


Attendance Policy

KIBBLESWORTH ACADEMY

Author (s)	Craig Steel	
Updated by	Craig Steel	June 2024
Committee Approval	4 th July 2024	
Board Approval	FGB	
Chair of Trustees Signature		
Next Review Date:	Summer Term 2025	
Review Cycle:	Annual	

1. Introduction

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Kibblesworth Academy expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times. We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

At Kibblesworth Academy, we are continuously working towards our goal of **100%** attendance for **all pupils**.

2. Aims of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

3. Rights and responsibilities for attendance and punctuality

The Legal Framework

- There are legal obligations on:
- The **parent(s)** to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register.
- The **school** to register attendance to enable effective safeguarding of children.
- The **Local Authority** to provide the means to enforce attendance.

The Head Teacher

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with the national legislation.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Gateshead LA policies and procedures.
- To lead on attendance and punctuality on a day to day basis, including liaising with and responding to parental enquiries.
- To oversee the analysis of data – weekly, termly and yearly – and respond to its findings.
- To organise the communication of attendance trends and data through the school website and parent communications.
- To meet with the school administrator responsible for attendance to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they have an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To link with external agencies within the LA, and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- To work with teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after a long term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

The Administration team

The administration of attendance and punctuality will be carried out by Miss P Edgar and Mrs J Fairlamb. Their roles in relation to attendance and punctuality are:

- To carry out and record the outcomes of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To check the school answer phone for messages relating to absence.
- To prepare weekly attendance data for all year groups
- To produce half termly, termly and annual reports on attendance and punctuality for SLT and governors.
- To promptly inform the HT if there are any concerns relating to attendance.
- To record the reasons for absence and the updating of class registers.
- To contact parents and families by letter after three instances of lateness of absence.
- To maintain the MIS attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with external agencies relating to attendance when required.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To support the HT with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding and organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures of this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

Staff

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resources so they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To complete the school registration procedures within the MIS twice per day at the time at which each cohort starts both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up absence by ensuring that reasons for absence have been provided on the school MIS. If a reason for absence is not recorded, this should be brought to the attention of the administration team by email.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from pupils.
- Establish good and effective communication links between school and parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection.

- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the HT of pupils who persist with poor attendance or punctuality.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality and parents evenings.

Parents:

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Those who have day to day responsibility for a child (ie, lives with and looks after them.)

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number
- Ensure that contact numbers are kept up to date.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence before 8.30am, leaving a message on our absence line (0191 4102975).
- Provide a written explanation of absence, including dates of absence, as soon as their child returns to school.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child. That includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in their child's life, which may impact on learning.

The role of the local authority:

- The local authority, in this case Gateshead, uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.

- Once all strategies have been tried, but there is no overall improvement in the pupil's attendance, the school may decide to refer the matter to the local authority for formal legal action. This can result in the issue of a penalty notice or prosecution in magistrates' court.
- The fixed penalty fine is £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid between 21-28 days. If the fixed penalty is not paid, the case may proceed to the magistrates' court for the original offence of failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.
- Prosecution in the magistrates' court can result in a fine of up to £2500, a parenting order, a community order, or imprisonment.

4. Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:

Aims:

- To ensure good attendance and punctuality (above 97%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains a high profile across school.
- To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (above 97%) through rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

Weekly Roll of Honour

These celebratory assemblies are held in school every Friday. The class with the highest attendance for the week is rewarded with Heamis the Attendance Bear (EY KS1) or the Attendance Cup (KS2) The roll of winners of both awards are recorded on the school website. If all classes achieve over 96% attendance, all classes receive additional break time, (10 mins) the following Monday.

Half termly attendance draw

Pupils who achieve 100% attendance within a week are awarded a golden ticket which is entered into a half termly prize draw.

Breakfast Club

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.

The School Learning Environment

A welcome, organised learning environment that supports and celebrates its learners is a key factor in ensuring that children enjoy school and attend regularly. All staff ensure that their learning environments are of a high quality. Regular, rigorous audits of the environments are carried out by the SLT to ensure this.

Staff Promoting Good Attendance

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

Attendance Certificates

Attendance certificates are awarded to children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of a term. A platinum attendance award is available to all pupils who achieve 100% attendance for the full academic year.

Sharing attendance data

Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of attendance/punctuality achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance/punctuality, and the number of pupils achieving 97% - 100% attendance are shared in half termly assemblies. This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the class teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance.

Parent/teacher consultation evenings

This provides an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the HT.

4. Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality

Class Registers

Morning Registers

Class registers are recorded on the school MIS, Horizons. The system ensures that no children are missed and the information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever person

is teaching the class for that session, but can be delegated to a teaching assistant where required. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

Class registers remain open until 9.30am. At that point the teacher can submit their final register through Horizons. The teacher can submit the register at any point before this time. The gates are closed at 9.00am. After this time all children are required to enter the school through the main entrance and record their late with a member of the admin team. If the pupil has been brought to school by an adult, they must provide a reason for the late. "Slept in" is not considered to be an acceptable reason for lateness. Children arriving after 9.05am are recorded as "L" in the register until the register closes at 9.30am.

Afternoon registers are taken at 12.55pm and will remain open until 1.15pm.

The member of the school admin team who has responsibility for attendance that day checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked with "/" in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for children who are known to be absent. Once this is done the administrator begins the first day absence calls for the remaining children.

Afternoon Registers

Registers must be taken on SIMS immediately after lunch at 1.00pm on SIMS. The registers should be checked by the administration team at 1.15pm, and any omissions pointed out to the classes. Continual breaches of the policy in regard to the completion of the afternoon register should be communicated to the HT.

After School Club (ASC) Registers

ASC registers are taken by the member of staff who is charged with co-ordinating registration of after school club, this usually being Mrs D Brady. The registers are paper based and generated by the school office. Once the registers are taken, they are returned to the admin team. If any child is not present, this is reported verbally as well as through the register to the member of admin present. If a child has been present at school but has not attended the ASC, it is considered a safeguarding issue and parents are contacted as a matter of high priority.

School Attendance Letters

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality.

Punctuality Folder

The school retains a record of correspondence regarding punctuality within each child's CPOMS record. This could include emails, phone call records and letters relating to punctuality. The administration team and the HT monitor these records and attendance data regularly. Letters regarding the school's concerns over lateness may be sent, which will also explain how much learning is being missed. If the situation does not improve, parents are invited into school to discuss the concerns with the HT. If the situation still does not improve, the parents will be asked to meet with the HT and the governor with responsibility for attendance who will discuss the possibility of a referral and further action.

Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made. The school administrators follow this system:

- Phone parents' contact number(s)
- Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.
- Phone other contact numbers to get an up to date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.
- Administrators, teacher, or head teacher to speak to the parents at home time if they have another child in the school.
- Speak to the parents by phone or face to face the following day and establish reasons for absence and update the contact numbers.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder.

The administration team must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the admin team has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised).

Attendance Meetings

The HT/ Admin team monitor individuals, classes, year groups, SEN, Pupil Premium and FSM pupils. They identify patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups. Letters are sent out to parents whose children's attendance is below 95% and parents who are concerned about their child's attendance, are invited to work in partnership with the school.

Summary of procedures to promote good attendance/punctuality:

The following tables show specific procedures to maintain and encourage excellent attendance at Kibblesworth Academy:

Daily Procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time.	Parents/carers	
Parents inform the school by 8.30am, if their child is absent that day.	Parents/carers	Office updates registration codes.
Pupils arriving late to school are registered at reception	Admin staff	Absence mark on SIMS amended by admin staff.
Teachers record attendance on school MIS. This is done at 8.55am and 12.55pm	Teacher / TA	
1 st day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child's unexplained absence for that day. HT informed of any attendance issues and parents contacted if required.	Admin staff	Admin update register codes.
Parents provide written note, including dates of and reason for absence upon the child's return to school. (This can be via email)	Parents	Admin collect from teachers and file.
Weekly procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Attendance and punctuality statistics produced by year group and school. (Horizons MIS report)	Admin	Used to update website and to inform SLT
Attendance and punctuality statistics produced and shared in roll of honour assembly.	Admin	All parents, staff and pupils are aware of the current picture of attendance.
Absence codes for individual pupils are updated using SIMS to show reason for absence	Admin	Information provided is used to support targeted interventions as appropriate.
Half termly procedures	By whom	Outcomes / actions
Analyse attendance/ punctuality data to monitor trends and progress against targets.	HT / admin	
Individual attendance / punctuality discussed with pupils and families at assertive mentoring meetings	HT / class teachers	Families are aware that attendance is targeted and that support is available.

Analyse data to identify cases of concern and develop appropriate interventions and support.	SLT	Provides targeted information for areas of concern.
Review success and impact of attendance/punctuality strategies for the term.	SLT	Amend and refine interventions as appropriate.

5. Requesting leave

In line with national legislation, leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances. The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for the child/children.

Parents should seek permission for a leave of absence during term time prior to the leave using a leave of absence form, available from the school office. It is expected that the request will fully explain the reasons for the request.

The request for authorised absence must be made at least two weeks in advance.

School will reply to all applications in writing, stating whether or not the absence has been granted.

If absence has not been granted, the reason for not authorising the request will be clearly stated, as well as the possible consequences of disregarding the refusal.

If leave is granted, the length of authorised absence will be clearly stated, including the date the child is expected to be back in school and the possible consequences if the child fails to return on that date.

If a parent removes their child from school without requesting a leave of absence or without authorisation from the Head Teacher, the parents will be informed in writing that a referral is being made to the local authority requesting a penalty notice to be issued.

Head teachers may now only grant leave in term time where circumstances are exceptional, for example:

- death of a parent/carer of sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have led you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please complete the required form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time.

6. Penalty Notices

If a child is taken out of school without the Head Teacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school.

- The **first penalty** notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A **second penalty** notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A **third penalty** notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those three years, alternative action will be considered, and will often include considering prosecution.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

"If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence."

The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

- penalties and prosecutions are in respect of **each parent for each child**.
- parent includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.

This policy is due for review Summer term 2025