

McKee College

**ATTENDANCE &
PUNCTUALITY
POLICY**

September 2020

Attendance and Punctuality

Introduction

Regular attendance is essential if students are to make the most of the educational opportunities made available to them whilst at McKee College. Irregular attendance disrupts learning and undermines progress, leading to underachievement and disaffection.

At the McKee we adopt a whole school approach to attendance and punctuality, the benefits of which are:

- Responsibility is shared by all staff.
- The policy impacts on all aspects of school life and relates to the value and ethos of the McKee.

Policy Aims

1. To improve the overall attendance figures.

This is achieved by establishing a high profile for attendance and punctuality so that regular attendance is part of the McKee's culture and ethos. We expect student attendance to be higher than that from their previous setting and to aspire to be above 96.1%. Expectations of attendance form part of admissions meetings.

2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for staff, pupils and parents.

There are procedures which monitor attendance on a regular basis by both the Head Teacher and the Attendance Officer. Pupils and parents are informed of the attendance rates and displays around the McKee are designed to celebrate good attendance figures. Attendance is discussed in key worker sessions and direct links are made between attendance and success at school.

Procedure:

- If a pupil is absent, parents are expected to notify the McKee School Office on the first day before 8:45am.
- If this does not occur, the Attendance Officer will contact the home as part of our first day calling when registers close at 9am.
- If we do not receive a response then the Attendance Officer will make a phone call home.
- This procedure is followed on the second day.
- On the third day of no response the Attendance Officer will then conduct a home visit.
- After 5 days consecutive unauthorised absence a case for a fixed penalty will be investigated.
- The decision to authorise an absence remains with the school not the parent.

If at any time a pattern of non-attendance emerges the case is to be referred to the headteacher by the Attendance Officer and further action discussed.

3. To devise a constant system for monitoring attendance.

Arrangements are in place for statutory registration procedures.

Procedure: School starts at 8.45. Registration closes in the morning at 9.15am and a student arriving after this time is marked as U. Students are registered again for the afternoon session. The registers are held on Behaviour Watch and SIMS. Text messages and phone calls to parents to notify them of first day absence or lateness are issued from 9:15am to 9:45am. This procedure will be different for those students not on a full time timetable.

- College House
 - Registration from 8:45 – 9:00am,
 - Late 9:00-9:15am
 - Attendance text issued 9:15am
 - Missed session from 9:15am
- Breck House
 - Registration from 8.45 - 9:00am
 - Late 9:00-9:15am
 - Attendance text issued 9:15am
 - Missed session from 9:15am

4. To safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school.

Staff at the McKee are aware that **Children Missing from Education** can be a potential sign of abuse or neglect. The Attendance Officer liaises with the DSL to flag up concerns and informs the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more. As with all safeguarding matters staff operate with a mindset of "it could happen here." Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and to support and promote the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school

5. To develop consistent communication and support for parents.

Parents are involved in attendance issues at the earliest possible stage by designated members of staff (Key Worker or Form Tutor).

Procedure:

Should there be incidences of long term unauthorised absence, in addition to established procedures, the member of staff allocated to the pupil (Key Worker) will maintain contact with the home and the child. A sequence of letters notifying parents of absence patterns are triggered and issued in a staged response.

6. Promote effective partnership with other agencies.

Other agencies are informed and involved should the necessity arise. The McKee operates an open door policy and actively supports multi-agency approaches that help improve attendance.

Ratified : Sep 2020

To be reviewed: Sep 2022

Procedure:

The host school or other agencies as appropriate, are informed of the reintegration strategies for individual pupils and are kept aware of any issues surrounding attendance.

This whole school approach is reflected in the ethos of the McKee where all staff aim to provide a welcoming, caring, learning environment in which pupils feel safe and valued. Regular attendance and punctuality are encouraged by all staff at the McKee.

Multi agency plans developed to support pupils when necessary.

Absence Tracking

1. Formal registration takes place between 08:45am and 09:15am and at the beginning of the afternoon session.
2. All authorised and unauthorised non-attendance must be recorded with the appropriate code. See table of codes.
3. Late arrivals must report to the School Office and the register marked accordingly.
4. Any first day absence, of which the McKee has not previously been informed, should be reported to the School Office immediately, they will then contact the parent or carer by telephone.
5. If after three days absence home contact has not been made the matter is to be referred to the Attendance Officer and a home visit arranged. This will be recorded on Behaviour Watch.
6. At 5 days the case for a fixed penalty notice will be investigated but only issued with the authority of the headteacher.
7. All communications should be recorded on Behaviour Watch.
8. Full details in attendance intervention hierarchy annex.

Leave in Term Time

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking 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 take leave during school time.

All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent/carers to the headteacher. There is a request form to be filled in that must be in two weeks prior to

the intended leave. These can be made available on request to the Attendance Officer. Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional.

Leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional.

In considering the request we will also look at various factors such as:

The timing of the request.

When a pupil is just starting the school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.

Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods e.g. GCSE or any other public examinations.

Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below 96.1% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave.

Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Re-admission cannot be guaranteed.

The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

Use of Penalty Notices

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classed as unauthorised. Depending on the circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court unless the fine is unpaid after 28 days. Full payment of the penalty means that parents/carers can avoid being prosecuted and convicted.

The McKee PRU will consider issuing penalty notices in the following circumstances

- unauthorised absence
- truancy (including students found during truancy sweeps)

- parentally condoned absence without good reason or medical confirmation.
- Persistent late arrival to school (more than 15 minutes after register is taken)
- Unauthorised absence in term time (please see notes on term time absence)
- Delayed return from authorised leave.

In every case a pupil must have had a minimum of 5 school days unauthorised absence in a term or 7 school days unauthorised absence over 2 consecutive terms before a penalty notice is considered. That includes unauthorised holiday leave.

Attendance intervention hierarchy

Attendance level	Action	By whom
All pupils	Form tutors and key workers discuss attendance on a regular basis with students and make use of good displays. Students get points for attendance that they can exchange for rewards.	Form tutors Class teachers
	100% attendance is rewarded weekly (based on that week) Pupil progress towards attendance targets is monitored and rewarded	Form tutors
	Key workers link attendance and attainment on a regular basis	Key workers
96.1% and above- GREEN	Rewards available- form competitions, raffle draws, trips, tuck shop	Head Teacher
6 sessions of unauthorised absence	Letter 1 is sent home, flagging up concern and advising that at 10 sessions can apply to LCC for a warning letter (PN1) Support offered to families and request for contact with attendance manager if needed.	Attendance Manager
10 sessions over 1 term or 14 over 2 terms	Letter 2 directing home to come in for meeting with attendance officer. In meeting attendance contract is set up. Contract has 100% over next 4 weeks to be reviewed. At 4 week review if failed school will apply to LCC for a PN1. At this stage referral can be made to other agencies and organisations using the Continuum of Need Model and in liaison with DSL.	Attendance Manager
If no engagement or improvement over 3 PN1 periods	School will apply for a PDN (prosecution determine notice)	Attendance Manager

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