

KIBBLESWORTH ACADEMY

Attendance and punctuality policy

Reviewed by:	C Steel / J Walsh	Date: February 2020
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Approved by:	Education Sub Committee
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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55 am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.55pm and will be kept open until 1.05pm. Nursery afternoon registers will be taken at 12.45pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents should do this by notifying the school office. If the school office is closed, parents should leave a message on the school answerphone, following the option for reporting an absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents should inform school of medical or dental absences in advance by contacting the school office.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

All pupils who enter after 8.55 am will do so through the main entrance of the school, where they will be required to sign in using the school electronic registration system. This system is used to identify repeated lateness, allowing school to support pupils and parents to improve future attendance.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Where a reason for absence has not been communicated to school, the school office will carry out “first call” on the first day of absence to ascertain reasons for absence and to meet our safeguarding obligations. Reasons for absence are recorded on SIMS in the school register.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance records are communicated to parents at both parent consultation evenings and also in the annual written report to parents in July. Where concerns exist around attendance, this will be communicated to parents by the Head Teacher, in writing. Attendance levels are reviewed half termly and monitored on an individual level for key groups including pupil premium and SEN pupils.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be **'exceptional circumstances'**.

We define **'exceptional circumstances'** as

- The funeral of a parent, grandparent or sibling
- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Sudden loss of housing
- Weddings of parents or siblings
- Children of service personnel who are about to go on deployment

Circumstances which are not considered exceptional include:

- Holidays taken during term time because of lower costs or parental work commitments
- “Once in a lifetime” holidays

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher’s discretion.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We have a number of strategies in place to ensure good attendance (above 96%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains a high profile priority across school.

Weekly **roll of honour assemblies** are held in school every Friday. The class in KS1 and EYFS with the highest attendance are rewarded with Heamis the attendance dog for the week. KS2 are rewarded with the Attendance Cup. All classes who achieve over 96% attendance are rewarded with an additional 10 minute break to be taken at the discretion of the class teacher.

Breakfast club runs from 7.45am every day, providing a meal and a nurturing social environment for the pupils, and is used as a primary strategy for improving attendance and punctuality.

Bagel breakfast runs for all school pupils from 8.45am. This is an opportunity to come into school and share a breakfast bagel with staff and to chat or read in a relaxed environment. It also allows teachers to triage children who may require additional support and discuss issues such as current affairs through the use of BBC Newsround.

Attendance certificates are awarded to children who receive 100% attendance across a term. Rewards such as discount vouchers for restaurants are also provided when available. Platinum attendance awards are available for pupils who achieve 100% attendance for a full academic year.

6. Attendance monitoring

The Head Teacher monitors pupil absence on a half termly basis. Exceptions to this are pupils who are on an attendance watch list due to a history of poor attendance. The attendance levels of these pupils are monitored weekly.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above three days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Attendance information is recorded in SIMS. Reports are published periodically and provided to the SENCO and Pupil Premium Co-ordinator to monitor sub groups. Any pupil who falls into 90 – 95% bracket will be monitored weekly. Pupils who fall into the persistent non attendance category will also be monitored weekly and support offered to parents to improve the attendance until it reaches 90%.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. This is done through the education sub-committee and also the head teachers report to the governing body.

Our link governor for attendance is Mrs Joanne Walsh.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

- The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary. Due to the small size of our school, the headteacher also arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues. This would ordinarily fall under the remit of the attendance officer.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer (Mrs Clare Davis):

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by Craig Steel and Joanne Walsh . At every review, the policy will be shared with the education sub-committee.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day