KING'S ELY

Attendance and Unauthorised Absence Policy

September 2026

Attendance and Unauthorised Absence Policy

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Attendance and Unauthorised Absence Policy

INTRODUCTION

At King's Ely we believe that pupils can only learn effectively if they attend School regularly and arrive and leave School on time. It is equally important that pupils should not be at School if they are unwell. All staff are responsible for the safeguarding and promoting of each pupil's welfare and are aware that frequent absence from School can sometimes be an indicator of abuse, neglect, radicalisation, bullying or the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences and the School places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents/guardians.

Our aims are:

- to develop and maintain a Whole School culture that promotes good attendance;
- to ensure that, as far as possible, every pupil can benefit from, and make their full contribution to, the life of the School;
- to build strong relationships with families, encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality;
- to respond proactively to non-attendance and/or lateness in a proportionate and targeted way;
- to work closely with pupils, their families and, if appropriate, the local authority where attendance becomes a concern.

We expect the highest standards of attendance and punctuality, reflecting our commitment to wellbeing and achievement. **King's Ely's minimum attendance target is 90%**.

For King's Ely Senior, Prep and Acremont, the Senior Leader with overall responsibility for attendance at the School (Senior Attendance Champion) is Mr Charlie Fisher, Designated Safeguarding Lead. For day- to-day attendance matters, please contact the School via the Parent Portal (for planned absences and reporting sickness) the absence email address (absentees@kingsely.org) or by calling the relevant section office (Senior School: 01353 660700; Prep School: 01353 660734; Acremont: 01353 660514).

At Fairstead House, Mr Michael Radford (Head) is the Senior Attendance Champion, with overall responsibility for attendance. For any absences, the School Office can be contacted via emailing secretary@fairsteadhouse.org or by phone 01638 662318. Nursery absences can be reported by phone or on the Famly system.

This Policy meets the School's responsibilities under the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The School has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice documents:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance - August 2024
- Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance - August 2024
- Children Missing Education - September 2025

- Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2026

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following School documents:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Drugs, Alcohol & Nicotine Policy;
- King's Ely Statement on British Values and Preventing Radicalisation;
- Missing Child Policy (including procedures for children not collected at the end of the day/activity);
- Social Respect (Anti-Bullying) Policy & Strategy;
- Safeguarding (including Child Protection) Policy;
- Fairstead House Safeguarding Policy;
- Fairstead House Supervision Policy.

SCHOOL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Governing Board:

- Maintains an overview of attendance through termly reports;
- Regularly monitors, reviews and challenges attendance data;
- Reviews and supports School interventions.

Principal:

- Holds overall responsibility for attendance within the School, including implementation of this Policy;
- Reports to the Governors on attendance.

Heads of Section:

- Responsible for attendance within their sections of the School, including implementation of this Policy;
- Authorise exceptional leave of absence for pupils in their sections;
- Liaise with the Senior Attendance Champion on cases where attendance is a concern and intervention may be necessary.

Senior Attendance Champion:

- Nominated Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance across the School. Mr Charlie Fisher (DSL and Deputy Head KES) fulfils this role for King's Ely. Mr Michael Radford fulfils this role for Fairstead House.
- Ensures everyone works together to create a School culture that promotes good attendance;
- Regularly monitors and analyses attendance data against a range of metrics;
- Establishes and maintains effective systems for tackling absence, evaluating these at regular intervals;
- Alongside the Pastoral Team, delivers targeted intervention and support to pupils and families;
- Provides advice and support to School staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues;
- Liaises with the local authority.

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Becomes actively involved and leads where attendance is also a safeguarding issue.

ISAMS School Data Administrator:

- Receives, updates and maintains accurate class registers in line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

ATTENDANCE

- Information on procedures for when a child is late, sick or absent for another reason is given to parents/guardians in the Information Handbook for parents and pupils. This highlights the importance of pupils being at School on time and parents/guardians need to notify the School well in advance, if any absence can be foreseen.
- At the induction meetings held each year for parents/guardians of children about to enter the School, the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. The need for pupils to arrive at School on time so that each pupil can be given the best possible start to each school day is emphasised. The need for pupils to be picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left. In the case of children in King's Ely Acremont and the EYFS, if a child is not collected, they will move to After-School Wraparound Care if parents have been contacted and are delayed. If parents or other emergency contact are not in School by 6:30pm, children will remain at School with two members of staff until the parent arrives, or alternative arrangements are made by Cambridgeshire Social Care Team. At Fairstead House, children who are not collected will attend After School Care or remain in their Nursery room. Further details regarding non-collection of a child can be found in the Supervision Policy.
- Parents/guardians are asked to share any worries their child might have in School. Sometimes things upset children which mean they become unhappy and may not want to come to School. Parents/guardians need to be alert to this.
- Parents are strongly advised to arrange their family holidays within the School's holidays rather than in term time, so that their child's education is not disrupted. The Principal (or their delegate) talks to those parents who persistently take their holidays in term time, reminding them of the negative impact of such disruption upon their child's education. Pupils travelling from overseas are encouraged to make travel arrangements well in advance, whilst places on suitable flights are available. When returning home for the holidays, it is preferable that flights are arranged so that no lessons are missed on the last day of term. However, in some cases where there are few flights pupils may be granted permission to leave earlier than the last day of term. In this case, the pupils must always check with their teachers in order to catch up on work that has been missed. The School expects pupils from overseas to be at School until the end of term and is not willing to release them earlier without good reason.

Requesting a Leave of Absence

Parents/guardians must request any leave of absence during term time in advance via the 'Request for Planned Absence' form on the Parent Portal, setting out the reason for the request, the proposed dates and any supporting information. Requests should be made as early as possible so that the School can consider the circumstances properly and, where appropriate, advise on any

work or arrangements needed to minimise disruption to the pupil's education.

Leave of absence will only be authorised where the School considers that there are exceptional circumstances. Each request will be considered on its own merits, taking into account the reason for the absence, the pupil's attendance record, the timing and duration of the proposed absence, and the potential impact on learning, assessments, examinations, fixtures or other School commitments. Parents/guardians will be informed whether the absence has been authorised or unauthorised, and pupils should not be taken out of School unless permission has been granted.

Medical Appointments

Where possible, parents/guardians should arrange routine medical, dental, orthodontic and other health-related appointments outside the School day. Where this is not possible, parents/guardians should notify the School in advance, via the 'Medical/Illness Absence' form on the Parent Portal, providing the date, time, expected duration and reason for the appointment, together with appropriate evidence, such as an appointment letter, text message, email confirmation or appointment card.

Pupils must follow the School's signing out and signing in procedures when leaving for, or returning from, an appointment. The School may record the absence as authorised where sufficient information and evidence has been provided. If evidence is not provided, or if the School is not satisfied that the absence is for a genuine medical or health-related appointment, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised. Parents/guardians are expected to minimise the amount of learning time missed and pupils should catch up on any work missed as soon as possible.

If a pupil is recorded as absent in the Attendance Register without explanation, the School office will telephone the parent/guardian soon after the start of School to enquire as to the reason for absence, in case the pupil has left home but failed to arrive at School.

Pupils arriving late to School must report to the relevant office where their presence is recorded by the secretary/receptionist before they return to class. In the case of King's Ely Acremont and Fairstead House pupils, parents/guardians should accompany the child to undertake this task.

Working With Families to Support Attendance

The School is committed to treating all families with dignity, respect and sensitivity when concerns about attendance arise. We recognise that barriers to regular attendance may be complex and may relate to a pupil's health, wellbeing, family circumstances or other factors. Where attendance becomes a concern, the School will seek to work collaboratively with pupils and their parents/guardians to understand the reasons for absence, identify any support that may be required, and agree proportionate steps to help remove barriers to attendance wherever possible.

Children With a Social Worker

Where a pupil has a social worker, the School will consider absence from School as a potential safeguarding matter and will respond in line with safeguarding procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or an appropriate member of the Safeguarding or Pastoral Team, will inform

the child's social worker if the pupil is absent where this is required, appropriate or relevant to the child's welfare, including where absence is unexplained, persistent, concerning, or forms part of a wider pattern of safeguarding concern.

Where the School is considering deleting a child with a social worker from the Admissions Register, the School will inform the child's social worker, and where appropriate the local authority, before the deletion takes place and in accordance with statutory requirements and local safeguarding procedures. The School will ensure that decisions about removal from roll take account of the pupil's safeguarding circumstances and any professional advice received.

Young Carers and Attendance

The School recognises that some pupils may have caring responsibilities at home and that these responsibilities may affect punctuality, attendance, concentration, homework, participation in school life and overall wellbeing. Staff are expected to use professional curiosity and respond sensitively to indicators that a pupil may be a young carer, including patterns of lateness or absence, tiredness, anxiety about family members, reluctance to attend activities, or references to caring duties at home.

Where caring responsibilities are identified or suspected, staff should share this with the Pastoral Team and, where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that the pupil's needs can be considered at an early stage. The School will seek to work collaboratively with the pupil and parents/guardians, and with external services where appropriate, to understand the impact of caring responsibilities on attendance and to agree support that helps the pupil attend School regularly and participate fully in education.

Liaison With Virtual Schools

The School will liaise with the relevant virtual school, where appropriate, to support its duty and expanded role in promoting, monitoring and supporting attendance for children with a social worker, previously looked after children, and children in kinship care. This may include sharing relevant attendance information, discussing barriers to attendance, contributing to multi-agency planning, and seeking advice on appropriate support or intervention.

Where a pupil is supported by a virtual school or where virtual school involvement would assist attendance planning, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Attendance Champion or relevant Pastoral Lead will ensure that communication is timely, proportionate and recorded. The School will take account of advice from the virtual school when agreeing support for attendance, particularly where absence may be linked to safeguarding, care experience, family arrangements or additional vulnerabilities.

Concerns About Late Arrival or a Pattern of Absences Will Be Shared

If a pupil is regularly late for School, or is often absent, then the parents/guardians will be contacted so that a solution to the problem can be found (see Appendix for process).

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registers are a legal document, and care must be taken to ensure they are marked accurately and in accordance with the regulations. Attendance of all pupils is recorded and monitored following the procedures below:

At King's Ely Senior, Prep and Acremont:

- Registration is carried out at 8:25am and between 1.00pm and 1.55pm. The AM Register will be open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after registration but before the Register is closed will be marked late. Punctuality is monitored and frequent or regular lateness will be considered a cause for concern.
- Any pupil arriving after the Register is closed will be marked absent. Parents should provide a note of explanation for any pupil arriving after the Register has closed. Lateness without reasonable cause will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Any Senior School pupil arriving after the registration period should sign in either at the Bishop Woodford House Main Reception or at the Old Palace Reception.
- The Absentee Team checks for missing marks or unaccounted absences and contacts parents where required.
- In the Senior School, subject teachers take a Register at the start of their lesson and if they are concerned that a pupil has not arrived at their lesson, then they should immediately use the ISAMS Register alert function to generate an email that informs the pupil's tutor, HsM, Head of Year, and the Health and Wellbeing Centre. ISAMS Register is also taken each lesson in KEP for pupils in Y7&8.
- If any pupil has to leave School before the end of the day, their parents must contact the School to request permission and the pupil must sign out at Reception.

At Fairstead House:

- Registration is carried out from 8.20-8.40am; the AM Register will be open for 30 minutes. PM registration is between 12.45pm and 1.15pm.
- Any pupil arriving after registration but before the Register is closed will be marked late. Punctuality is monitored, and frequent or regular lateness will be considered a cause for concern.
- Any pupil arriving after the Register is closed will be marked absent. Parents should provide a note of explanation for any pupil arriving after the Register has closed. Lateness without reasonable cause will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- In the Nursery, Famly is additionally used to record hours of attendance; children are signed in on arrival and out when returned to their parents or guardians at the end of their session.
- The Office (for School) or Nursery staff check for missing marks or unaccounted absences and contact parents where required.
- For the School, staff must be made aware if any pupil has to leave School before the end of the day, and children will wait in the School Office to be collected.

ADMISSIONS REGISTER

King's Ely will carry out its statutory responsibility to inform Cambridgeshire County Council and Fairstead House will meet its statutory duty to inform Suffolk County Council when a pupil is added or deleted from the Admissions Register at non-standard transition (i.e. where a pupil of compulsory school age leaves before completing the final year or joins after the beginning of the first year). There are fifteen official grounds for removing a pupil, set out in detail in *'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'* (August 2024) and '*Children Missing in Education'* (2025). Furthermore, as per Government regulations, it is practice at King's Ely that, where a parent notifies the School that a pupil will live at another address, the new address; the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will normally live in future; and the date from which it is expected the pupil will normally live there, is recorded on the Admissions database.

The School has the right to remove a pupil from its Admission Register in accordance with the terms and conditions of the School's Parent Contract.

In addition, in compliance with the safeguarding guidance on children missing education in *'Keeping Children Safe in Education,'* King's Ely will inform the local authority where the pupil is normally resident when the pupil is deleted from the Admissions Register at non-standard transitions.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

All staff at King's Ely are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. They are also concerned about each pupil's safety, welfare and happiness. Frequent absence may raise safeguarding concerns; therefore the School will take appropriate action immediately. In line with the School's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty, staff are aware of the signs that could indicate the potential radicalisation of a pupil and are aware of the possible implications of extended travel by a pupil to conflict zones in terms of radicalisation, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

If truancy is suspected, the Head of Section is notified, who then contacts the parents/guardians, either by phone, or by home visiting if necessary. Parents/guardians are encouraged to bring their child to School so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parents/guardians then the Head of Section or Housemaster/mistress talks to the pupil concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in School that might make that pupil not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher or tutor and appropriate action is taken.

It is important to note that, all Schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend School regularly or following an unauthorised absence of more than 10 School days (continuous). The School will comply with its statutory duties and local authority requirements with regard to reporting unauthorised absences. The School will not delete a pupil for non-return until the grounds for deletion are met.

The School will fully comply with its statutory duties as a licensed **Student Sponsor** for non-UK national pupils resident overseas under the **UKVI Child Student** routing framework. In accordance with Home Office compliance mandates, the School will formally notify UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) via the Sponsor Management System (SMS) of any student who **fails to enrol on the first day of term**, **misses 10 consecutive expected contact points** without authorised permission, or **fails to meet the School's academic engagement expectations.**

FIXTURES

It is School policy that, if a pupil is selected to represent the School, he/she must do so and this must take priority over social engagements. If it is impossible for the pupil to do so as, for example, the player has been selected to represent the county or has an essential family engagement; parents/guardians should alert the School well in advance. Permission should only be sought in exceptional circumstances (see Section on Attendance).

Parents are reminded that all pupils are required to attend those activities arranged on a Saturday for which they have opted. In addition, those School events and sports or other fixtures arranged on a Saturday are expected to be fully supported and attended by pupils as required.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

King's Ely recognises the importance of faith and religious observance in the lives of many of our pupils. We value the diversity and richness that all religions and cultures bring to the School community. The right to religious observance is protected in law and has the full support of the School.

Any requests for absence for occasions of religious observance must be made in writing to the relevant Head of Section and with as much notice as possible, so that arrangements can be put in place for a pupil to catch up on any work missed during his or her absence.

APPENDIX ONE: ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION DATA

The Attendance Register
All software and data backups are managed by iSAMS, ensuring comprehensive data protection. Full database backups are completed weekly and retained for 33 weeks, while transaction log backups are carried out every 30 minutes and retained for 30 days. These backups are securely stored both on-site and off-site within the UK. King's Ely has no direct access to or management of the backups performed by iSAMS.

The AM/PM daily pupil registration records are taken via iSAMS and backed up daily and stored on two separate hard disk arrays (Server and Veams). This is kept in perpetuity in electronic/data format and accessibly by way of searching for particular records via the iSAMS system.

At Fairstead House Nursery, registration is completed on and backed up by the Famly App and retained in perpetuity.

In addition, by way of a recurring calendar reminder, the School Data Administrator will run a report at least every 14 days to identify if there are any student registrations with a 'N-No reason yet provided' or any 'Not Yet Registered', and using the report to follow up across all sections of the School so all pupil registrations are properly accounted for with a valid reason for absence.

This further report/check every 14 days is in addition to daily checking/chasing by support staff in each section.

At Fairstead House, the Head will run a report at least every half-term and use the report to ensure a valid reason for absence.

The Admissions Register (Pupil specific data within the iSAMS database)
The School Data Administrator ensures all the necessary fields on iSAMS are complete as per the necessary fields for the School's Admissions Register (as stipulated by the regulations/within the ISI Commentary on Regulatory requirements).

The Admissions Register pupil data within the iSAMS database is backed up each 24 hours to the main server storage, as well as a secondary bank of mirror storage drives in a building separate from the servers.

The School Data Administrator also does a separate monthly export (into Excel format) of certain data to store on OneDrive; this is also backed up nightly and onto the mirror storage. The data exported is:

- the Admissions Register records for all current pupils;
- a complete pupil record export (including all associated contact details);
- basic lists of pupil details by year groups and academic status (name, DoB, form group, gender, Day/Boarding), essentially form lists;

APPENDIX TWO: LOW ATTENDANCE PROCESS

Attendance Issues Guidelines

The government defines persistent absence from education as an attendance rate of below 90%. Furthermore, the School recognises its duty to act with the local authority to identify children missing education (children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school) and shares a belief that all children are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children go missing from education for a range of reasons and they may be at risk of significant harm.

The School maintains an Admissions Register. If a pupil fails to attend School on the first agreed day of attendance, the School will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity, especially if the child's whereabouts cannot be ascertained.

The School will follow through statutory safeguarding duties to investigate any unexplained absences.

The School follows Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board guidance on reporting the details of pupils who fail to attend School regularly. The School must report any continuous pupil absences, greater than 10 school days, where no reason is given, but may report sooner.

The School Attendance Champion produces a weekly report that indicates all pupils who have dropped below a 90% attendance threshold for the term. This will identify those pupils who have a history of attendance issues but may not pick up all those who are a potential concern. It is therefore important that tutors look out for trends and patterns and use their professional curiosity to identify issues.

The process flow is as follows:

1. Through the AM registration process, a tutor at King's Ely or a class teacher at Fairstead House identifies that attendance is low. If necessary, they should contact a DSO in order to establish the precise attendance %.
2. If a pupil is **absent sick for 5 consecutive days**, then the tutor/HsM should:

a. contact parents/guardians to check in and to establish whether this is a short-term absence (e.g. 'flu or similar) or if it is likely to become a longer-term issue (e.g. glandular fever or similar). If it is likely to become a long-term issue, then a concern should be logged on MyConcern, the Health and Wellbeing Centre informed, and support offered to manage access to education and a return to School.

3. If the pupil has been **absent sick for 10 consecutive days**, then the tutor should:

a. contact the parents/guardians to request a doctor's note to explain the absence to date;

b. speak to the DSL and HsM/HoY to decide whether a log of concern on MyConcern is required; ensure that the Health and Wellbeing Centre is informed of the absence; offer support to the family to manage access to education and a return to School.

4. If the pupil has **accumulated 15 days absence** over the course of the year or has dropped **below 80% attendance** for the year to date then the tutor should:

a. raise a log of concern in MyConcern;

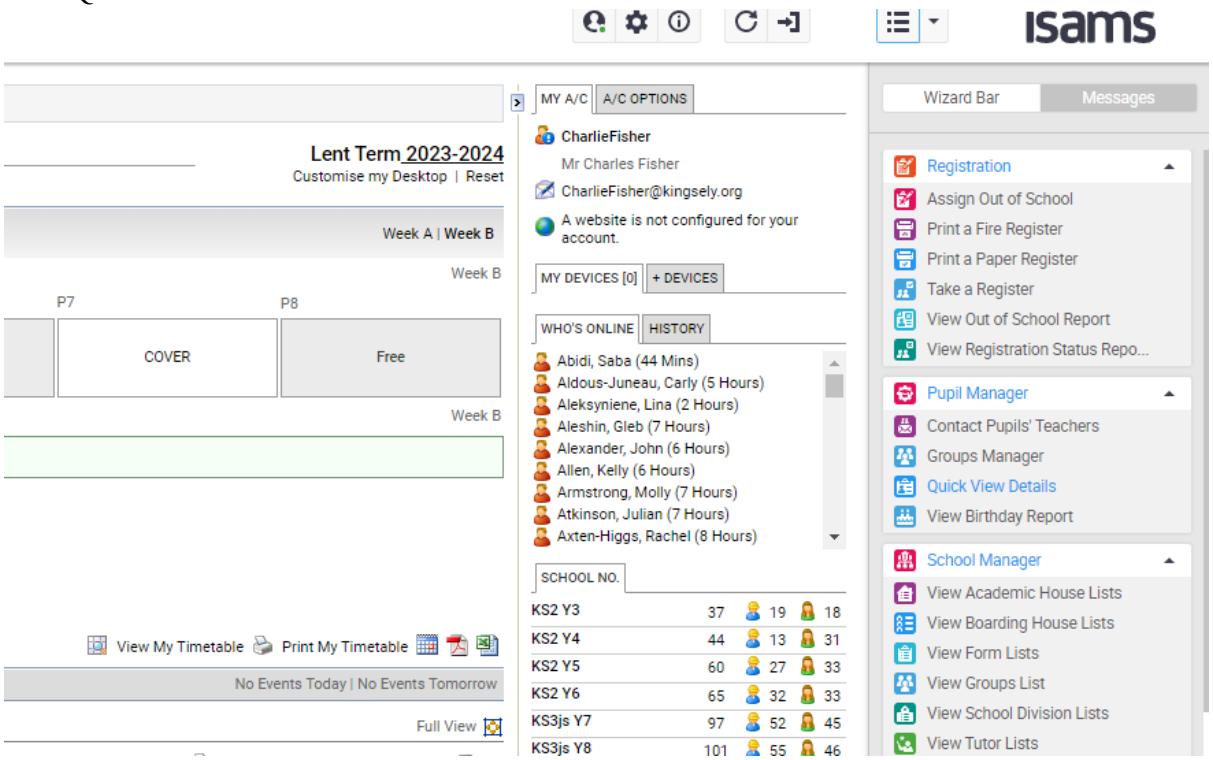
b. contact parents to make sure that they are aware of the amount of School that has been missed and the impact that this will have. The communication should be clear that the School cannot guarantee quality of education once attendance has dropped to this extent. The communication should also offer support to help the pupil access their education and inform parents/guardians that this could include an Early Help Application (EHA) to the Local Authority.

Please note that these timelines and thresholds are indicative. The pupil's Pastoral Team may decide that the process outlined above is not necessary (in which case the rationale must be recorded in MyConcern). Equally, the Pastoral Team may decide that this process needs to be accelerated.

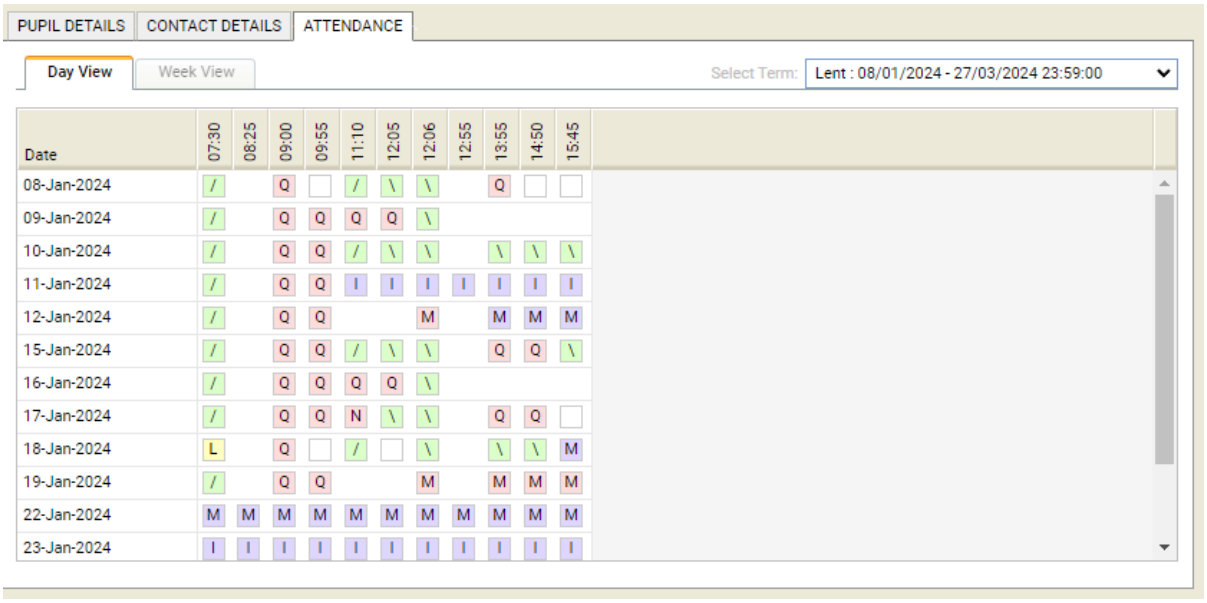
In accordance with paragraph 49 of the guidance to schools, the School will also make a report to the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the School has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of (the same) sickness.

Checking attendance using the Pupil Quick View link in ISAMs

1. Click on Quick View Details:



2. Type in the pupil's name and then click on the attendance tab. You can choose which term you want to look at using the drop down on the right hand side:



Date	07:30	08:25	09:00	09:55	11:10	12:05	12:06	12:55	13:55	14:50	15:45
08-Jan-2024	/		Q		/	\	\		Q		
09-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	Q	Q	\				
10-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	/	\	\		\	\	\
11-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
12-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q			M		M	M	M
15-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	/	\	\		Q	Q	\
16-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	Q	Q	\				
17-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q	N	\	\		Q	Q	
18-Jan-2024	L		Q		/		\		\	\	M
19-Jan-2024	/		Q	Q			M		M	M	M
22-Jan-2024	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
23-Jan-2024	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

This does not give you a % attendance, but will allow you to see if you need to investigate further.

APPENDIX THREE: PUPIL LEAVER/JOINER REPORTING TO LOCAL AUTHORITY

King's Ely and Fairstead House recognise their statutory responsibility to inform their local authority when a pupil of compulsory school age joins the School (except in Reception Year) or leaves the School and is removed from the Admissions Register before completing their final year. King's Ely will inform Cambridgeshire County Council and Fairstead House will inform Suffolk County Council.

The following procedure will apply:

Joiners

- Details of pupils of compulsory school age who join the School at any time, except for those who start in Reception at King's Ely or Fairstead House each September, will be reported by the Admissions Department within five (5) days of their arrival where it is possible to do so.
- It is noted that Cambridgeshire County Council do not have a mechanism for such reporting at the time of this Policy's implementation.

Leavers at non-standard transition points, including new pupils registered to join the School but who fail to attend the School on the first day of the term

A pupil who leaves the School at any time except the end of Year 11 or Y13 (King's Ely) or Y6 (Fairstead House), or a new pupil who is registered to join the School and fails to attend the School on the first day of the term without notification of withdrawal, will be reported to the School's local authority within ten (10) days of the pupil leaving.

- Pupils leaving, or failing to arrive, during the course of the academic year will be reported by the section of the School where the pupil is registered, with responsibility as follows:
    - at King's Ely Senior (including King's Ely International): Mr Charlie Fisher (Designated Safeguarding Lead);
    - at King's Ely Prep: Mr Simon Kibler (Head) or delegate;
    - at King's Ely Acremont: Mrs Faye Fenton-Stone (Head) or delegate;
    - at Fairstead House School: Mr Michael Radford (Head) or delegate.
- Pupils leaving at the end of the academic year will be included in a report created as part of the ISAMS rollover by the School Data Administrator, Mrs Nicola Doherty, who will notify the local authority of leavers at that time.
- Where the destination of such leavers is known, the School's Senior Leaders named above are responsible for informing the School Data Administrator and the Admissions Department via pupilsleaving@kingsely.org so this can be added to ISAMS and included in the end of year report to the local authority/ies.

APPENDIX FOUR: HOME VISIT PROTOCOL

Home Visit Procedure
All home visits conducted by staff must be authorised by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Head of Section before taking place.

Wherever possible, parents/carers should be informed of the home visit prior to arrival; there will be exceptions to this, for example a visit to confirm that an absent pupil is at home when parents/carers are not responding to telephone calls/text messages, or emergency safeguarding visits.

Home visits will always be conducted by two members of staff.

Home Visit Definition
A home visit is a visit that requires members of staff to enter the home of a parent or carer, in the case of an emergency visit or a procedural visit.

Reasons for Home Visits
King's Ely utilises home visits as a tool to be used when:

- pupils are refusing to come into School;
- there are attendance issues/concerns;
- pupils are being educated at home;
- all other means of contact with a family have failed;
- the Safeguarding Team needs to establish that a pupil is safe if they are absent from School and attempts to contact parents or carers have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the pupil;
- the School needs to work with and support parents or carers in developing strategies to help their child attend School where attendance is an issue.

Benefits
Home visits have many benefits. For parents or carers and children, a home visit gives the opportunity to meet a key person in a setting that they are familiar and comfortable with. Other opportunities are to:

- establish a positive contact with a key member of staff who is supporting the pupil;
- meet family members that are important to the pupil;
- talk about the pupil and their needs.

Procedures
The aim of the home visit protocol is to ensure good working practice and to provide guidelines in reducing risks to members of staff when undertaking home visits.

Before the visit:

- Be familiar with the School's protocol for home visits.

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- Be clear about the purpose of the visit.
- Make sure that a home visit is necessary (if possible and/or practical, arrange for the parents/carers to come into the School).
- Read the Home Visit Risk Assessment and adapt if the situation is deemed anything other than low risk (Appendix 1).
- Inform Reception of your visit before you leave, leaving contact details and a list of the addresses you will visit.
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead whether it is deemed appropriate for the visit to go ahead.
- Arrange for an appropriate person to accompany you; home visits should be conducted in pairs.
- Before departing, clarify each person's role in the home visit.
- Make sure you are well informed about the family and are aware of personal circumstances.
- Consider who you need to see, e.g., one or both parents/carers, with or without the pupil.
- Wherever possible, make an appointment to establish a time convenient to the family and to ensure that everyone you want to see will be present, either by making a phone call or sending a letter.

During the visit:

- Dress appropriately.
- Ensure that there are no animals in the room where a meeting takes place.
- Introduce yourself, have identification available and explain again the purpose of the visit, carry your identification but do not have it on display (i.e. do not use a necklace lanyard)
- Do not enter the premises unless invited in by a responsible adult.
- Do not enter the premises if invited to do so by a child that is on the premises unsupervised by a responsible adult.
- Only speak to an adult with parental responsibility (parents/ carers) or another responsible adult whom a parent/carer has delegated to be there in their absence, and they have given the School permission to speak to about the pupil for whom we are making the home visit.
- Do not speak to siblings other than to ask if their parent/carer is available. Do not discuss the purpose of the visit with siblings or any other unknown young person or adult at the premises.
- Do not go upstairs in a property unless accompanied by a responsible adult and then ONLY if you deem it completely safe to do so and necessary.
- Do not enter a child's/young person's bedroom.
- If you are concerned that a child/young person is in the home inappropriately alone/unsupervised, contact the School's Safeguarding Team straight away to discuss your observations, or to seek immediate advice from them if you are uncertain whether the child is alone/unsupervised. If appropriate the Safeguarding Lead will make a referral to social care.
- If you feel that a child/young person is in immediate danger, contact Emergency Services 999.
- Assure the parent/carer that you will treat anything they tell you sensitively and will only tell the DSL or other appropriate staff. Explain that you may need to take notes during the meeting. Do not promise that you won't relay information to School. Remember that under the child

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protection procedures you must report disclosures or suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- Be sensitive to the culture, religion etc. of the home.
- Be professional; give professional advice and information rather than personal opinions.
- Be sympathetic but remain neutral; don't get personally involved.
- Be discreet but assertive about the direction of the conversation; do not gossip about the School or staff.
- Do not stay too long; keep to the point.
- Complete *Home Visit Form* to evidence the visit.

After the visit:

- Report back to the DSL and upload the completed *Home Visit Form* to My Concern.
- If you are not returning directly to School, telephone the School after the visit to say you have left the home visit.
- Any child protection concerns arising from home visits should be discussed with the Safeguarding Team on arrival back to the School and should be recorded on My Concern.
- At the School, do not discuss individual home visits with staff who are not involved in working with those pupils.

Home Visit Form

See a template for the *Home Visit Form* at Appendix 5. It is essential that staff write a short report on every visit they make, and that this is uploaded to My Concern.
If an incident occurred, the visitor should record all details as soon as possible after the incident to ensure precise and accurate recollection of the events.

If an accusation of abuse is made against the visit/visitor, advice should be sought from the DSL or Head of Section as soon as possible.

Home Visit Summary

Before a visit, a Home Visit Risk Assessment must be completed and approved where the situation presents anything other than a low risk. The purpose of the visit should be clear, and you should be well informed about the subject of the visit. Appropriate colleagues should be arranged to accompany you, where required. Always make sure that School staff know where you are going and that your mobile telephone number is left with Reception. Make an appointment in advance to establish the time of visit where appropriate.

During a visit, you should carry a mobile phone with you and avoid carrying large sums of money for your own safety. Carry identification, but do not wear it visibly (e.g., on a lanyard). Consider who you need to see and avoid speaking at length with other persons present. Introduce yourself, be professional and conduct the visit professionally; stay on topic, and do not stay any longer than you need to.

If you feel threatened during your visit:

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- If you are threatened or prevented from leaving, stay calm and try to control the situation.
- Try to appear confident, speak slowly and clearly and do not be enticed into an argument. Try to diffuse situation by saying you will seek advice from a senior member of staff or colleague.
- Keep your distance, never touch or turn your back on someone who is angry.
- If staff attend as a pair wait outside the property until all staff involved have arrived. Consider whether sending out two members of staff may escalate the difficulties.
- If working as a pair agree a code word (safe word) or phrase to alert a colleague that you need assistance or should leave.
- Staff must leave the property and reach a place of safety if you have any concerns about personal safety and inform the School immediately.

After a visit, report back to the School if you are not returning directly; telephone to say you have left the residence safely.

If you are concerned about your safety, do not complete the visit. It is strongly recommended that no one makes an evening home visit.

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APPENDIX FIVE: HOME VISIT RISK ASSESSMENT

This generic risk assessment should be kept in the "Home Visits Folder" in the school.

Specific risk assessments should be created where risks are identified as being higher than usual (where this has been done, as there is a higher risk, these tailored risk assessments should be uploaded to My Concern).

If the risk for a visit is deemed high, the Principal must grant permission for the visit to go ahead and consideration should be made on whether a joint safeguarding partner visit, should be made (e.g., A joint visit with police, social care etc).

Student Details	
Section	
Name	
Class/Form	
Address to be visited	
Date	
Status (delete as needed)	S47 / S17 / EHA / CME / EHCP / Other vulnerability
Reason for Visit	
Delete as needed	Local Authority request Concerns from School
Have all other means been tried?	
Names of staff undertaking visit	
Summary of reason for visit	
Are there any known risks about this family?	
What steps have been taken to mitigate risk?	

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Hazards	Aggressive or violent parent/ pupil/ family member	Driving	Movement through public areas	Illness of injury/ accident	Attack by dog or other animal
Individuals at risk	Member of staff may be harmed	Member of staff may be harmed	Member of staff may be harmed	Member of staff may be harmed	Member of staff may be harmed
Severity of Harm	Major injury may occur	Vehicle breakdown, accident intruder in vehicle when unattended, use of mobile phone	Attack Theft of property	Illness or injury	Major injury may occur
Likelihood	Remote possibility	Remote possibility	Remote possibility	Remote possibility	Remote possibility
Risk Level	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Controls	Refer to home visit Policy Risk reduced by: Informing DSL 2 person visit if aware of home Circumstances Inform reception and sign out, so others are aware of your whereabouts Take a mobile phone for communication Arrange a code word that you can share with School contact if you are in danger	Use School vehicle wherever possible Carry torch, phone etc. for emergency Advise team or partner where you are going Phone in if plan changes Do not leave valuables in car (e.g., laptop) Avoid risky areas	Back down from confrontation Call for help Use attack Alarm Keep valuables secure and out of sight or disguised Surrender valuables if personal safety is at risk	Alert Emergency Services if appropriate Take mobile communications Alert team members if able to Ensure access to phone Complete injury at work protocol on return	Avoid contact with animals Seek local advice before entering premises with animals Appropriate behavior near animals –avoid alarming them, e.g. sudden movements

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Home Visit Report

To be included on My Concern, as a record of the visit (either by uploading the form below or by including the information therein):

Date of Visit		Staff attending	
		DSL consulted prior?	Y/N
		Was anyone home?	Y/N
Time of Visit		Did you leave a letter if not home?	Y/N
		Was a risk assessment completed	Y/N
Reason for Visit		Were all other methods of communication tried first	Y/N
Details of Visit	Who was home? Did you enter the property? Did anything unusual happen? What time did you arrive and leave? What condition was the property in? Were there any concerns for the welfare of the pupil? What was discussed? What was agreed? What future action will you take? Does anyone else need to be informed about the visit and who will pass on this information?		

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