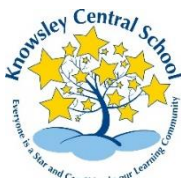




Knowsley Central School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed by:	SLT	Date: September 2023
Last reviewed on:	September 2023	
Next review due by:	September 2024(Annually)	



Intent

As a school we understand the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils. Regular attendance greatly increases the chances of pupils in Knowsley Central reaching their potential.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment in which they can thrive and in which the pupils actively enjoy attending and look forward to their school day.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance as this maximizes their learning opportunities.

This policy is set out to work in partnership with parents, carers and the local authority to achieve the best outcomes for all pupils. This policy should be read in conjunction with the attendance, roles and responsibilities guidance attached to this document.

Aims

- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality for all pupils at KCS.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support, advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

Promoting regular Attendance at Knowsley Central School:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

To help us all focus on this, as a school we will ensure:

- Individualised interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
- A curriculum is provided which is creative and meets the needs of the pupils. This is reviewed regularly
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes school and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special educational needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Attendance and punctuality are regularly discussed with pupils i.e. assemblies and lessons

Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school for any period of time without contact from parents or carers can be considered to be a safeguarding concern. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required as soon as possible to ensure that school understand the nature of the absence.

Expectations of Parent/Carer

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours whenever possible.
- Contact school preferably by 8.30am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school. This can be done through the school App or by ringing the school number and speaking to a member of the office staff. If no one is available, please leave a detailed message on the school answering machine.
- If a phone call or message on parents App from school is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded. Contact Mrs. Vicky Brown (Parent Liaison) if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of emergency**, we need up-to-date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Head teacher and can only be authorised by the Head teacher.

If a pupil is absent we will

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9:30am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised school will involve other agencies such as Social Care and/or Police. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited into school to meet with the Deputy Head. The meeting is designed to offer support and guidance.
- If absences persist, we will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

Understanding types of Absence

As a school we must record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Head teacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings

- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer to case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

Persistent Absence

- Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Parent/Carers are asked to contact Mrs. Vicky Brown in the first instance.

Why Regular Attendance is very important:

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

The local authority attendance officer

- Provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance and encourages good communications between home and school.
- Will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the authority may be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority website.

Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. The Head teacher and Governors expect that family holidays will be taken during the holiday periods. We follow LEA policy and procedures for attendance and any holidays taken in term time will be unauthorised. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Head teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence. As many of our pupils arrive by LA transport the school will work closely with the transport company and Knowsley transport lead Andrew Nimmo to ensure all pupils arrive at school on time and any issues around this are solved quickly and efficiently.

How we manage lateness

The school day begins and registers are taken at 9:00am and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School recommends that pupils arrive at school for 9.00am.

Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register which is 9:30am, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the school who will offer support to resolve the problem.

People Responsible for Attendance

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

Removal from Roll

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Give the Head teacher comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing, preferably 2 weeks in advance of any move.
- If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a **child missing in education**. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Role	Name	Responsibility
Head teacher	Mr. D McConnell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily Attendance/ Late pupils are reported.• Safeguarding requirements (DSL)
Deputy Head Teacher	Mrs L Kearney	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SLT contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required. Safeguarding home visits as required.• Instigation of legal proceedings• Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to pastoral staff.• Safeguarding requirements (DDSL)• Liaison with the local authority regarding support work with identified pupils.
Parent Liaison	Mrs. V Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before 8.30am)• Phone call to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also pupils who arrive late.• First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned.• Home visits• Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families.

Attendance analyst	Miss J Fishwick Mrs N Fenlon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks are input into SIMs • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits.
Class teacher	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed attendance registers. • Record correct Sims code • Home Visits