance. Academy attendance data must be available to the Local Authority and the DFE. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All Academy staff are committed to working with parents and students to ensure the highest possible level of attendance.

For further information, contact:

Senior Vice Principal – Pastoral - Ryan Bernard: r.bernard@kaa.org.uk

Attendance Officer – Anthea Fontaine-Barrett: attendance@kaa.org.uk