



Keelman's Way School

Attendance Policy

Keelman's Way School Recognises that:

- Most students attend school regularly to learn, to socialise with friends and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and prosperity of the community.
- There is a clear link between students' achievement and their level of attendance at school. We want all the students to achieve the very best they can and for this they need to be in school regularly.
- Late arrival disrupts the education not only of the student who is late but also of others in the class.
- It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children attend the school where they are on roll.
- Some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported at times in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

Keelman's Way School Expects that:

All students will:

- Arrive by 9.00am with everything they need for their school day for primary pupils
- Arrive by 9.30am with everything they need for their school day for secondary pupils
- Attend school regularly, and for the whole school day, until 3pm (Primary) and 3.30pm (Secondary)

All our students' parents/carers will:

- Ensure their children attend school every day unless they are too ill to attend or there is an acceptable reason for absence.
- Ensure their children arrive on time, prepared and equipped for the day.
- Inform the school as soon as possible on the day, if their child is going to be absent.
- Communicate with school about their children's progress and attend meetings such as Parents' Meetings and Annual Reviews.

Keelman's Way School will:

- Provide students with appropriate education.
- Respond to concerns raised by both students and parents/carers in a prompt, fair and proper manner.
- Follow the procedures of school and the Services for Young People in dealing with attendance issues.

Attendance Target:

Keelman's Way School aims to achieve attendance of 95%. This target is set annually.

PROCEDURES**Monitoring**

Attendance performance throughout the school will be monitored in a number of ways:

- Registration monthly review of absences of 85% and below will be used for the monitoring of data and reviewed over sustained and short term absences
- Termly Governor Meetings
- Individual student's attendance will be included in Annual Reviews.

This school Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by Governors and Senior Leadership Team and amended as appropriate.

From 19.8.24

Daily attendance registers across the sector means schools have to record data which will be accessible from a secure dashboard managed by the DfE.

This will allow schools to track and compare their pupil's attendance and identify trends to tackle attendance.

Schools 'make a sickness return to the local authority' (LA) if a pupil will have missed 15 consecutive school days due to illness.

This also stands if a pupil misses 15 days or more over the year because of illness.

As well as informing the local authority, schools are now expected to 'inform a pupil's youth offending team worker of any unexplained absences.'

School will work with families to remove barriers for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes barriers in getting children to school such as transport, and barriers within school including routines and uniform.

School ensures the necessary support and pastoral care is available. The school Inclusion support lead offers support to parents on health, welfare and attendance.

Part-time timetables are considered 'in very exceptional circumstances,' as a temporary measure if agreed upon between the school and the pupil's primary caregiver. This is based around the child's need and their ability to access learning within school.

Fines issued to parents who take their children out of school for an unauthorised absence of five days in a row, from £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days.

The fine will increase to £160 (previously £120) if paid within 28 days.

The rules for term-time holidays have changed. Penalty notices can now be issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10-week period, even if those sessions are not consecutive. So, if you have 10 individual days of unauthorised absence within that timeframe, it would meet the criteria for a penalty notice.

The guidance informs that money collected from fines will be used to cover administrative costs first and foremost, and any surplus will be 'spent on attendance support.'

Nursery pupils

Although attendance at nursery is not statutory, absence or sporadic attendance is often an early indicator of issues needing support or advice.

Following several national serious case reviews where the absence of children from school/nursery was not followed up as quickly or as rigorously as it might have been, sometimes with fatal consequences, the Children's Centres maintained nursery units have a policy of "eyes on the child" once three consecutive nursery sessions have been missed without this being expected (for example for holiday, serious known illness). We expect parents to ring in any absences. After three sessions, whether the parent has rung in or not, we would conduct a home visit to check that the child is OK, and expect to see the child in person. Parents are aware that this is our policy and understand the reasons for it. Almost all are entirely supportive.

Registration

The register provides the daily record of attendance of all students. It contributes to a student's end of term reports, record of achievement and references. It is a legal document that may be required in a court of law as evidence, for example in prosecutions for non-attendance.

Keelman's Way School uses the following codes laid down by the DfES from

September 2006:

- / present AM
- \ present PM
- O unauthorised absence
- I authorised absence for illness
- M authorised absence for medical/dentist appointment
- C authorised absence for other circumstances
- L late arrival before register closed
- H family holiday authorised by Head Teacher
- G family holiday not authorised by Head Teacher
- U late (after register closed)
- V educational visit or trip
- W work experience
- B Educated off site

The school day begins at 9.00am. for primary students 9.39 secondary and post 16. The registration time in the morning is at 9.05am. Where a student arrives after the start of the registration he/she will be marked as late. Students late after 10.00am will be coded as U which constitutes legally an unauthorised absence. It is therefore essential that parents inform the school if a student is late because of attending an urgent appointment such as with a dentist or doctor, so that the absence can be authorised. In the event of an appointment, the student must return to school with an appointment card with details of the time of the appointment. Parents may also telephone the school to let us know about the appointment or send a letter to the class/form teacher. Pupils only rarely need to miss a full day of school due to appointments.

Registration in the afternoon is taken at 1.00pm.

Follow up on absent students

Only the school can authorise absence, on the basis of information provided by parents/carers. Where explanations are not felt to be acceptable, the absence will remain unauthorised and the parents/carers informed.

In all cases of absence parents/carers must contact school by 9.30am on the main school number 0191 4897480, to allow the school to record the absence and if appropriate authorise it. Parents/carers should give an indication of the probable length of absence if likely to be longer than one day. If the explanation for absence is not accepted as justifiable, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and the parents/carers informed.

Where there has been no contact from parents/carers and the child remains absent without explanation, school staff will make contact with parents/carers of students to ask the reason for absence. In the first instance contact will be by phone, but where parents/carers cannot be contacted this will be followed up in writing. For this reason parents/carers must inform the school immediately if their contact details change.

If a student is missing from school for 5 days and parents/carers cannot be contacted, or no satisfactory contact has been received, then the school procedures for Children Missing from Education will take effect. Concerns will be reported to LA and where there are child concerns to Social Services.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

Support in school

The school believes firmly in working in partnership with parents to resolve issues. Parents/carers and students must contact the school if they are experiencing problems with attendance.

This should be to Mrs King Primary department Mrs Royle Secondary and post 16.

Reintegration

We all realise that returning to school following a period of absence can be very difficult for some young people, whatever the reason for their absence. In these situations school staff will plan carefully with parents/carers and students, together with any relevant agencies about how best to support the student's return to school.

In some cases, for a short period, it may be appropriate to start the reintegration gradually, building up to a full-time timetable. Other support will also be considered, from mentors through to appropriate rewards for improvement and achievement.

Punctuality

The large majority of pupils arrive at school on transport offered by the LA. Parents and carers who bring their own child to school must arrive at the appropriate start time of 9.00am entering by the pupil entrance. Pupils who arrive in school later in the day should bring their child to the main visitor entrance.

Process of Dealing with Attendance Problems

Where concerns arise they should be raised with Senior Management by the admin staff or class teacher.

Where there is cause for concern, a letter explaining the importance of attendance and warning parents/carers about penalties will be sent. This letter will encourage parents/carers to contact school to discuss the problem.

Continuing concerns will lead to parents/carers being invited to attend a meeting with services for young people or a home visit made. A review date and monitoring arrangements will be set and a further meeting held if appropriate.

Absence for family holidays in term time

Only the Head Teacher has the right to authorise any absence from school. There is no automatic right for parents/carers to take holiday during term time. Keelman's Way School believes that students need to be in school to benefit from the education offered and only in the most exceptional circumstances will the Headteacher authorise holidays in term time.

Parents/carers should use existing school holidays for holidays/trips abroad. If absence is required in exceptional circumstances, then ideally this should be used as a 'top up' by attaching the extended leave to a school holiday. These forms need to be sent into school two weeks before the proposed holiday.

Parents/carers must ask the Head Teacher to authorise a child's absence for a holiday prior to booking and the decision to authorise will take into account attendance record (normally a minimum of 94% over the previous 12 month period), educational progress and the circumstances of the proposed holiday. The student's parents/carers make the application using a form provided by the school. Parents/carers will be informed if an application has been successful or not.

If leave of absence is taken without consultation and school authorisation, then the absence, by definition, is unauthorised. This may result in referral to the Services for young people (and a subsequent issue of a Penalty Notice) or prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

By definition, exceptional trips do not occur regularly or often. We advise no more than two such breaks during a student's school career; having said that, this frequency could still have a damaging effect on school achievement in some cases.

Procedure for requests for leave of absence

Students should obtain a form from the School Office.

When completed the form should be returned directly to the School Office.

The form will be processed and checked by School Office Staff then passed to the Head Teacher for signing.

The signed form will be returned to office staff to log absence, if granted in the Register.

Tear-off part of form will be returned to parents/carers confirming/declining request for leave of absence and form filed in student file.

Useful numbers

School: - 0191 4897480

Services for young people: - 0191 4246303

Date.....Head Teacher

Date.....Chair of Governors

To be reviewed: Summer 2025