

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

KIBBLESWORTH ACADEMY

Updated by	C Steel	
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1. Introduction

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfill their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school’.

[School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013](#)

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 Mrs J Fairlamb and Mrs C Davis. 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 the SLT to analyse.
- ~~To display attendance data on school external notice boards, screens and the school website.~~
- 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 SIMS 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 SIMS 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 SIMS system. 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:

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury, or if a member of their household exhibits symptoms of COVID 19 (until such time testing has taken place and results obtained.)

If any of the above is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. If pupils' have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils' should be brought child back to school after appointments. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, 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.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence.
- 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 local authority is expected to:

- 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.

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.

Website

The school website contains a chart displaying attendance in classes on the home page which is updated periodically.

Attendance Points

~~Pupils have the opportunity to collect attendance points across the year. Each child receives 10 points for 100% attendance across a term. Children who have 98% and above receive 8 points, 97% receive 7, down to a cut off of 95% who receive five points for the term. Any children who's attendance falls below this target will not receive points that term for the attendance shop.~~

Attendance Shop

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the attendance shop has been suspended. Rewards will be given to children who have attendance greater than 95% termly. Usual attendance shop arrangements will resume when it is safe to do so.

~~The school operates an attendance shop where the pupils can collect points for good attendance across the year and cash them in for rewards at the end of each half term. Points can be accumulated across the year for higher value rewards. The attendance shop is open to each year group at specified times in the final week of each half term and is administered by the school council, supported by teaching assistants and the admin team.~~

Breakfast Club

Breakfast club runs from 7.45am ~~8.00am~~ 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 SIMS. 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 [ten minutes after the agreed start time for each bubble](#). At that point the teacher can submit their final register through SIMS. The teacher can submit the register at any point before this time. The gates are closed at 8.55am. After this time all children are required to enter the school through the main entrance and record their late in the late book. 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" (Late after the register closed) in the register.

[Additional codes are available to record absence due to self isolation and Covid related issues. – X code.](#)

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 maintains a file relating to punctuality of children. This is a record of all communication with parents and families, such as emails, phone call records and letters relating to punctuality. The administration team and the HT monitor the punctuality file 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 8.45am, 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 SIMS. This is done at 8.55am and 1.00pm	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.	Parents	Admin collect from teachers and file.
Weekly procedures	By whom	Outcomes / action
Attendance and punctuality statistics produced by year group and school	Admin	Used to update website and to inform SLT
Attendance and punctuality statistics produced and shared in roll of honour assembly, school website and notice boards.	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.

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 lead 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 amount of the penalty is £60.

- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.
- If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

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 renewal Autumn term 2021, or sooner should guidance relating to the pandemic change.