



# **Kenilworth Primary School**

## **Attendance Policy**

**Review date: September 2023**

**To be reviewed: September 2024**

Kenilworth Primary School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all children are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them. The school has an electronic package to record attendance that is linked to the Local Authority. This produces accurate reports for analysis of the whole site and individual pupil attendance.

**The school day starts at 8.45am. Children in the Key Stage 2 playground will line up when the whistle is blown. Key Stage 1 children and Early Years will enter through the classroom door. The gate will be locked at 8:45am when the whistle is blown on the Key Stage 2 playground.**

**School finishes at 3:15 for Key Stage 1 pupils and 3:20pm for Key stage 2 pupils. All pupils will leave via the classroom doors.**

**Children are expected to already be settled in class by 8.50am for the start of school when the register will be taken.**

## **Statutory Framework**

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not, in itself, authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied with the explanation of absence will it be authorised.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

Monitoring and sustaining good attendance at Kenilworth Primary School is the responsibility of both school and parents. At Kenilworth it is important that pupils also recognise the importance of good attendance.

### **Pupils**

- All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually. Late marks will include the actual amount of learning time lost.
- Any pupil with 100% attendance, will receive a reward at the end of every term.

### **Parents**

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed in school uniform and equipped, and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school by 8:15am.
- If a child is unwell for more than 2 days at a time, parents are requested to call in daily with an update on the child's condition.
- A child's absence from school will be considered unauthorised until the school receives a satisfactory explanation.
- Parents whose child's attendance causes concern will be contacted by the Attendance Officer as soon as the concern arises, either by phone, letter or home visit.
- If the Head Teacher has concerns that they are unable to contact a family and there are reasonable concerns around a child/ren's welfare, then a welfare check by the police will be requested.
- Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/ dental appointments for their child during school hours. However, if this is unavoidable, then please provide the school with medical evidence – this can take the form of appointment cards, doctor's letters, hospital letters, or an emailed screenshot of a text confirmation.
- Regular late collection from the main entrance will also be noted and parents will be written to.
- If attendance falls below the expected 96% then parents will receive a letter from the Head Teacher. If attendance continues to remain below 96% after support has been implemented then a breach letter will be sent and a fine will be issued.

### **School**

- Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.
- The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

## **Registration**

Registers will be called by 8.50am at morning registration across the school and in the afternoon by 1.15pm across the school, to begin the afternoon sessions. Registers will be marked electronically and in accordance with the list of symbols as set out in the Arbor guidelines.

Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed must report their attendance to the school office. Pupils who are late will be marked with an 'L' and the amount of minutes entered onto Arbor. **This will be monitored by the Attendance Officer and any pattern of lateness will be followed up with a letter to parents.**

*Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed (9.05am), the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' ('U' code) for that session; i.e. they are marked as "unauthorised absent" for the whole morning or whole afternoon session, even if the pupil was present for most of the session). A 'U' code will affect a child's attendance percentage.*

The Attendance Officer will monitor registers on a daily basis and, with the Head Teacher, inspect the registers weekly to ensure correct procedures are being followed. Arbor will calculate and enter the attendance totals. Attendance issues will initially be followed up by the Attendance Officer, and then with the Local Authority Attendance Officer, if marked improvement is not apparent.

## **Authorised/ Unauthorised Absence**

Kenilworth Primary School will decide how an absence is to be recorded according to 'School Attendance: Policy and Practice on Categorisation of Absence' (DfEE1994)'.

Absence **may be** authorised if:

- The pupil was ill or 'prevented from attending by any other unavoidable cause'
- The absence occurred on a day of religious observance
- There is a bereavement of an immediate member of the family
- The pupil is attending an interview for a place at another school
- The pupil is receiving special off-site tuition for a special educational need
- The pupil is attending a Pupil Referral Unit

Absence **will be unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil is observed in a public place in school hours
- The pupil is absent for **unexceptional** circumstances (e.g. a birthday)
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday

**To authorise absences for medical reasons parents will be asked for:**

- A prescription which clearly matches the times your child has been off school
- A consultation report from the GP which can be issued by the practice
- A copy of any medical letters for appointments taken during school time

**The process of monitoring attendance**

- Attendance letters will be sent to parents half termly. If a pupils absence is under 96% then parents will be reminded of good attendance.
- If a pupils absences falls under 90% then parents/guardians will be invited into school for a meeting with the Head Teacher to offer support. Evidence will be needed for any further absence.
- If after this time absences persists, then another reminder letter will be sent. There will be no more unauthorised absence without clear physical evidence to support why the pupil is not in school
- After this time if the number of unauthorised sessions reach 15 or more in the current term, the parent will be in breach of regulations and the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice. Please see Penalty Notice paragraph below:

‘If a parent fails to notify the school that their child is going to be absent and the school has concerns then this maybe escalated to children’s services where a welfare check may take place.’

**Term Time Holiday**

There have been amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into force from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

These remove all reference to family holiday and extended leave, therefore:

- ***NO*** leave of absence for holidays will be granted, although parents are still required to notify the school in writing or by email of such holiday
- *Parents may make an application for leave of absence for an exceptional circumstance.*
- *The Head Teacher will decide what is deemed as an exceptional circumstance*
- *The Head Teacher will decide whether this application will be granted*
- *The Head Teacher will decide the number of days granted for any leave of absence*
- *Leave of absence taken without permission will be unauthorised*
- *A child can be removed from the school’s registers if they fail to return from a leave of absence where permission has been granted, after both school and Local Authority*

*have tried to locate the pupil(s), or if there are 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the school and Local Authority have failed to locate the pupil. The police will be contacted at this point.*

***Please note: If a child is absent in the week immediately before and/or immediately after a school holiday or long weekend, medical confirmation will be requested by the school before the absence is authorised. The Head Teacher's decision will be final.***

### **Procedures for following up absence**

If, by 9.05am, the school has not heard from a parent stating a reason why their child is absent, the school office will contact a parent for an explanation of their child's absence. If a parent does not contact the school with an explanation, the school will continue to contact the parent to ensure the safety of the child.

If a pupil is persistently absent, the Attendance Officer, alongside the Head Teacher, will invite the parents to the school for a meeting.

If a pupil returns to school after an absence without an explanation, the parents will be contacted by the Attendance Officer.

The school office team will pass on messages about absence to the Attendance Officer who indicates on the register the reason why a child is absent, and the class teacher is informed.

The County will provide a Local Authority Attendance Champion to examine patterns in attendance and absence on a termly basis. He/ she may also contact the parents if the school initiated meetings or letters have had little impact.

**Kenilworth Primary School has adopted the 'Penalty Notices' policy in line with Hertfordshire County Council procedures and follows its guidelines in implementing them.**

***This means that, if the number of unauthorised absence sessions reaches 15 or more (one day is two sessions) in the current and/or previous term, parents are at risk of receiving a fine of up to £120, per parent, for each individual child from the Local Education Authority, who may issue parents with a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, for failure to secure their child's regular attendance at school.***

### **Strategies for promoting good attendance**

- Kenilworth Primary School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late, and that follow-up action will be taken.
- Attendance data will be collected and monitored in order to inform school policy and practice.
- Certificates for 100% attendance will be handed out termly, with an award at the end of the academic year for those children with 100% attendance for the whole academic year, and a reward for those children with attendance of 98% and above.
- Parents will be regularly reminded (via newsletters, the school brochure, parents' evenings, etc.) of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will (when appropriate) have work sent home to them and will be supported back into school upon their return to good health.
- The Head Teacher will make a termly report to the governing body on attendance matters.
- The Head Teacher will, when appropriate, liaise with other agencies - Educational Psychology Service, Attendance Officer, Children's Services, Intensive Family Support Team, etc. - when this may assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- The Head Teacher and Attendance Officer will have regular meetings with the Local Authority Attendance Officer for inspection of the school's registers, in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

**Our aim at Kenilworth Primary School is to have children in school every day, ready and willing to learn, and to work closely with parents to ensure good attendance.**

**Thank you for working with us to make this happen**

