



Policy on Attendance

Principle

Queen Elizabeth School fully supports the principle that regular school attendance for all pupils on the school register allows them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and which offer them the means of advancement. All pupils have an equal right to an education and no pupils should be deprived of these educational opportunities by either their own absence or lateness, or that of other pupils.

It is recognised that:

- The majority of pupils at QES want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peers, and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society
- Some pupils and parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities
- It is the responsibility of parents / carers to ensure their children's attendance at school as required by law (ref Section 7, 1966 Education Act)

Aims

QES aims to ensure that:

- all pupils attend regularly.
- attendance rates are maximised by:
 - a) working closely with parents
 - b) making it clear to parents and pupils that unjustified absence is not tolerated
 - c) investigating individual absences carefully, monitoring both authorised and unauthorised absence.
 - d) supporting pupils whose problems have led to non-attendance
 - e) discouraging lateness
 - f) maintaining consistency in the school's registration practices
 - g) working closely with the Education Welfare Service
 - h) discouraging holiday absence in term time
 - i) monitoring the effect of absence on attainment of pupils

Management

1. An Assistant Headteacher has oversight of all attendance matters and works with all staff in their capacities as Year Heads / Deputy Year Heads / Form Tutors and subject teachers or support teachers to ensure the policy is met.
2. This Assistant Headteacher liaises with school's Education Welfare Officer when there are registration problems or concerns.
3. Year Heads / Deputy Year Heads and Form Tutors work closely to monitor lateness, absence and truancy.



Practice

1. Register bags are kept in the School Office and are collected at the beginning of each morning and afternoon registration period. They are returned to the office at the end of registration to comply with school evacuation regulations.
2. The presence or absence of every pupil is recorded by the form tutor on SIMs (or if unavailable on a paper register)
3. Absences are categorised following the guidelines provided by the LA and using the codes on SIMs.
4. Pupils who arrive at school after the registration period must report to the School Office to sign in and collect a late slip as well as give an explanation for their late arrival. The pupil must show the late slip to the teacher of the lesson they go to and give it to the Form Tutor at the next registration.
5. Pupils who leave the school premises during the day sign out at the School Office after showing their authorisation to leave. Pupils who return sign in before returning to class.
6. Pupils who go home ill: the office sends a slip to the Form tutor for information. If the absence extends for more than that one day an absence note, e-mail or phone call is required from the parents.
7. Any period of truancy is reported to parents, is discussed with the pupil and may lead to the imposition of an appropriate sanction.
8. Persistent truancy is referred to the Education Welfare Service, when this takes the total attendance below 80%.
9. Individual absence totals are included in each child's school reports.
10. Registers are checked by the office staff daily. Information is then circulated to the Assistant Head / Year Heads and Form Tutors so that absences can be checked and symbols updated.
11. Individual absence totals are collated weekly by the attendance officer, who meets with the Assistant Head on a Friday to monitor attendance and take appropriate action.
12. The absence of siblings is monitored by the Assistant Head
13. Deletion from the admission register of the name of a pupil (of compulsory school age) is permitted when:
 - a) a school attendance order naming the school has been altered or revoked
 - b) the pupil has been registered at another school
 - c) the pupil has ceased to attend and the parents have satisfied the LA that he or she is receiving full-time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at a school (i.e. home educated)
 - d) transfer of the pupil's ordinary residence makes attendance at the school unreasonable (ie: he or she has moved to another area)
 - e) the School Medical Officer has certified that the pupil's health is such that he or she is unlikely to benefit enough to attend before becoming legally exempted from attendance
 - f) the pupil has been continuously absent, the EWS informed and the pupil traced.
 - g) the pupil is known to have died
 - h) the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and he or she intends to leave
 - i) the pupil has been permanently excluded by the governors. (If as a result of an appeal by the parents to the Governors or LA the exclusion is considered unreasonable, the name of the pupil must be reinstated)

Form Tutors

1. Register pupils on SIMs am and pm, entering appropriate symbols for absence.
2. Check the authenticity and validity of absence notes.
3. Send the absence notes to the School Office via the register bag
4. Refer concerns about absence notes to the Year Head or Assistant Head.
5. Maintain full and accurate registration of pupils.



6. Are alert to recurring patterns of lateness, absence and truancy, referring them to the Year Head.
7. Work with the Year Head to collate work requested for pupils absent because of illness.

Year Heads

1. Liaise with the form tutors on emerging attendance or punctuality concerns
2. Contact parents to check absences or discuss attendance problems.
3. Work with the Form Tutor and subject staff to ensure appropriate work is sent regularly to pupils absent through illness.
4. Respond to requests from separated or divorced parents to be kept informed of any attendance problems of their child.
5. Work with the Assistant Head or Inclusion Manager in the case of long-term absence to ensure an appropriate programme of tuition, including home visits and an Individual Education plan.
6. If the pupil is absent for medical reasons the school will liaise with other outside agencies and make referrals as appropriate. If the absence is likely to persist and the illness is confirmed in writing by the community paediatrician or specialist the pupil is referred to the LA for home tuition (five hours per week maximum). The LA tutor provides an Education Plan and pays for the tuition. The Assistant Head and Year Head liaise with home and the tutor, reviewing the plan and pupil progress at regular intervals. The EWO is involved and invited to meetings. Work is provided by school as appropriate and marked. Advice and support are given by staff. For pupils who have home tuition plus a package of support from school, QES has decided that this constitutes the equivalent of 'full-time' education for that pupil. The register should be marked with a 'B' for all sessions and the pupil counted as present.
7. Work with the EWO if a home-study package has been negotiated for an individual pupil. The PSP must specify exactly what the Education Plan is and it must be signed by the EWO. The Education Plan will include a package of support: work set and marked by staff, appropriate advice, electronic support. Regular reviews to monitor pupil progress and amend the Plan as appropriate will be scheduled. The pupil will be marked as 'B' for all sessions and the pupil counted as present.

Assistant Headteacher i/c Attendance

1. Meets with the Attendance Officer weekly to monitor pupil attendance, taking into consideration individual circumstances
2. Sends out letters of concern to those pupils whose attendance has dropped below 90%
3. Carries out Attendance Panels and Reviews where appropriate to offer support to pupils and parents in improving attendance
4. Refers pupils, as appropriate for a CAF, HCP or to the EWO (if attendance drops below 80%) for further support
5. Gives a termly attendance report to the Community Governor's Committee
6. Ensures the LA annual audit and termly attendance audits are completed

Parents

1. are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and stay at school.
2. are responsible for ensuring that their children arrive at school on time and in a condition to learn and with homework completed.
3. inform school of the reason for a child's absence by 11 am on the first day of absence by phone or e-mail and provide any further information required.
4. inform the school when a child is ill giving the anticipated date of the child's return.

Parental Notes

1. Requests for leave of absence are addressed to the Assistant Headteacher at least 2 weeks in advance of the absence (except for (2) below).
2. Requests for leave of absence to attend medical and dental appointments are addressed to the Form Tutor in advance of the absence.



3. Notes explaining unexpected absence are addressed to the Form Tutor and should be received in school on the first day of the pupil's return to school.
4. Reminders for absence notes go out after a week and missing marks lists are sent out regularly to form tutors. If the absence note still hasn't arrived a letter goes home clarifying that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised if a note is not sent to school within ten days.
5. Absence notes should give the dates of the child's absence and should contain a valid reason for absence.
6. Explanations for absence including shopping or minding other children are not normally accepted as valid reasons for absence.
7. If notes do not contain a valid reason for absence parents should be contacted by the Year Head.
8. Parental notes explaining absence are filed in the school office for one school year.

Authorised Absence

Absence is categorised as authorised when:

- a) the pupil is absent with leave (including study leave, work experience, approved educational activity off-site, the death of a close relative, participation in a licensed public performance)
- b) the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- c) when the pupil is involved in a day of religious observance

Unauthorised Absence

1. Where a pupil is absent without prior authorisation and no explanation is forthcoming the absence is treated as unauthorised and the register marked accordingly.



2. Any unauthorised absence is discussed with parents and the Education Welfare Service alerted when appropriate.
3. Information about rates of unauthorised absence is provided in the termly attendance audits and to the Community Governor's Committee.

Post-Registration Truancy

1. Teachers should take a register at the beginning of each lesson and report any suspicious absences to the school office immediately.

Rewarding Attendance

1. This is at the discretion of the Year Heads and may take the form of end of term certificates and/or letters home. 100% attendance is rewarded at the annual Awards Ceremony.

Family Holidays

1. Parents are not entitled (as a right) to demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday.
2. Leave of absence for holidays is granted when parents show that there are exceptional circumstances.
3. The child's overall attendance pattern will be taken into account when requests for absence for holidays are made.
4. The office checks to ensure that the parent requesting leave of absence has custody of the child.
5. The maximum period of authorised absence for holidays is ten days in any one year.
6. Where the request is for a period exceeding ten days the merits of each case will be taken into consideration. Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
7. Where parents keep a child away from school in excess of the period agreed prior to the absence the extra time will normally be treated as unauthorised absence.
8. Where parents take a child away without permission or omit to apply for permission in advance of the holiday such absence will be treated as unauthorised and may call into question approval of future applications.