

Attendance and Punctuality

Introduction

This document explains and reinforces the excellent co-operation we share with you as parents in respect of existing practice at Katharine Lady Berkeley's School. Attendance figures over the years have always been high and reflect the importance we place on regular attendance.

Good school attendance gives your child the opportunity of success and helps develop skills for life. All children should attend school every day unless there is an unavoidable cause like illness.

Missing school damages a pupil's learning and their grades, disrupts routines and can make pupils vulnerable to crime. Pupils should never miss school for reasons like shopping, birthdays or to wait in for a repair person.

Every member of staff shares that commitment and works with you in supporting your child, when problems occur. Absence and truancy not only damage the educational progress of the student but can affect other students too.

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child doesn't attend school regularly and the absence is not agreed by the school.

Definition of parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

The future for young people is changing rapidly. The nature of employment is being transferred by the use of new technology and global economic factors. Young people need to achieve higher educational levels than at any time in the past. Non attendance at school, even for short periods of time, may jeopardise their future opportunities.

What constitutes good attendance?

Attendance percentages are not like examination results. An attendance percentage needs to be in the high nineties before it can be considered good. Consider the following examples:-

- An attendance record of 90% might seem good but is equal to one day missed per fortnight! If this continues from Year 7 to 11 a total of six month's education will be lost.
- An attendance record of 80% might seem acceptable but is equal to one day missed per week!! If this continues from Years 7 to 11 a total of one year's education will be lost.



175 non-school days in a year for holidays, shopping and appointments

190 School days per year 190 days for education	182 days of education	176 days of education	170 days of education	161 days of education	143 days of education
100%	96%	93%	90%	85%	75%
Excellent/Good Best chance of success, of to a flying start		Room to improve	Less chance of success, harder to progress	Serious concern Possible court action	

Taking the registers:

Schools have a legal duty to record the attendance of every student or record them absent or late. The register is called at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions and attendance is also monitored at each lesson.

Reporting an Absence:

- Parents **must** call each day of their child's absence unless a doctor's certificate is obtained. To report any absence or inform us of any future absence, please contact the school and ask to speak to the **Attendance Officer on 01453 842227** who will take the necessary details.
- Students cannot report their own absence.
- Could parents please try to report absence by 9.00a.m.
- If your child is absent and no reasons have been given the Attendance Officer will contact you for the reasons. Please ensure you inform school of any changes in your contact details.
- All unexplained absences will be followed up by computer generated letter.
- If a child is absent for extended periods medical evidence can and will be asked for.

Reporting Late Arrivals:

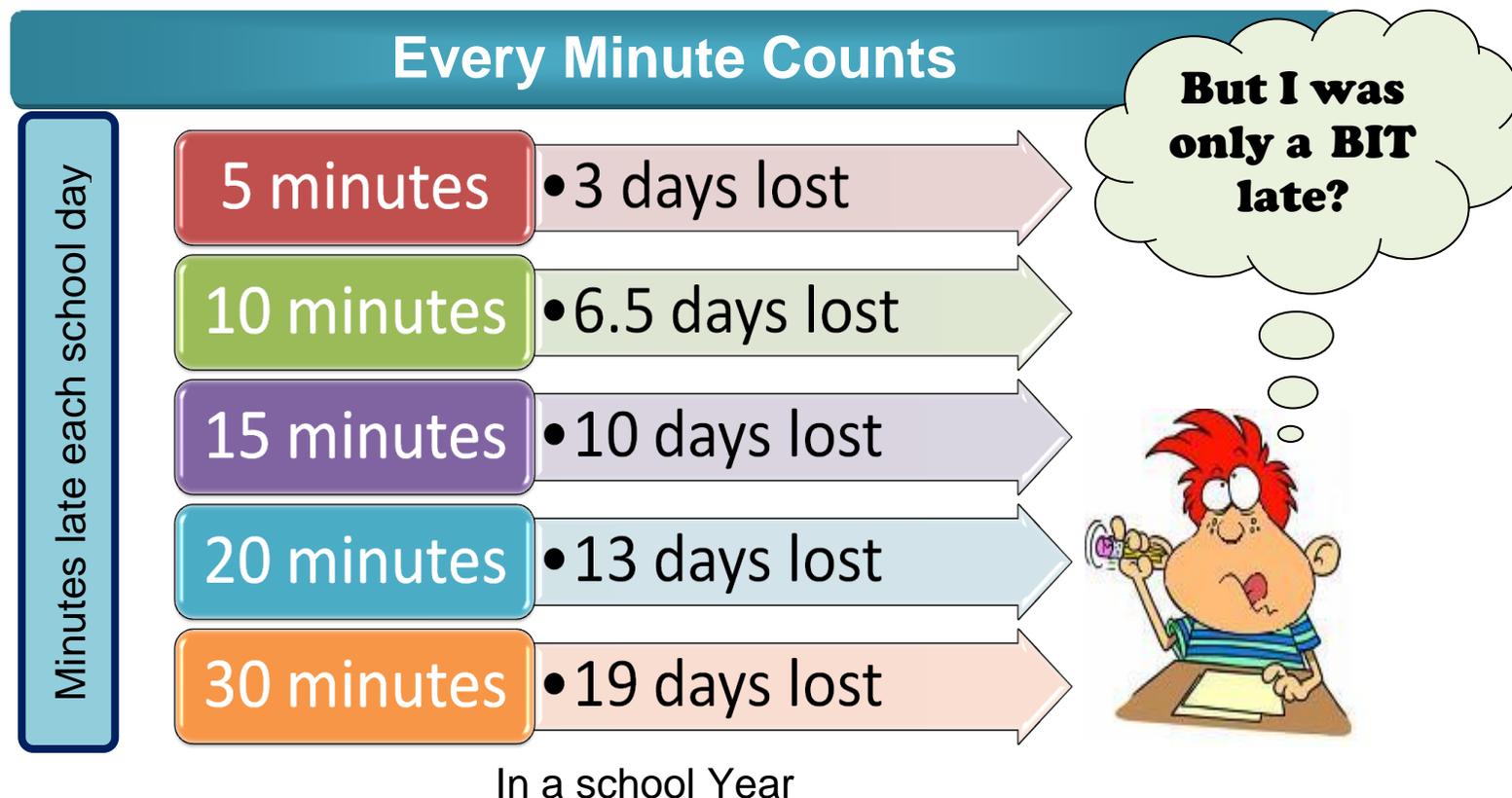
- Parents **must** call the school to report a student's late arrival. Please ensure a reason for the late arrival is given.
- Students **must** sign in at reception when arriving late to gain an attendance mark, as well as for Health and Safety reasons.
- Students arriving after the registers have closed (8:45am) will be marked absent for half a day. The AM session becomes unauthorised and is recorded with a U mark.

The school day starts at 8:25am and so students need to be on the premises by 8:20am.

Punctuality:

Katharine Lady Berkeley's School expects a joint commitment from both parents and students to ensure they arrive on time. It is the responsibility of the student and parents to ensure sufficient journey time is planned taking all aspects of travel i.e. traffic, transport delays, accidents into account.

If students arrive late to lessons they disturb the learning of others, they will not know what they are going to learn about and will waste valuable time. The teacher will have to interrupt the lesson to make sure the late comer knows what to do and will have to call up the register again to mark them in late. The teacher will record how many minutes they have missed. If your child is often late, you will be informed and they will be asked to make up the missed learning time at break, lunch or after school.



If a student misses morning registration (for whatever reason, including late school bus), they **must** sign in at reception. Students who don't sign in will be marked as absent and parents will be telephoned to advise that their child was not present for morning registration. It is therefore important that students follow the correct procedure in order to obtain a present mark. This will in turn prevent a telephone call to parents and avoid worrying you unnecessarily.

Reporting Medical/ Dental Appointments:

- Appointments should be made after the school day finishes where possible.
- Parents **must** notify school if a student needs to leave school for a medical/dental appointment either by letter, email or a telephone call.
- Students **must** sign out with the Attendance Officer before leaving the school site
- If a student asks to sign out to attend a medical appointment and they don't have a letter, appointment card or parents have not notified school a telephone call will be made to the parents to confirm the student has an appointment.
- Students arriving late and who give a medical appointment as the reason will be marked late unless parents have notified school of the appointment.

- **School will only authorise absence for up to half a day for a medical appointment unless authorisation has been sort beforehand**
- Students attending a Medical/Dental appointment mid-morning (e.g. 11:30am) are expected, where possible, to attend school beforehand and to return after the appointment.
- Students **must** register at reception when they return to school.

Truancy:

Truancy is unacceptable and any student who truants will be sanctioned. A courtesy call is made to parents to advise them that their child has left site. Truancy is recorded on a student's personal record and remains on file until they leave the school. The sanction for truancy is time in T9 to make up the time they have missed.

What will we do to monitor attendance and punctuality?

- We will contact you on the first day of absence, at home or work, if you have not previously informed us of the reason why your child is absent;
- Send you an absence letter if we have not been able to contact you to determine the reasons for absence.
- **We will follow the 4 stage attendance procedure:**

Initial Concern – Attendance falls below 93% (below 89% in term 1) - Letter to parents

Review period 4 weeks

6+ unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during the review period - the student moves onto Stage 1

Stage 1 – Letter to parents

An Attendance Agreement completed with Student and Education Welfare Officer

Review period 4 weeks

6+ unauthorised sessions or attendance below 90% during the review period - the student moves onto Stage 2

Stage 2 – Letter to parents - Home visit by the Education Welfare Officer and/or a school meeting.

Medical evidence will be required to authorise further absences due to illness.

Review period 4 weeks

6+ unauthorised sessions during the review period – the student moves onto Stage 3

Stage 3 – Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) - Letter to parents

First review 4 weeks

A total of 28+ unauthorised absences or 20 continuous unauthorised absences – the student moves onto Stage 4.

Stage 4 –Referral to The Education Entitlement and Inclusion team

Request for legal proceedings

Dependent on the level of concern, a student may not move onto all stages of the procedure before a referral is made to The Education Entitlement and Inclusion team

It is unlikely that any leave of absence request would be authorised for any student on stages 2+ of this procedure

Sometimes your child may try to convince you to let them stay at home and you may be unsure what to do. The table below gives some typical reasons and suggestions about how you could deal with them

Reason given	Home Solution	Parent
No PE kit	Find alternative sports gear and write a note to PE teacher.	Contact P.E. teacher and inform them of the situation and your plan to resolve the problem.
Trouble with homework	Offer help and explain how staying off school will only make the situation worse.	Use student's journal to communicate with the subject teacher.
Regularly feeling ill – upset tummy/headache	Investigate – some health problems melt away when children meet up with their friends.	Contact tutor, Head of Year or Education Welfare Officer to investigate if there are any issues in school making your child reluctant to attend.
Birthday	Explain that a child must go to school by law otherwise it is truancy.	Birthdays can be celebrated at the weekend.
Problem with a teacher	Talk to child to discuss problem and suggest they talk to their tutor or Head of Year	If the problem persists, make an appointment to see your child's Head of Year
School Refusing/ Poor Attendance	Explain to the child that they must go to school by showing them the legal requirements of a parent. Offer to take them to school Assure them that members of staff will help resolve any problems	Contact Debbie Gardner the Education Welfare Officer immediately. Do not cover up the reasons for your child's absence. If we are unaware of a problem we cannot help solve a problem. We have dedicated staff who will work to resolve a variety of issue.

Why were you absent?

It was my birthday

Had to take the dog to the vets

Had to get my hair cut

Alarm didn't go off

Couldn't get up, I had a late night

Had to wait for the gasman

My uniform wasn't clean

Went Shopping

Had to look after my little sister

Had the chance to go on a last minute holiday

Thought it was an INSET day

Missed my bus



These absences would **NOT** be authorised

Guidance for parents/carers

- Reinforce our expectations regarding full attendance and excellent punctuality with your child;
- Support school staff when we take action over punctuality or truancy, for example, issuing detentions;
- Let us know of any change in contact details immediately; Contact the school to inform us about any absence;
- Ensure that your child completes any work that has been sent home or that they catch up with any work that she has missed.