



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Approved by:</b>	The LGB		
<b>Responsible department:</b>	Leadership team		
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## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Our mission is to open up a world of opportunities for all our pupils. Our vision for achieving this is to work together to ensure everyone is safe, happy, learning and succeeding as valued and respectful individuals.

Therefore, we are committed to providing an excellent educational experience for all our pupils, and high attendance and punctuality is the key to achieving excellence. It is our intent to ensure maximum attendance for each pupil, as there is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance and low levels of achievement (pupils who miss between 10 and 20% of school stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more GCSEs compared to 73% of pupils who miss fewer than 5% of school days).

School is committed to ensuring that parents/carers and pupils understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

There will, inevitably, be occasional issues that impede full attendance and these will be identified and addressed promptly. We will strive to work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **Safeguarding**

School is committed to Safeguarding and recognise that good attendance is an important aspect to ensuring the welfare of all of its pupils. Therefore, poor attendance will be highlighted and challenged in line with our safeguarding policy and procedures.

### **Responsibilities**

At school we will:

- Expect pupils to attend school regularly, on time, properly equipped and ready to learn.
- Encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents/carers as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- Promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Include pupils' attendance in reports to parents/carers on achievement, at least annually, in the form of the end of year report.
- Will enforce the requirement to attend school punctually and reserve the right not to authorise absence for persistent offenders, where there is no reasonable explanation and where the absence does not fall in the category of exceptional circumstances.
- Will involve appropriate outside agencies in order to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

### **Parents/Carers of children should:**

- Ensure their child regularly and punctually attends school, fulfilling their legal responsibility.
- Telephone the office before 9:00 am on the first day and every subsequent day of absence, informing the school of the reasons for absence and stating an expected day of return.
- Work actively with School staff and relevant multiagency staff, to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.

## Registration Procedures

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 determine the admissions and attendance registers that all schools must keep. They also regulate the power schools have to grant leave of absence.

By law, schools are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the student is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Pupils are required to attend registration at the start of the morning session and are registered again at the start of the afternoon session.

Doors open at 8:40am and close at 8:50am. PM registration takes place by 1:30 pm

Pupils arriving at school after 8:50am must enter via the main entrance and an adult must provide a valid reason for the late arrival to admin staff. These pupils will be recorded as late (L). If an inadequate reason for the late arrival is not provided, and/or the pupil arrives after 9:30am, they will be recorded as 'U'.

A pupil cannot be removed from the attendance register unless they are removed from the admissions register at the same time.

Registration Symbols The following symbols are used in registers in line with the Department for Education guidance:

Code	Description	Pupil counted as if present in school for that session?
/	Present	Yes
L	Late (8:50-9:30am)	Yes
U	Late (after 9.30am)	No
B	Educated off-site	Yes
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	No
D	Dual Registration	Yes
E	Excluded	No
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	No
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed)	No
H	Family Holiday	No
I	Illness	No
M	Medical/Dental Appointment	No
N	No reason yet provided for absence	No
O	Unauthorised absence	No
J	Interview	Yes
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Yes
V	Educational Visit or Trip	Yes
W	Work Experience	Yes
R	Religious Observance	No
S	Study Leave	No
T	Traveller Absence	No
X	Non-Compulsory School Age absence	No

## **Absence Reporting**

### **First Day Absence**

Parents/carers should aim to ring the school on 01484 842154, before 8:30am to report a pupil's absence, giving the reason and likely duration of the absence. The Office Staff will update school systems when this information is received.

If a pupil's absence has not been reported on the morning of absence, school will attempt to contact the family, working systematically through the listed contacts until contact has been made and a valid reason for absence has been given.

If school has not been able to make contact, a home visit will be conducted by staff to ensure the wellbeing of the pupil.

### **Longer Absences**

In the case of a pupil being absent from school longer than one day, parents/carers must continue to contact school to report each day of absence and provide school with updates regarding the pupil's health. At the discretion of the headteacher, home visits may be made at any point during the absence to ensure the wellbeing of the pupil and offer support.

Longer term absence may occur as a result of injury, planned hospitalisation, bereavement etc. In this case, school will make arrangements for appropriate work to be collected/available online, and staff will liaise with the family to arrange additional support for the pupil's educational support.

### **Leave of absence**

Parents/carers do not have the legal right to authorise their child's absence, as this is the responsibility of the Headteacher at school.

Parent/carers must notify school if they intend to remove their child for a leave of absence i.e. family holiday, by completing a leave of absence form and returning it to the school Office for the attention of the Head teacher. This should be sent to school at least 2 weeks prior to the planned absence.

Once a leave of absence has been requested, the Head teacher will consider the student's attendance, length of absence, any previous requests, the potential impact upon outcomes and whether the reasons given fall into the category of exceptional circumstances.

A Pupil Leave of Absence will be granted (authorised) only in exceptional circumstances.

Absence may be recorded as authorised by school where parents/carers have confirmed the absence is due to:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement of immediate relatives
- Medical appointment (appointments should be made out of school hours where possible).
- Sporting activities at regional level or higher
- Performances which are linked to approved educational activities, i.e. musical performances organised by Kirklees Music School.

Absences may be recorded as unauthorised by school when due to:

- Family holidays, unless in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Head teacher.
- Reasons such as shopping, hair/beauty appointments, birthdays, no uniform, not able to get a child to school due to a sibling being ill, bad weather.
- Absences which have not been properly explained.
- Absence for any commercial ventures.

### **Intervention in Cases of Absence**

An attendance rate of 95% and above is generally considered good; this allows for children to miss 9.5 days across the school year. If a pupil is on the path to reach below 95% attendance, a generic letter will be sent to parents/carers to notify them that this is the case and offer support.

#### **Below 95% attendance**

If a pupil's attendance reaches below 95% attendance, a further letter will be sent to parents/carers by the attendance lead regarding concerns and offering support.

#### **92% attendance**

If a pupil's attendance reaches 90%, this is deemed as Persistent Absence (PA) which is a serious problem for the pupil as much of the work missed is difficult to catch up, leaving pupils at a considerable disadvantage.

Therefore, when a pupil's attendance reaches 92%, school will send a further letter and the family support lead will contact the family in an effort to prevent the attendance rate dropping to PA level. School will also informally contact the Attendance & Pupil Support Officer (APSO) who will contact the family to discuss concerns and identify any support needed.

#### **90% attendance and below (PA)**

Where absence is classified as persistent, a letter will be sent to parents/carers and a formal referral will be made to the APSO. A meeting will be arranged with the APSO and parents/carers will be advised of the legal ramifications should their child's attendance not improve.

At this stage and at the Head teacher's discretion, parents/carers may be notified that proof of illness/appointments etc must be provided on each day of absence otherwise absences will not be authorised.

#### **Continued Persistent Absence**

If a pupil continues to be persistently absent, this will likely lead to the issue of penalty notices and other legal consequences instigated and pursued by the school and the APSO.

*NB At any time if there is a change in the attendance pattern, unexplained absences or development of a pattern of absences, the above may be overridden.*

#### **Penalty Notices**

The Attendance and Pupil Support Officer for the School will consider requests from schools, the Police, other agencies such as Social Care or Youth Offending Service and neighbouring authorities for an issue of a Penalty Notice.

#### **When a penalty notice may be issued:**

Where enforcement is necessary to improve attendance, penalty notices will be considered when a parent has failed in their duty as defined in section 7 of The Education Act 1996 to ensure the regular school attendance of their child.

Penalty notices may be issued:

- Where the individual absence has been recorded by the school as an unauthorised holiday in the attendance register for 10 or more sessions (5 consecutive school days).
- If parents have not sought permission from the Head teacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term-time.
- If the Head teacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway.
- If a pupil has not returned to School by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation.
- If a pupil has had more than 15% unauthorised absences within a continuous 6-week period.

### **The Procedure for payment of Penalty Notices**

Arrangements for payment will be included with the Penalty Notice. Payment of a Penalty Notice discharges the parent of liability for the offence in question. S/he cannot subsequently be prosecuted for the period covered by the Penalty Notice.

Payment of a Penalty Notice is for £60, for each parent of each child, if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular attendance at school. If you are found guilty of the offence you may be fined up to £1,000, and you will receive a criminal record. If a term time holiday is taken twice consecutively without the Head teacher's approval, the third time may trigger a direct prosecution.

Finally, you also need to be aware that if your child fails to return to school following 20 days of absence, he/she is at risk of losing their school place and being removed from the attendance register.

### **Punctuality**

At school, we also encourage pupils to demonstrate excellent punctuality.

Classroom doors close at 8:50am, and school expects all pupils to be in school and settled by this time. Learning activities begin promptly at 8:50am, with key lessons such as Phonics and Reading often being the first ones of the day.

When a pupil is late, this can impact on their learning for the rest of the lesson but can also impact on their own and others behaviour as the class is disrupted.

A review of the attendance data will be a standing item on the headteacher's report to the LGB (three times during an academic year).