



Miss Sarah Hetherington - Headteacher

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Approved Date: 1st September 2026

Next Review Date: 31st August 2027

Attendance and Punctuality

Statement of Intent

McKee College believes that excellent attendance is fundamental to educational achievement, wellbeing and future success. We recognise that some pupils face barriers to attendance and that improving attendance requires partnership working between school, families and external agencies.

We are committed to a culture where attendance is everyone's responsibility and where support will be offered at the earliest opportunity.

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. Expectations of attendance form part of admissions meetings.

Attendance Categories

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil is considered persistently absent when their attendance falls below 90%. The school will provide targeted support and work collaboratively with parents, carers and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.

Severe Absence (SA)

A pupil is considered severely absent when their attendance falls below 50%. These pupils require intensive multi-agency support and will be prioritised for intervention.

Attendance, SEND and Mental Health

Many pupils attending McKee College have additional needs that may impact attendance. The school will work closely with pupils, families and external professionals to understand barriers to attendance and implement reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Absence linked to anxiety, mental health needs or SEND will be managed through supportive intervention rather than punitive approaches alone.

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

Attendance Data Analysis

Attendance data will be analysed regularly to identify individuals, vulnerable groups and trends requiring intervention.

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 9:15am.
- 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 we will then conduct a home visit by the Family Support Worker
- After 5 days consecutive unauthorised absence a case for a Penalty Notice 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 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

- College House
 - Registration from 08:45 – 09:15
 - Late 09:15 – 09:30
 - Attendance call or text issued from 09:30
 - Missed session from 09:30
 - Phone calls home from 10:00

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.

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 Penalty Notice 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/carer 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.
- 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

Before considering legal intervention, the school will seek to understand and address barriers to attendance through discussion with pupils, families and relevant professionals. Support may include pastoral intervention, mentoring, family support, timetable adjustments, SEND support, mental health support or multi-agency working.

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.

Under the National Framework for Penalty Notices, a penalty notice must be considered when a pupil has accrued 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The school will consider whether support would be more appropriate before requesting legal action.

Current Fine Structure

- First penalty: £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days.
- Second penalty within three years: £160.
- Third offence within three years: prosecution may be considered

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.

McKee College 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.

Attendance intervention hierarchy

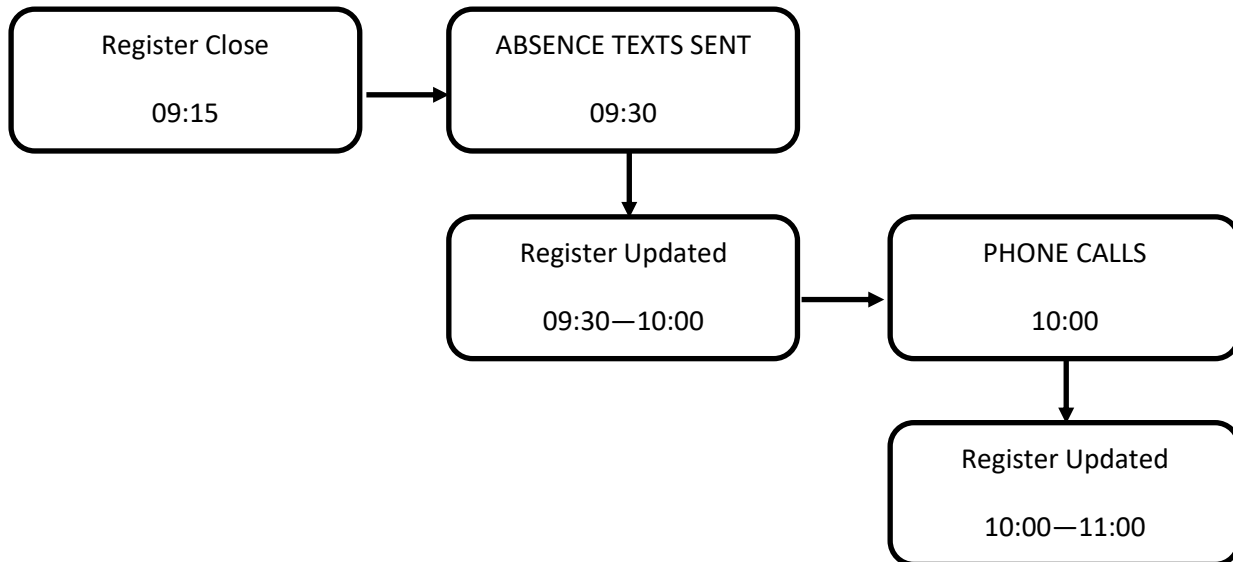
Attendance level	Action	By whom
All pupils	Form tutors and key workers discuss attendance on a regular basis with students and make use of good displays. Students get points for attendance that they can exchange for rewards.	Form tutors Class teachers
	100% attendance is rewarded weekly (based on that week) Pupil progress towards attendance targets is monitored and rewarded	Form tutors
	Key workers link attendance and attainment on a regular basis	Key workers
RAG rated Incentives	Rewards available- Form Competitions, Raffle draws, Trips, Tuck shop	Headteacher
6 sessions of unauthorised absence	Letter 1 is sent home, flagging up concern. Home visit arranged.	Attendance Manager Family Support Worker

10 sessions over 1 term or 14 over 2 terms	Further home visit arranged. At this stage referral can be made to other agencies and organisations using the Continuum of Need Model and in liaison with DSL.	Family Support Worker
If no engagement or improvement over 3 PN1 periods	School can apply for a PDN (prosecution determine notice)	Attendance Manager

The Attendance Team

Form Tutors	Form Tutors will promote good attendance through positive engagement, identify early, pupils with attendance concerns and escalate if necessary.
Attendance Officer	Additional support for more specific and serious attendance queries and help with barriers to attendance.
Key Worker	Lead key worker and Form Tutors to support with attendance issues and supporting pupils and families.
Family Support Worker	Additional support for more specific and serious attendance queries and help with barriers to attendance.
DSL and Safeguarding Team	Oversee attendance concerns linked to safeguarding risks and coordinate appropriate support and interventions.
Member of SLT with responsibility for attendance	S Hetherington - Headteacher

ABSENCE MONITORING



ESCALATING CONCERNS

