



Kenilworth Primary School

Attendance Policy

Review date: September 2021

To be reviewed: July 2023

(See COVID-19 addendum on back page)

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 SIMS package to record Attendance. This produces accurate reports for analysis of whole site and individual pupil attendance.

The school day starts between 8.40am & 8.50am and finishes between 3.15pm & 3.30pm. Children are expected to already be settled in class BY 8.50am for the start of school.

Please call 020 8953 3459 to record your child's absence or leave a message on the School Gateway. We will respond to your message at the beginning of the school day.

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, not including absences due to possible covid, 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 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 9.00am.
- 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 Champion as soon as the concern arises, either by phone or letter.
- 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.

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 8.55am at morning registration across the school, and in the afternoon by 1.30pm 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 SIMS 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 SIMS. **This will be monitored by the Attendance Champion 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 Champion will monitor registers on a daily basis and, with the Head Teacher, inspect the registers weekly to ensure correct procedures are being followed. SIMS will calculate and enter the attendance totals. Attendance issues will initially be followed up by the Attendance Champion, and then with the Local Authority Attendance Officer, if marked improvement is not apparent. Ongoing concerns may be brought to the Governors' attention.

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
- The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home, and the LEA has made no suitable arrangements for enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/ her home, if there is one
- There is a family bereavement
- 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
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion

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' could 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 attendance champion 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 1st 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

Please note: If a child is absent in the week immediately before and/or immediately after a school holiday or long weekend, medical confirmation may 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 9.10am, 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 Champion, 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 Champion.

The school office team will pass on messages about absence to the Attendance Champion 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 Champion 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!

COVID-19 Addendum – updated for 2021-2022 Academic Year

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Pupils who have COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and get a test:-

- If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they must inform the school and the pupil can return when they feel well.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.

If someone in the pupil's household has COVID-19 symptoms:-

- The rest of the household do not need to self-isolate – only that member of their household should self-isolate and get a PCR test.
- During an outbreak if a member of the household tests positive, then the whole family will have to isolate. The school has currently adopted the sibling isolation rule (please see outbreak plan for further guidance.)
- If the pupil subsequently develops COVID-19 symptoms and they have a sibling/s in another class, that sibling/s must isolate as well and remote learning will be provided by the school. Please follow guidance above.

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- a fever (a temperature of 37.8C / 100F or higher)
- a new persistent cough (usually dry)
- a loss of sense of taste and/or smell

In all cases of self-isolation, parents must inform the school immediately, and about the outcome of a test (if required).