



KIDMORE END
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Agreed by: Full Governing Body

Head teacher: Linda Hull

Chair of Governors: Sarah Rodda

Date agreed: 14th November 2018

Date for review: 14th November 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The Staff and governors of Kidmore End CE Primary School are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school firmly believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems affecting attendance will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

2. AIMS:

We recognise that

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Some pupils and their parents may on occasion need to be supported in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Regular attendance helps children to achieve a wide range of aims including: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving (at school and outside school), making a positive contribution and growing up independently

3. EXPECTATIONS:

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.
- To read and agree to the school's home/school agreement.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical on the first day that their child is absent, explaining the reason for the absence, and keep in touch with the school thereafter.
- Not to remove their child from school for any other than the most pressing reasons. Examples are
 - Medical appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours
 - Special family occasions, for example weddings, that the parents have no control over
- If leave of absence has to be requested, it should be made in writing, giving reasons for the request
- We expect parents not to book holidays in term time

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the matter will only be discussed with the headteacher or his/her deputy).
- That the school will keep to their side of the home/school agreement

4. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE:

- If a note, email or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone, text or email.
- Where there is no response the school will continue to endeavour to contact the parents and a letter or email will be sent after three days of unexplained absence. If there is any concern regarding the safety of a child, more immediate action may be taken.
- Where non-attendance continues, the case will be discussed with the Attendance and Engagement Team, and their advice sought.
- After 10 days, unless other action is planned, the parents will be invited to attend a meeting in school. This meeting will include the appropriate staff, a social worker from the Attendance and Engagement Team, parent and pupil and will aim to identify and solve the problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school.
- If there is no improvement, then the case will be discussed again with the social worker with a view to a formal referral being made to the Attendance and Engagement Team, if one has not already been made at an earlier stage. If a referral had already been made then the case will be reviewed and further action planned.

5. AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised Absence

The following may be reasons for authorising absences.

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.
- Visits to other schools (eg prior to transfer)

Family Holidays:

Leave of absence can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, which means that leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Each request will be considered individually taking into account the circumstances, age of the child, previous attendance patterns, parental views and the educational progress of the child. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence will not be authorised. The Headteacher will determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. If the holiday goes on for longer than agreed, the extra days' absence will be unauthorised. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Approved Educational Activity

Where pupils are away from school but are undertaking an approved educational activity, this should be marked in the usual way but counted as present for calculating data for the DfE absence return. To avoid confusion in emergency situations pupils who are off site should not be marked as present. The following activities fall within this category.

- Field trips
- Educational visits

Unauthorised Absence

The following absences will **not** be authorised.

- Shopping trips
- Holidays in term time where the circumstances are not deemed exceptional
- Minding the house or looking after siblings.

- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff have cause to believe that the note or email is not genuine or not valid.

Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. It is for the Head teacher to decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered.

6. LATENESS

We actively discourage late arrival by challenging young people who are persistently late.

Registers remain open until they are returned to the office at approximately 9.10 am. After that time the child is marked as late. In the event of bad weather this period is extended. Where a pupil arrives during the period when the register is open they may be marked present. Where a pupil arrives after register closure they should be marked with the letter L.

7. REMOVAL FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. These are detailed in Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended 1997) and the Schools Administration Handbook (section A2). **Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal.**

- Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school
- Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Head Teacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Attendance and Engagement Team to obtain information on the cause of the absence.
- Where the Head Teacher has been notified that the pupil has died.
- The pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- Where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee.

Pupils who are missing

The school will make reasonable enquiries and follow protocols laid out in the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust Children Missing Education Guidance.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Head Teacher (or in his/her absence, the deputy):

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence
- To liaise with the Attendance and Engagement Team
- To make referrals to MASH/LCSS where there are safety concerns.

Administration Team:

- To alert the headteacher to any children who are not achieving acceptable levels of attendance, in practice this will be less than 90%.
- To bring to the notice of the headteacher any patterns of authorised absence that are noticed, or any concerns they may have about specific children.
- To keep accurate records.
- To submit the relevant data to the local authority as required.
- To keep attendance registers or copies of electronic registration print outs for a minimum of 3 years from the date that the last entries were made.
- To ensure, as far as possible, that the information the school holds on pupils and parents is accurate and up to date.

Class Teacher

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To refer any unexplained absence to the headteacher.
- To refer any suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence to the headteacher
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.

Governors:

- Receive annual attendance reports in order to monitor patterns of attendance.

Parents

- Contact with school on first day of absence, giving the reason for the absence.
- Keeping school informed on subsequent days of absence.
- Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.

Attendance and Engagement Team:

- Will liaise with school staff
- Will contact the family as they deem appropriate; where a referral is accepted, the team will undertake home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- They will instigate legal proceedings on behalf of the LA including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and applying for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- They will accept referrals that meet the Attendance and Engagement Team's referral criteria, initiate contact with parents or carers and undertake assessments.
- They will plan and review casework.
- They will provide feedback to schools.
- They can offer strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance, the employment of young people and young people involved in performing.
- They will support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

6. LIAISING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Other Agencies to be used where appropriate in individual cases.

- Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust
- Educational Behavioural and Support Services.
- Educational Psychologists.
- Special Educational Needs Service.
- LCSS/Social Care.
- Local police
- Health professionals

Poor attendance may either on its own, or in conjunction with other indicators may lead the school to call a 'Team Around the Child' using the 'Early Help Assessment. This will require liaison with the agencies listed above as well as the EWS.

GDPR

The requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Privacy Notice which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.