



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Attendance Policy

POLICY TITLE: Attendance Policy

STATUS: Statutory

REVIEWED BY: Governing Board

DATE of REVIEW: July 2025

DATE of NEXT REVIEW: July 2028

Introduction

At Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, we firmly believe that every child has the right to learn. To support this, regular attendance and excellent punctuality must be a shared priority. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives a full and enriching educational experience, and we recognise that consistent attendance is essential for QE Girls to thrive.

It is the shared responsibility of pupils, teachers, parents and carers to promote high attendance and minimise authorised absence. This commitment is rooted in our belief that only through regular and punctual attendance can students fully benefit from the academic, extracurricular, and super-curricular opportunities the school offers.

The Department for Education's publication "the link between attendance and attainment at KS2 and KS4" published March 2025, p6 states "At KS4, pupils who attended school nearly every day in Year 11 (with an attendance rate of 95-100%) were 1.9 times more likely to achieve the Grade 5 in English and Maths GCSE compared to pupils who only attended 90-95% of the time (relating to up to 2 weeks more time in school over the course of a year) and 3 times more likely than persistently absent pupils who only attend 85-90% of the time (relating to 4 - 6 weeks more time in school). This means missing just 10 days of year 11 reduced the likelihood of achieving grade 5 in English and Maths by around 50%". Pupils who attended school 90-95% of the time were also 1.6 times more likely to achieve Grade 5 in Maths and English GCSE compared to pupils who only attended 85-90% of the time, relating to an additional 2-4 weeks in school. This demonstrates there are improvements in the chance of success from increased attendance by one absence band". At QE Girls, this translates to pupils being almost 2 times more likely to achieve at least a grade 9 to 5 at GCSE.

Attendance

Pupil attendance is split into the following categories:

Attendance Grading	Excellent	Impressive	Good	Nearly There	Needs to Improve	Concerns	Serious Concerns
% Attendance	100%	98%	96%	95%	94%	90%	Less than 90%
Number of Absent Days		4 School Days	7 School Days	9 School Days	11 School Days	19 School Days	20+ School Days

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

1. Support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
2. Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
3. Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
4. Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
5. Ensure the school's attendance level meets Government targets.

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student absence also disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the class.

Ensuring a student's regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer and allowing absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education Act 2002 - Sections 53
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.
- Discuss promptly with their Form Tutor or Head of Year any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school on the day or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Regularly inform parents of the percentage of attendance of all pupils.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Educational Welfare Officer. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Educational Welfare Officer may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Child Missing In Education Officer after 10 days unexplained absence.

Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all school staff. At Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School we will investigate all unexplained absences and work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern.

To help us all focus the importance of good attendance we will:

- Report to parents/carers on a termly basis on students' attendance and punctuality rate.
- Celebrate good attendance by sharing individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class badges and events.

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always

required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences - the school may be prepared to authorise absences for the following reasons on receipt of appropriate evidence:

- Genuine illness of the pupil;
- Hospital appointment for the pupil, which cannot be arranged outside of school time;
- Major religious observance;
- External exams or educational assessments;
- Visits to prospective new schools;
- Emergencies or another unavoidable cause (where the school has given approval in advance for the child to be away);
- Where an explanation offered after an absence has been accepted as satisfactory justification for a student being absent from school;
- Compassionate leave for bereavement of close family members.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider to be reasonable. These types of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These absences include:

- Shopping / day trip;
- A birthday treat;
- Oversleeping due to a late night;
- Routine dentist appointments;
- Looking after other children / family member;
- Appointments for other family members;
- Truancy for all or part of the school day;
- Students arriving at school after the register has closed;
- Unauthorised holidays in term time.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student is classified as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. An individual is deemed to be a PA if their absence is 90% or less regardless of whether the absences have been authorised. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational attainment and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absences 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 parents/carers will be informed of this .

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral systems and with referral to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Absence Procedures

The following procedures are issued to all parents at the beginning of Year 7.

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 – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;

If your child is absent we will:

- Text you on the first day of an absence if we have not heard from you;

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with your Head of Year and/or Assistant Headteacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Educational Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 92%.

Telephone numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents, including regarding absence queries. Therefore the school needs to have an up to date contact number at all times. It is important that parents help us to help you and your daughter by making sure we always have an up to date telephone number to contact you. There will be checks on telephone numbers and email addresses throughout the year.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your daughter misses the start of the day she will miss work. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, and it can be embarrassing for the child, further encouraging absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.40am** and we expect your daughter to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **8.40am** and your daughter will receive a late mark if she is not in class by this time.

In Years 7-11, if a student arrives late to school she will receive a 15-minute after school detention on the same day. Sixth Form lates generates a 30 minute detention at lunchtime.

At 9.10am the registers will be closed. If your daughter is late, a letter is required to explain why this has happened. Persistent lateness may also result in a Local Authority penalty notice.

Authorising absence

Amendments have been made to the 2024 Pupil Registration regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

Schools can no longer grant up to 10 days' leave in special circumstances for the purpose of family holiday. The 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holidays and schools may now only grant leave in 'exceptional' circumstances. According to the guidance, Schools now have a duty to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has missed or is expected to miss 15 days of school, to support the Local Authority's duties under section 19.

Penalties for unauthorised absence

Amendments have been made to the 2024 penalty notices regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which also came into force on 19th August 2024.

The amendments increased the fines from £60 to £80, and from £120 to £180. From September 2024, parents must pay £80 within 21 days or £180 within 28 days.. These are payable to the Local Authority. Extended absence from school for visits overseas may result in a student being removed from the school roll.

STAFF ROLES

Form Tutor

- Promotes habits of regular attendance and punctuality both with individuals and with the form group; Accurately completes electronic registers and responds to parental notes and unexplained absences by liaising with the Head of Year about updating absence codes;
- Is alert to absence being condoned for illegitimate reasons;
- Is alert to emerging patterns of absence and lateness;
- Is aware of and consistent in applying school systems for monitoring and promoting attendance
- Requests the support/intervention of the Year Head when appropriate.

Subject Teacher

- Keeps an accurate electronic register of attendance for each lesson
- Updates the electronic register with students who are late to lessons and deals with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly
- Recognises that difficulties with learning can be an important factor in poor attendance;
- Explores methods of making specific provision for children who are frequent or long-term absentees
- Welcomes and values the presence of all children in their lessons.

Head of Department

- Examines the curriculum in order to develop ways of improving the quality of the classroom experience
- Develops sensitive and effective departmental re-entry strategies which welcome children back from a period of absence and offers support in the organisation of missed work;
- Regularly liaises with Form Tutors and Heads of Year on attendance related matters

Head of Year

- Assumes a key role in co-ordinating all aspects of attendance related matters
- Ensures that registers are properly maintained and that absences are appropriately followed up Monitors and supervises the work of Form Tutors in promoting attendance
- Effectively liaises with senior staff on attendance related matters
- Ensures that up-to-date attendance data is regularly available
- Follows the attendance monitoring procedures and thresholds see appendix 1
- When necessary, communicates with and meets parents of children experiencing attendance difficulties; see appendix 2 letters
- Refers attendance concerns to the Educational Welfare Officer;
- Considers attendance or punctuality concerns as part of CAF, PSP and other interventions
- Consults, when appropriate, with other agencies - Social Care, CAMHS, etc.

Headteacher (through the Senior Leadership Team)

- Ensures that a whole-school attendance policy is implemented and reviewed
- Ensures that this policy is communicated to children, staff, parents and governors (via, for example, the school website)
- Ensures that detailed attendance data is regularly collected and used to inform strategic planning on attendance matters
- Ensures that whole-school attendance targets are set and achieved
- Reports to governors on attendance matters
- Creates a school ethos which values and promotes excellent levels of attendance and punctuality

Responsibility for attendance matters at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School:

Ms Colette Abimbola - Deputy Headteacher
Miss A Welch, Attendance Officer
Head of Key Stage, Head of Year and Form tutors
Sixth Form: Mrs Mears and Mrs Payne

Student Attendance monitoring

Tier 1 Weekly monitoring

Attendance officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces weekly attendance spreadsheet for SLT link, HoY and Form Tutors • Shares received information from families with HOY • Regularly updates Sims with accurate attendance codes • Generates and shares list of daily lates with SLT link, AAHTs and HOYs • Collaborates with and supports HOYs with sending attendance letters to parents
HoY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks weekly attendance spreadsheet and discusses with SLT link at LM meeting and VI meetings. • Raises attendance concerns with EWO • Liaises with parents to help address and overcome obstacles affecting student attendance • Arrange and attend Attendance clinics with parents and pupil to improve attendance • Collaborate with EWO to prepare necessary documentations for FPNs and or prosecutions
Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracks students attendance and punctuality • Challenges students' absence and responds to parental attendance queries • Raises attendance concerns/issues with HOYs

Tier 2 Ongoing monitoring students with attendance of under 96%

Form Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor students with attendance under 96% • Contact home to discuss attendance and barriers
Attendance officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaises with HOY regarding students eligible for each tier of attendance letter and sends letter to parent

HoY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrees which students should receive Letter A
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Tier 3 Below 94%

Attendance officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests to HoY which student should receive letter B and sends letter B once agreed with HoY
HoY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrees which students should receive Letter B and arranges a meeting with parents
Form tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages and supports students attendance through regular dialogue and collaboration with both students and parents

Tier 4 Below 92%

HoY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discusses student at VI and in LM meeting with SLT link • Refers to EWO and letter C sent home
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Appendix 2

Letter A Drop to 96% after term 1

Re: Attendance Below 94%

I am writing to you because xxxxxxxx attendance has dropped below 94% this school year. Her attendance is currently xxxxxxxx.

As you will be aware, our school target for all students is to maintain an attendance record of at least 96%.

We know that there is a positive correlation between attendance levels and academic performance, because good attendance at school is linked to better GCSE grades.

Attendance at 93% is approximately the same as missing a whole term's work across the five years of secondary schooling. Evidence shows that this impacts on GCSE grades.

Please speak with your daughter about the importance of attending school every day. We would also like to speak with you to talk through any issues and barriers to your child attending school. Please could you call the school to speak with me? We are able to set attendance targets with your child for improvement across the rest of the year.

Thank you for your continued support regarding your daughter's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Letter C Drop to 92% and AAHT Link Intervention

Dear Parent/carer

Re: Attendance Below 92%

Your child's attendance is currently xxxxxxxx.

We have reviewed xxxxxxxx attendance since our last communication and it has not improved. Therefore, please can you attend a meeting at school on at to discuss how we can improve the situation.

An attendance of less than 92% means a student is close to being categorised as a persistent absentee. Falling into this attendance category has profound effects on her future; she will miss the equivalent of half a year off school across five years if this pattern continues. Please speak with xxxxxxxx about the importance of attendance.

From today, all absences will only be authorised if appropriate medical evidence is provided to support the absence. If attendance falls to 90% your daughter will be referred to Barnet's Educational Welfare Officer who will work with you to help improve your daughter's attendance.

The new guidelines require the school to monitor punctuality. All guidance is found in our attendance policy on the school website. In addition, please note the following legal changes that have come into force in September 2024. Parents will receive a Penalty Notice if their child is marked as being absent for 10 sessions (there are two registration sessions per day - AM and PM) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised

absence and can also span different terms or school years.

Our School's registration closes at 9:10 am. Students arriving late before the register closes will be marked with the "L" code. However, lateness after the register closes will be marked with a "U" code which is recorded as an absence for the morning session and counts as an unauthorised absence according to DfE guidelines.

Please confirm your attendance for the above meeting.

Thank you for your support regarding xxxxxxxx attendance.

Yours sincerely

Associate Assistant Headteacher

Letter D Drop to 90% support Educational Welfare Officer

Dear Parent/carer of

Your child, has now been referred to me as her attendance is of significant concern despite intervention from a range of staff at QEG.

I would now like to invite you to a meeting on..... atto review the current situation with attendance. I must point out that if there is no improvement in attendance you could become liable to a prosecution under Section 444 of The Education Act 1996 and we will refer to the Attendance Legal Panel for consideration. Alternatively, we could consider a Penalty Notice issued by the school under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the School Attendance(Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Headteachers and Local Authorities are empowered to issue Penalty Notices to parents/carers whose children fail to attend school regularly and punctually and where the absence is unauthorised (leaflet enclosed for your information). For further information please see our attendance policy, found at Attendance policy .

Thank you for your continued support in working together to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Assistant Headteacher