



Kingsway Primary

School Positive Outcomes For All

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy written by:	Jane Moore	Date: 17 th November 2022
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Attendance Improvement Officer
17th November 2022

1. Introduction:

Within this Attendance Policy a parent is defined as in Section 576, Education Act 1996. This means all natural parents, whether married or not and includes any person who, although not a biological parent, has responsibility or has care of the child or young person. (i.e lives with and looks after the child)

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This school attendance policy is written to reflect the law and also the guidance produced by the Department of Education.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

2. Why regular attendance is so important:

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is

your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in a Penalty Notice (for each parent) and/or prosecution.

3. Promoting regular attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you information on attendance
- Provide you with reports on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance is, and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance each term through certificates
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and outings/events

4. Understanding absence:

By law, every half-day absence from school has to be coded by the school (not by the parent), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required. *These codes are given in Appendix 1*

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other exceptional circumstances. Approved education activities are coded as a present mark.

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Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These include:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily (i.e. condoned absence)
- truancy during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- failure to request 'exceptional circumstances' leave of absence
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children, birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term-time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance should be addressed by the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend school, you should not cover up their absence, or, give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and this usually makes things worse.

5. Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

Kingsway Primary School and its staff regard the regular attendance of children at school as being vital to child's education and development. Kingsway Primary School aims for all its students to have 100% attendance and regards good attendance to be 96% or above with no unauthorised absences in line with guidance from Leicestershire County Council. There is a

great deal of information available about achievement which clearly shows low levels of absence have a negative impact on learning. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously.

We monitor all pupil absence and pupils with below 96% attendance are tracked and monitored carefully by our Attendance Improvement Officer. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance falls below 90% for whatever reason. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' fullest co-operation to tackle this. A pupil missing 50% or more of school becomes a 'severely absent' pupil. Absence at this level requires intensive support across a range of partners. All the partners need to work together to overcome the barriers to attendance.

6. Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Telephone the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am.
Kingsway Primary School has an answerphone for absences where parents can leave a message.
- Contact the school on a regular basis and keep the school informed regarding any prolonged absences
- Provide medical evidence (Doctors appointment card or prescribed medication) for absences due to illness of 3 days or more

If your child is absent we will:

- Text or telephone you on the first day of absence (or *on subsequent days*) if we have not heard from you
- Write to you when your child's attendance falls below 95%.
 - Write to you if we are concerned about your child's attendance to alert you to any

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emerging patterns or level of absence

- Invite you in to discuss the situation if absences persist

To address issues with pupil attendance we may:

- Request medical evidence for regular and/or prolonged absence
- Carry out home visits where the school is concerned about the validity of a child's absence
- Arrange for a visit to your home to be undertaken to establish that your child is safe. This could be by a Police Officer
- Liaise with the other agencies and Traveller Education Service
- Take all reasonable steps to address the identified attendance issues Copies of all

correspondence regarding your child's attendance are stored in your child's file.

7. Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about a variety of matters, including absence, so we need to have all of your contact numbers for all times of the day. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number: if we don't have your contact number, something important could be missed. *In addition to holding a contact number for parents, the school will ask for two additional numbers in case of an emergency. Please provide these to the school office.*

8. The Attendance Team - Leicestershire County Council:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving

any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the matter to the Court Officer for the Attendance Team in the Local Authority for further action. Court Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. (Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued by the Local Authority immediately following a period of leave that has not been authorised by the school.)

Parents/carers may wish to contact the Attendance Team directly to ask for help or information. Please see the Leicestershire County Council Website for more details:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-attendance>

They can also be reached by emailing attendanceteam@leics.gov.uk

9. Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and may affect your child's educational progress. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and time with the class teacher gaining vital information and news for the day. Late arrival to class also disrupts lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school gates open at 8.50am, children line up and registration takes place in class.

At **9.15am** the registers are closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, unless they have been to an unavoidable medical appointment, they will receive

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a mark that shows them to be on site (**U code** see *Appendix 1*), but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of further action from the Local Authority if the problem persists.

We monitor all pupil lateness and late letters are sent to pupils with 4 or more late marks each half term. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the school to resolve the problem. You can approach the school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

10. Supporting the Education of Children with Medical Needs

When a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full time education the Local Authority where the child lives are responsible for arranging provision. The Local Authority is required to provide education where a child will be away from school for 15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative). The Leicestershire County Council policy for supporting children with medical needs who are unable to attend school can be found at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/7/7/Inclusion-Service-Children-with-Medical-Needs-Policy.pdf>

When appropriate, Kingsway Primary School will make individualised arrangements for a pupil not well enough to attend full time school. This could include making reasonable adjustments to support attendance in line with health needs, online provision, work provided at home, undertake risk assessment and support to attend the school part-time in line with health needs.

11. Leave of Absence in Term Time:

From the 1st September 2013, **the DFE issued guidelines giving no entitlement to parent to take their child on holiday during term time.** Any application for leave must only be in **exceptional** circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are **exceptional** and warrant the granting of leave. **Head Teachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.**

Kingsway Primary School and its staff regard the regular attendance of children at school as being vital to each child's education and development. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously. It remains the policy of the school to only sanction non-attendance during school time in exceptional circumstances.

The Local Governing Body of Kingsway Primary School deems exceptional leave to

- be:
- Bereavement of a direct/close **family** member
 - Medical treatment/advice by a registered medical practitioner.

Holidays, weddings or other visits to relatives are not deemed to be exceptional events which cannot be foreseen and will therefore not be authorised.

All applications/requests for exceptional leave must be received in writing to the Head Teacher at least 2 weeks in advance of the absence and prior to any bookings being made. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually and you will be notified of the decision in writing. Additional evidence may be requested by the school to support exceptional circumstance absence requests. The Head Teachers decision is final and

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any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be coded as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to parents.

Following the Supreme Court ruling on 6th April 2017 (Isle of Wight Case) the school will notify the Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council of unauthorised leave of absence. If a child has unauthorised leave of absence a parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days) or, the case could be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court for the purposes of criminal prosecution.

12. Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are

Mrs Germaine McKinnon, Head Teacher

Mrs Jane Moore, Attendance Improvement Officer (Braunstone Town Family of Schools)

Jane Moore
Attendance Improvement Officer
17th November 2022

Appendix 1

The registration system and codes:

The school will use a computerised system for keeping school attendance records. The national codes are used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity

C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education
L	Late (before registers closed)	Activity Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	school closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Table of Changes – Attendance Policy 2022-23

Page No and Section	Details of change
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Contents Page	<p>Number 8 amended to The Attendance Team – Leicestershire County Council to reflect name changes at the Local Authority</p> <p>Number 10 - Added Supporting the Education of Children with Medical Needs</p> <p>Number 11 and 12 renumbered</p> <p>Number 11 – amended to Leave of Absence in Term time (Removed Exceptional Circumstances)</p>
Page 3 - Introduction	Paragraph 1 – Added (i.e lives with and looks after the child)
Page 4 – Persistent Absenteeism	<p>Paragraph 2 – Added</p> <p>A pupil missing 50% or more of school becomes a ‘severely absent’ pupil. Absence at this level requires intensive support across a range of partners. All the partners need to work together to overcome the barriers to attendance.</p>
<p>Page 5 – Telephone numbers</p> <p>Page 5 – Pupil Services Court Team</p>	<p>Paragraph 1 – Added</p> <p>we always have an up to date number: if we don’t have your contact number, something important could be missed. <i>In addition to holding a contact number for parents, the school will ask for two additional numbers in case of an emergency. Please provide these to the <u>school office</u>.</i></p> <p>Section name – amended to The Attendance Team – Leicestershire County Council to reflect name changes at the Local Authority</p> <p>Paragraph 1 - Pupil Services Court Team amended to The Attendance Team</p> <p>Paragraph 2 - See Leicestershire County Council Website for more details www.leics.gov.uk removed from the policy and replaced with:</p> <p>Parents/carers of may wish to contact the Attendance Team directly to ask for help or information. Please see the Leicestershire County Council Website for more details: https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-attendance</p> <p>They can also be reached by emailing attendanceteam@leics.gov.uk</p>
Page 5 - Lateness	<p>Paragraph 1 - Persistent lateness is a serious concern removed and replaced with Poor punctuality is not acceptable</p> <p>Added - If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and time with the class teacher gaining vital information and news for the day</p>
Page 5 – How we manage lateness	<p>Paragraph 1 – The school day starts at 8.55am and your child is to be in class at that time removed and replaced with The school gates open at 8.50am, children line up and registration takes place in class.</p> <p>Paragraph 2 - At 9.30am the registers are closed amended to At 9.15am the registers are closed</p>
Page 6 – Supporting the Education of Children with Medical Needs	2 Paragraphs added advising how the School and Local Authority support the education of children with medical needs in line with the new DFE working together to improve attendance guidance
Page 7 – Exceptional Leave of absence in Term Time	Amended to Leave of Absence in Term time
Page 7 –Leave of absence in Term Time	<p>Paragraph 5 – added to sentence 1 - at least 2 weeks in advance of the absence and prior to any bookings being made.</p> <p>Amended Final sentence to - The Head Teachers decision is final and any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be coded as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to parents.</p>

	Paragraph 6 – Amended to the Attendance Team

Jane Moore
Attendance Improvement Officer
17th November 2022