



EXCELLENCE • LEARNING • LEADERSHIP
ST JOHN'S & KING RICHARD
SCHOOLS FEDERATION

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction:

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:- Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses all aspects of school attendance. Therefore failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance upon request or once per term as part of our reporting procedures or if the attendance rate of your child dips below 95%;
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;

Understanding types of absence:

- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and other events.
- Always be available to discuss issues of attendance with parents or carers.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. (In our case AM equates to periods 1 to 3; PM equates to periods 4 to 5).

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

It is our aim that every child should enjoy a level of attendance of 95% or more in any given year.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

The option to pursue such absence through the Chain of Command will be considered at this time.

Absence Procedures: Please see Appendix A, B & C for further details.

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Clerk and/or Key Stage Managers, or Head of School if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to SCE and / or The Chain of Command if necessary, if attendance moves below 85%.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **07.30** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **07.40** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **07.50am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with Government policy, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Key Stage Manager or Head of School to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays In Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance. Decision made by the school will need to comply with SCE's Guidance on Term Time leave for Pupils. Appendix B

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

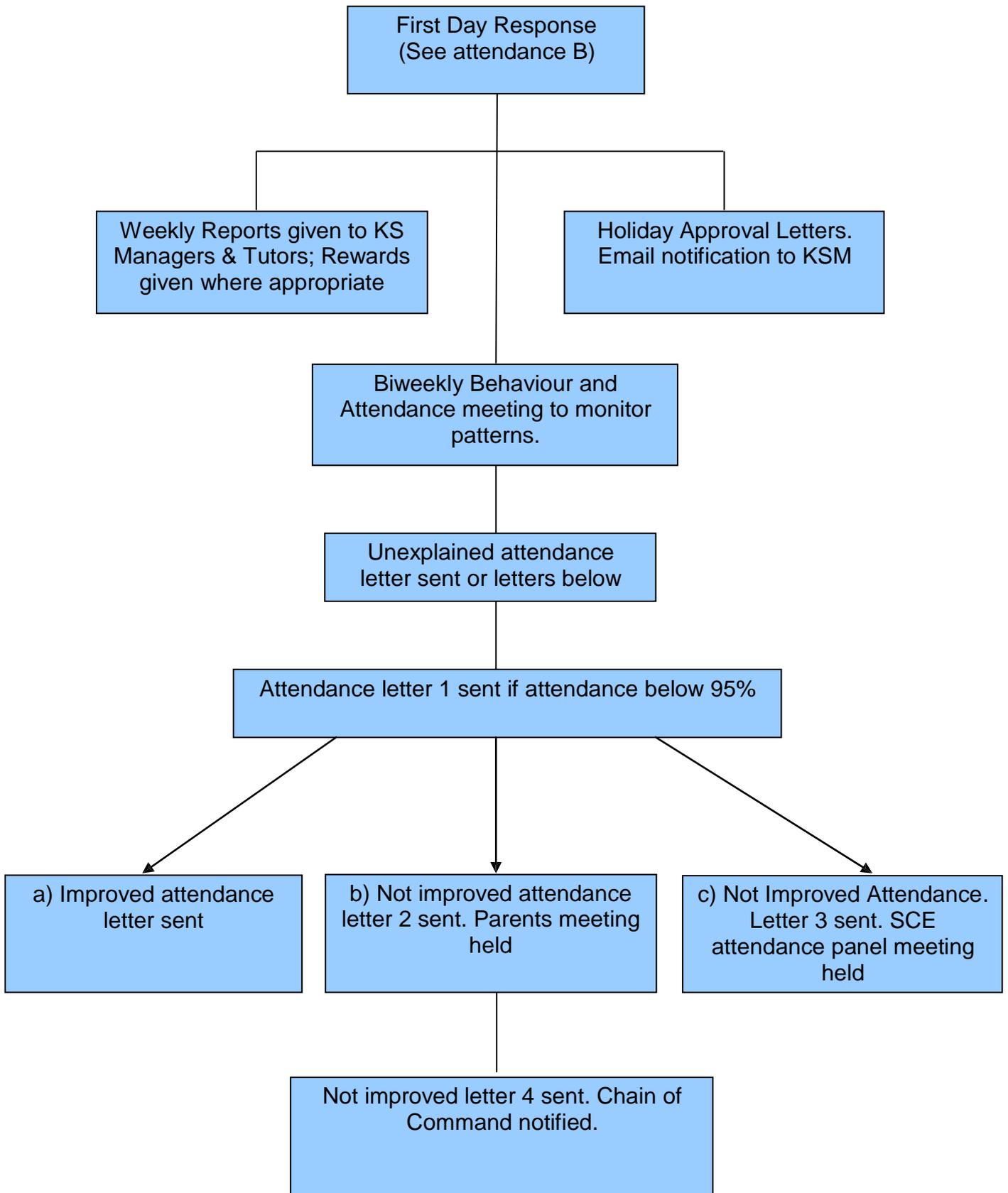
All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

1. Form Tutors must complete register on system by 07.50.
2. Attendance Clerk to telephone parents of students marked as absent for Years 7-11 – (First Day Response).
3. Once absence has been confirmed as genuine the attendance clerk will enter appropriate absence code. Parents are not required to send a letter with student's return for that day. However, parents will be asked to send in a letter if absence will last longer than one day.
4. If a student goes home ill and is absent the following day the attendance clerk will not telephone to confirm absence. Parents should then provide a written confirmation of absence. A note in the planner and recorded by the tutor will be sufficient. Email or telephone is acceptable.
5. Form Tutors and Pastoral Leaders **must** inform the attendance clerk of a planned absence if known.
6. Form Tutors and KS Managers are to remind students that they must register with the Form Tutor before any other activity i.e. Music Lessons, reporting to Pastoral Leaders
7. Form Tutors must mark a student present or absent using the appropriate code, registers **must** not be left blank.
8. Punctuality – Students who arrive late/miss registration must sign in at the

School Office. Tutors / Pastoral Leaders are to challenge any patterns of lateness they detect.

9. Registers will be taken within the first ten minutes of each lesson. (Lesson 5 will be used as PM registration for attendance returns).
10. The Attendance Clerk will monitor for and respond to any incidents of internal truancy.
11. The Attendance Clerk will monitor and respond to attendance as per the flow charts attached.
12. If students need to attend appointments during the school day they must be accompanied by parents and signed out correctly by the Attendance Clerk. Those returning to school should be signed in, in a similar fashion.
13. Sixth Form students are to sign in and out in accordance with agreed procedures with the Head of Sixth Form.
14. Requests for absence for events such as family holidays can be granted in compliance with Government /SCE policies.

Reviewed October 2015



ABSENCE – FIRST DAY RESPONSE

