

King's Lynn Academy Family of Schools

Common Absence Principles Sept 2012

The Common Absence Principles will underline the Absence Policy in each school within the King's Lynn Academy Family of Schools.

The King's Lynn Academy family of schools is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and the common absence principles are written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Absence during term time is strongly discouraged. Parents are reminded of the effect that absence can have on a child's potential achievement. Each school will consider authorising absence requests for up to 5 days, for exceptional circumstances, whenever possible. Parents/carers must apply in advance for permission.

Each school within the Family of Schools will monitor attendance patterns to identify any concerns. Where a child begins to develop a pattern of unauthorised absences, each school will try to resolve the problem with parents/carers. Joint meetings will take place with other schools who share the same family.

The Department of Education states that 85% is the threshold for persistent absence. Referrals will be made to the Local Authority Attendance team if unauthorised leave reaches 20% over a 4 week period and/or below 85%.

Term time leave (academic year = September – July)

Parents/carers are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure their child/ren attends school regularly. There is however a discretionary power to allow term time leave in **exceptional circumstances**. The principles within this Family of Schools is to limit this to 5 days whenever possible. This is not an entitlement and purely at the discretion of the school's headteacher. Schools will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a pupil's education or if the absences are during school exam periods and SATs.

Parents are required to apply for permission for term time leave (see Appendix 1). Before completing the application, we advise that parents/carers consider very seriously how the absence will affect their child's education.

Missing school means missing out!

There are 190 days in a school year

If your child is at school for 190 days out of 190, that's 100% attendance.

Your child has a good chance of doing well at school.

If your child is at school for 180 days out of 190, that's 95% attendance.

Your child still has a good chance of doing well at school.

If your child is at school for 169 days out of 190, that's 89% attendance.

Your child has been off for 21 days, and may find it hard to keep on track.

If your child is at school for 161 days out of 190, that's 85% attendance.

Your child has been off for 29 days, nearly 6 school weeks.

If your child is at school for 150 days out of 190, that's 79% attendance.

Your child has been off school for 40 days.

Poor attendance like this will have a serious impact on education and life chances.

If your child is at school for 143 days out of 190, that's 75% attendance.

Your child has missed 47 day's lessons.

Is your child missing out?

If your request is turned down and your child still misses school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised by the school on the pupil's records. Schools are not required to provide work for pupil's taking term time leave. An accumulation of unauthorised absences will result in legal proceedings against the parent/carer through the Magistrates Court.

Parents/carers are advised to: -

- **Discuss with the school any request for term time leave via the school office.**
- **Parents should no assume permission is granted until they have had written confirmation.**
- **be aware that any further absence (e.g illness) will bring their child's attendance below the 95% requirement and action may be taken by the Local Authority.**

If the headteacher does not approve an application for term time leave, an appeal can be made through the Governing Body via the Clerk before the leave is taken.

Lateness (see Appendix 2)

If a child is late after the registration (up to 30 minutes), they will be marked as an authorised absence.

Registers are marked as follows: -

L (late) – up to 30 minutes late

U (unauthorised) – after 30 minutes late

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of the categories in Appendix 3.

Appendix 1

King's Lynn Academy Cluster

West Winch / Middleton / Howard Infant / Howard Junior / King's Lynn Academy/ Reffley / St Edmund's

Name of School: _____

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Please note: taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress

The following criteria will be used to determine the decision

1. The child's previous attendance history
2. The age of the child(ren)
3. The child's stage of education
4. The time of the year (exams)
5. The nature of the trip (an exceptional experience)
6. Whether the parent are restricted in terms of leave from the employer (Proof from employer is required)

Full name of child(ren) _____

Yr Group _____

Name of siblings _____

Address _____

Leave requested from _____ to _____

Total number of school days _____

Exceptional circumstance _____

Reasons _____

I/we have read the information on the reverse of this application and would like to formally request the leave of absence as shown.

Signature of parent(s) / carer(s) _____

Date _____

Your request for leave from school during term time has been considered and has been **authorised / not authorised.**

Signature of Headteacher _____

Family Holidays & Extended Trips Abroad during Term Time

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is however, a discretionary power to allow leave of absence for up to 5 days in any academic year*, for the purpose of *annual family holidays* in exceptional circumstances during term time. This is not an entitlement and purely at the discretion of the schools head teacher. Schools should not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a student's education or if the absences are during school exam periods and SAT's.

Before completing this application we would advise that you consider very seriously how the absences will affect your child's education. National statistics show 5 days absence in any academic year does have a negative effect on attainment. Schools are not obliged to provide work for students taking leave of absence, however some schools may chose to do this.

The government advises that any excessive family holiday or any refusal of leave of absence must be recorded as unauthorised by the school on the student's records. As you may be aware an accumulation of unauthorised absences may result in legal proceedings against you either through a Fixed Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

Discuss with the school any request for holiday prior to making a booking. Your child's school may have a designated person for this. It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure you receive confirmation from the school before the trip is taken. Do not assume permission is granted if you have not received written confirmation.

If the head teacher does not approve an application for a leave of absence an appeal can be made through the Governing Body. This cannot be made retrospectively.

Fixed Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or the parent/carer has been unable to provide a reason for the absence, which is acceptable to the school.

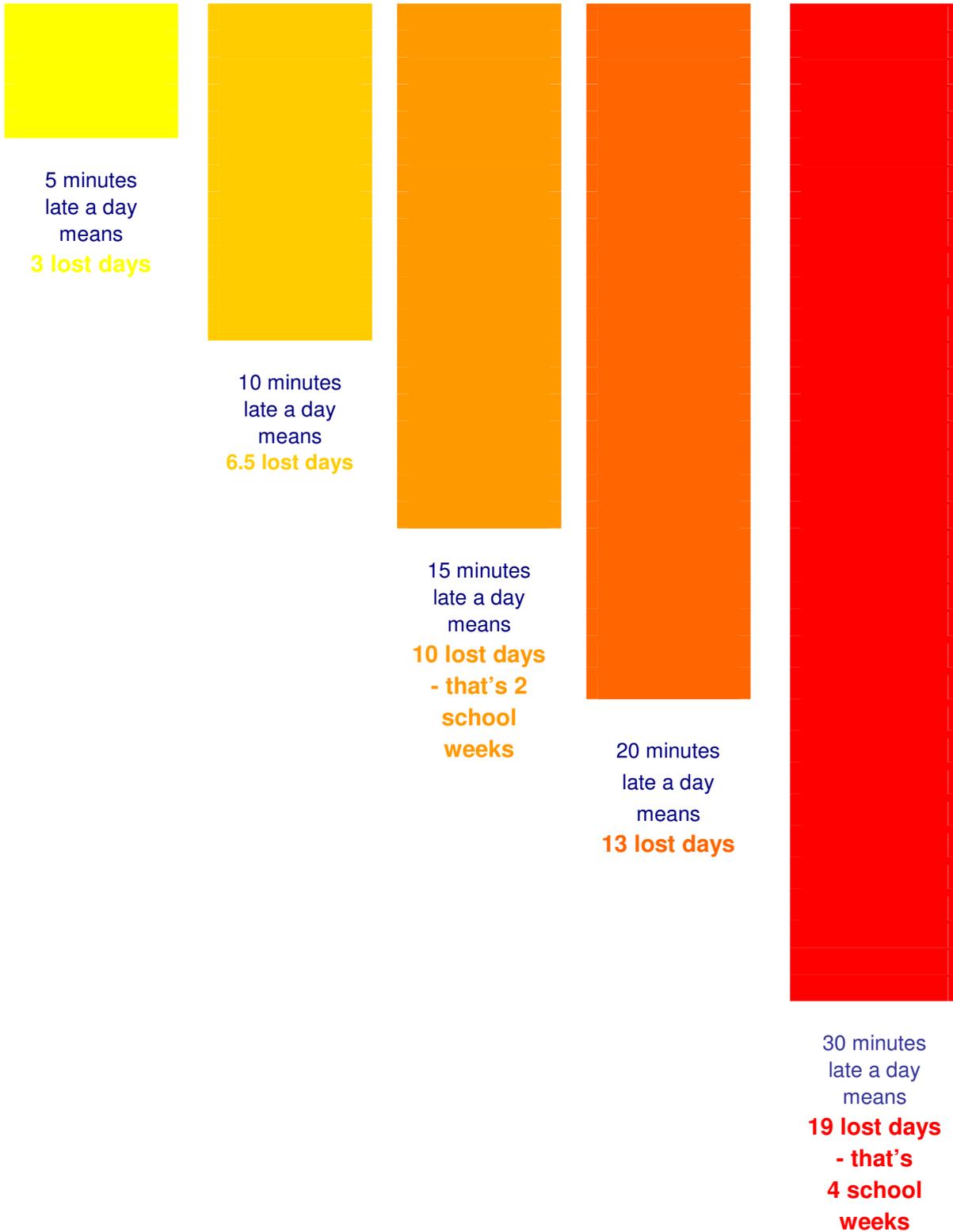
The school will discuss with the Local Authority any cases of unauthorised absence and whether the issuing of a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution to the offence and can be issued when it is felt that parents/carers are failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The penalty is in the form of a £50 fine per parent/carer per child payable within 28 days, this increases to £100 payable between 29-42 days. Failure to pay usually results in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

*(Academic year =school year from September to July)

Appendix 2

Every minute counts!



Appendix 3

Register codes

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved education activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (Not covered by another appropriate code / description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved education activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical / dental appointment	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code / description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers close)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved education activity
W	Work experience	Approved education activity
X	Un timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil on yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances