

Attendance and punctuality policy Kirk Smeaton C of E Primary School



Policy: Oct 23

To be reviewed: Oct 25

Roles and responsibilities Pupils- are expected to attend school and all their lessons regularly and punctually. All pupils are expected to strive to achieve an attendance target of at least 95%, and to aim for 100%

Parents/carers - are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. Parents should inform the school each time their child is absent, preferably by 9am preferably by email or Arbor message and, where an absence exceeds one week or more, should provide a letter on return explaining the reason for absence. Parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments during school hours and holidays should not be taken in term time. Where this is unavoidable, requests for leave of absence should be made using the appropriate form, available from the office.

School staff- will endeavour good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching or pastoral). The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance including appropriate rewards. Where pupils experience attendance difficulties they will be offered prompt support by the school. Parents will be informed of any concerns that arise over their child's attendance. School will consider the individual circumstances of absences and inform parents if any reason for absence is not accepted and it is unauthorised.

Governors- set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance to evaluate the effectiveness of the attendance policy. Attendance is shared each half term within governor meetings and discussed in the H&S meetings.

Headteacher and pastoral worker- monitors individual pupil and whole school attendance and punctuality, and works in partnership with key agencies. The Head Teacher provides Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice, and communicates school policy to parents/carers.

Class teacher- provides an accurate record of the attendance of each pupil in their class and brings issues of attendance or punctuality to the attention of the Head Teacher promptly.

Parent Support Advisor/Family support worker/other school-based support worker- With the consent of the parents a referral to early help may be considered. When these agencies are involved, they will keep detailed records of intervention work with parents/carers on attendance issues, and meet with parents/carers to address attendance issues and to set targets for short term improvements.

Administrative staff- will prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of attendance management system and provide the Head Teacher with attendance data on a half termly basis, and more frequent updates as requested. The Administrator will co-ordinate the "First Morning Response" and make every reasonable effort to contact the parents of a child who is absent without the school having been informed, to be sure of the child's whereabouts.

Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) Duties

- Provide advice, support and challenge to schools, children and families, to maximise attendance at school.
- Implement the EWO operational procedures for improving school attendance and reducing absence.
- Implement individual casework with children and families. Convene education related parenting contracts.
- Take enforcement action as appropriate including penalty notices, prosecutions, School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders.
- Support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring of individual children's attendance.
- Conduct truancy patrols around schools and their communities.

Registration procedures

Registers will be opened at 8.40am and close at 8.55am and 12.50 and close at 1pm. Once registration has ended registers must be sent to the office. Absence codes are attached to each class register. Children need to be in school for 50% of the session in order to access their mark i.e. A child cannot attend school at 8.55 and then leave to attend an appointment and gain their mark or if a child was collected to attend an appointment at 1.15pm, they cannot gain their mark.

Authorised absence

It is up to the Head Teacher ultimately whether to authorise an absence. The Head Teacher may authorise leave of absence for up to ten days in any academic year, unless there is a reason not to. Requests over ten days will not be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Illness

Parents/carers are asked to contact the school by 9am on each day of absence. This will be noted on the message pad and the class teacher informed. The school can decide not to authorise prolonged or repeated absences without doctor's note.

Lateness

Pupils arriving after the register has been closed will be considered as late. This is monitored weekly by the headteacher and the administration officer. Parents are contacted by letter if lateness becomes a persistent problem.

Medical/dental appointments

Absence from school due to medical/dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Unauthorised absence

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school. Absence from school may not be authorised for holidays, shopping, birthdays. If parents are working away from home and their child/ren is/are accompanying them, absence will not be authorised. Parents and staff should understand that just because an explanatory letter from a parent has been received by the school, this does not mean that the absence will be authorised.

When parents provide a letter from their employer to show that they are unable to take holidays in school holiday time, absences for 10 session (1 week) will be authorised per academic year.

The schools may refer for a fixed penalty notice if there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a term period. This is when NYCC gives each parent a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school. If this is not paid you could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives you a Parenting Order.

Children Absent from Education (CAE) and Children Missing from Education

As a school we recognise that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Definitions:

- A child absent from education is a child who is on roll at a school, but is very regularly not attending.
- A child missing education is a child of compulsory school age who isn't on a school roll or being educated elsewhere.

We understand that if a child is absent from education or is missing from education, these are vital warning signs of safeguarding risks to a child. It could indicate that a child is;

- being abused
- being neglected
- subject to sexual or criminal exploitation

It might also indicate that a child has mental health problems, or is at risk of;

- substance abuse
- travelling to conflict zones
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- honour-based abuse or forced marriage
- exploitation

Children who are persistently absent from school are more likely to need early help, and this includes children who are persistently absent for part of the school day. These children are more likely to become children missing education (i.e. not on any school roll).

There has been a significant increase in children absent from education since school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic – these are often referred to in the media as 'ghost children'. They may have mental health issues that affect their ability to return to school, or their family circumstances may have changed, or they may have been groomed and exploited during the pandemic. We recognise that when a child goes missing from an school it is a potential indicator of a safeguarding concern; therefore, we follow the Safeguarding procedures.

Each Academy will investigate instances of unauthorised absences and will report students with irregular attendance, or who have been continuously absent for 10 days or more, to NYC Council. Kirk Smeaton CE Primary School reserves the right to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police, YOS, Housing, etc.) if any child is absent from school for more than five days without confirmation from parents. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance will be considered.

Procedures for following up absence

First Morning Response – a telephone call to the parents or second emergency contact as soon as possible and at the latest by 10.00am on the first day of absence if no reason is known. All reasonable attempts to speak to a parent will be made. If this is not possible, an answer phone message will be left. The Administrators will decide if a text message is appropriate. Teachers will be informed by way of a message from the School Office. If no reason for an absence has been obtained at the next register update, an unauthorised is coded. If no contact has been made by day 3 a member of staff will go to the house to check on the child.

Transition arrangements

Liaison with secondary schools includes electronic transfer of attendance concerns and is also discussed one-to-one when necessary.

Reporting to parents

Parents should be informed promptly over concerns relating to attendance.

- Attendance figures to be provided with annual reports.
- 100% attendees rewarded.
- Identification, monitoring and evaluation of attendance data collected regularly to establish patterns of irregular attendance (approximately every half term) and where attendance is an issue, parents will be informed.
- School will analyse data for reasons for absence to target intervention.

Where a child's attendance causes concern, the following parameters and actions will be considered by the Headteacher:

(Each case will be considered individually based on circumstances)

Cause for concern	Action(s) to be considered
Attendance above 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to parent to inform them of attendance.
90-96% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance will be monitored by the School and attendance history considered each half term. • Letter to parent to inform them of attendance. • Consideration of a Fixed penalty notice for unauthorised attendance.
90% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to parents/carers asking them to work with school to improve attendance. See appendix 2 • Discussion with parents/carers to develop a plan of action. See appendix 3. • Consideration of a Fixed penalty notice for unauthorised attendance.
85% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal meeting with parents and carers. • A formal plan of action to improve attendance. See appendix 3. • Consideration of a Fixed penalty notice for unauthorised attendance.
Repeated incidences of illness-related absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with parents/carers • Referral to school nurse • Request that parents/carers provide proof of doctor's involvement (appointment card with child's name on / letter / copy of prescription etc)
Repeated arrival at school after 8.50am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be marked in the class register as a LATE. • Letter to parents/carers requesting that the matter is addressed and offering support. • An action plan to be established. See appendix 3. • Consideration of request from outside agencies through the Common Assessment Framework • Late marks after 9am will be marked in the class register as an UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE for the session. • Consideration of a Fixed penalty notice for unauthorised attendance.



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Headteacher: Mrs H Cuddy

Attendance up to -----

Dear _____,

Your child has been late for school ___ this half term.
Your child attendance is _____ so far, this academic year.

Being on time

National statistics show that poor time keeping seriously affects a young person's chance of achieving their full potential. Arriving late may mean that your child misses important instructions for the day and can lead to feelings of isolation and disengagement from learning.

Please note that school opens at 8.40am and the gates close at 8.50am, if a child arrives after 8.50am, they are classed as late. Arrival after the close of registration at 9am is classed as an unauthorised absence.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 these absences could be used as evidence against you if legal action were to be considered by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If there are 10 unauthorised absences, a referral for a fixed penalty notice will be sent to NYCC and parents may be fined.

Overall attendance

We monitor attendance carefully on a daily basis and will be reporting to you at least half termly. School has high expectations on attendance as good attendance is proven to increase children's academic achievement. I would like to draw your attention to the following expectations:

- Attendance is judged by OFSTED to be good if it is over 96%
- The school recognises that attendance which falls below 93% is a cause for concern and will be closely monitored.
- If attendance falls below 90%, we will contact you to look at support that can be provided and complete an action plan.
- If there are repeated dips in attendance and these are linked to medical issues, we will ask proof of medical involvement.

Some startling statistics:

If a child is inconsistent in gaining 90% attendance, although this might sound good, in reality, over the course of a year this is the equivalent of:

- ½ day of school missed every week
- 4 weeks of school missed a year or
- 1 whole year over a child's school life.

Where pupils miss up to 14 days of school during KS2 they are 25% less likely to achieve the expected level in reading, writing and maths than those with no absence. Ways to help maintain good attendance include:

- Arrange medical appointments outside of school hours.
- Take holidays in school holiday times.
- Ensure children arrive on time, we have wrap around provision to support parents who may need additional childcare so they can drop other children off or attend work meetings etc.
- Make every attempt to ensure your child attends school unless illness prevents them from attending.

Absence from school			
Absence during 1 school year	Days absent	Weeks absent	Number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	250 lessons

Kind regards,

Mrs Cuddy
Headteacher



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Headteacher: Mrs H Cuddy

Date:

Dear _____,

I wish to draw your attention to the enclosed registration certificate for your child. This is the second time we have raised concerns about child child's attendance this academic year. Your child attendance is _____ so far, this academic year. This means that your child has had _____ days off school and this is well below the National Average.

We wish to arrange a meeting to discuss the absences with you and make a plan of action for the future. A meeting has been arranged for _____. Please confirm your attendance or by contacting the school office by ... _____. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please let the school office know and an alternative date will be given.

As your child's attendance has dropped to _____ you will need to provide medical or other evidence before any further absence can be authorised. Medical evidence should be in the form of a doctor's note, appointment card or prescription.

Kind regards,

Mrs Cuddy
Headteacher

Appendix 3- Attendance support plan

Students name							
Year group							
Parent/carers name							
Current attendance							
Reasons for poor attendance							
School life- relationships with staff and peers, most and least enjoyable lessons, any issues in lessons? Who they talk to in school, their aspirations, emotional/behavioural need, SEN etc							
Home and family life- Who do they live with, any siblings, if so what do they do and their attendance information. How do they get to school? Do parents work?							
Health- general health, substance use, emotional wellbeing etc.							
Plan of actions- What concerns are there? How can they be changed? What actions are parents and school going to do? Time scale for the actions. Referral to early help, social care, CAMHS, SPA- SEN? CAF needed?							
Concerns:							
Changes needed:							
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Actions</th> <th>Date completed by</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Actions	Date completed by	1.		2.	
Actions	Date completed by						
1.							
2.							
Review date							
This is a formal agreement between Kirk Smeaton CE Primary and _____ (Parents).							
Parent signature: _____ Date: _____							