



# Kingsway Community Primary School

## Primary Attendance Policy

Date adopted by Governors	Summer 2021
Date for policy renewal	
Signed by Headteacher	
Signed by Chair of Governors	

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## Statement of intent

Kingsway Community Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Kingsway School takes seriously its responsibilities for education, welfare and its children. Good attendance means that children are more likely to make good, consistent progress in their growth and learning. Where there are concerns about a child's attendance, the school will seek to support and enable good attendance, in order for them to access fully all the opportunities that school has to offer.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

(a) to age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Restorative Behaviour Policy
- Child Missing in Education Policy
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1.3 The Education Act (1996) outlines that:

- (i) The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and (b) to any special need he may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise." (s.7)
- (ii) If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at the school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence." (s.444)
- (iii) "Parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person-
  - (a) Who is not his parent of his but who has parental responsibility responsibility for him
  - or
  - (b) Who has care of him." (s.576)

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

2.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of Kingsway Community Primary School.
- Ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2019) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

2.2. The Headteacher and Attendance Lead are responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of the school, and distributing these to parents.

2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Following the Primary Attendance Policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

2.4. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.

2.5. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

2.6. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

### **3. School expectations of attendance and punctuality**

3.1 The school expects all children to attend school regularly and to arrive on time each day ready to learn. If a child's attendance is 90% or below, they are regarded by the government to be a 'persistent absentee'.

#### **3.2 The School Day and punctuality.**

Under normal circumstances the school day starts at 8.50am and finishes at 3.10pm.

#### **3.3 Readiness to learn:**

Parents are encouraged to ensure children are at their class entry point at the designated time. Learning activity is available from the moment children enter the classroom. The first lesson begins at 9am or in the case of staggered start times, ten minutes after the start of the day.

#### **3.4 Being on time – punctuality:**

Children who arrive late miss out on learning opportunities and this may delay their development and progress.

Late children may miss out on important about what is happening during the school day which may leave them confused and distressed.

Late arrivals can cause disruption for the rest of the class and embarrassment for the child.

### **4. Lateness**

4.1 If a child arrives at school after class has started, the child must be taken to the school office by parent/carer and signed in.

4.2 The school office keeps a record of 'minutes late' which is monitored by staff.

4.3 Registers close at 9.15am

4.4 A child arriving after the start of the school day but before the close of registers will be coded as 'L', indicating they arrived late after the closing of registers.

4.5 A child arriving after the start of the school day and after the closing of registers will be coded as 'U' indicating that their absence is unauthorised due to lateness.

4.6 Where a child's lateness is a cause for concern, the school will notify the parent(s) in writing, summarising attendance and minutes late for a specified period. The school may choose to: invite parents to a meeting to understand factors contributing to lateness and see whether support may be offered and/or set a punctuality target for a fixed period.

## 5. Communication

5.1 The school recognises that the key to a child's learning and development is a close partnership and good communication between the child, parents/carers and school.

5.2 It is our expectation that parents will:

- a. Notify the school by 9am on each day of their child's absence.
- b. Follow the Leave of Absence process (see below) to request approval of planned absences.

5.3 An absence will be unauthorised:

- a. When the school has received no reason/explanation of an absence.
- b. If the school has good reason to doubt the explanation given for an absence.
- c. If a request for Leave of Absence is not approved.

**Only the Headteacher may authorise a child's absence from school.**

## 6. Illness

6.1 If a child is too unwell to come to school parents should inform the school office, by phone or email, as soon as possible on the day of absence and then every subsequent day. A child should return to school as soon as possible following recovery, even if it is the end of the week.

6.2 If a child has a recognised contagious illness the school office will be able to advise how long he/she should be kept off school.

6.3 If a child has a chronic, persistent or recurrent health issue this should be discussed with the SENDCo to enable the school to support his/her learning.

6.4 If a child's health related absences mean that his/her attendance is causing concern, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence of illness- this could be an appointment card, a prescription, prescribed medication or a doctor's note. This will enable the school to understand the nature of the illness and to consider the authorisation of absence for reasons of illness.

6.5 To enable attendance, in certain circumstances and in accordance with the school's medical needs policy, we are able to make arrangements for a parent to administer medication to his/her child during school hours. Any parent who wishes to make such an arrangement should discuss the possibility of this with office staff in the first instance.

## **7. Medical Appointments**

7.1 Parents should seek to minimise medical appointments by:

- a. Wherever possible, making medical appointments outside of school hours.
- b. Ensuring that the child is only absent for the time necessary to attend the appointment, where possible attending school before or after the appointment.

7.2 When a child has an unavoidable appointment during school hours the office should be notified at the earliest opportunity. The office requires evidence of the medical appointment to enable the school to consider authorising absence.

7.3 Children who are absent for part of the school day to attend a medical appointment should be collected from the office by a parent or carer., and in on their return.

7.4 On occasions, where a child has regular medical appointments, which may fall during the school day, arrangements may be made for the appointment to take place on the school premises. The parent or school may choose to discuss the possibility of this to minimise absence.

## **8. Leave of Absence**

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

8.1 Head Teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstance relating to the application.

8.2 Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

8.3 Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

8.4 The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent, i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.

8.5 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a fixed penalty notice.

8.6 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'. This may result in legal action against the parent by way of a fixed penalty notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.



8.7 The Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service have the authority to consider issuing fixed penalty notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy can be found at <https://warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).

8.8 If a fixed penalty notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

8.9 Each application for Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

## **9. Promoting Regular Attendance**

9.1 The school promotes regular attendance in the following ways: assemblies, through school values, PSHE, weekly attendance certificates, end of term and year 'tea party', whole class attendance awards, staff training, parent's newsletter and workshops and Attendance Matters information board in parent waiting area.

9.2 Attendance is discussed during parent consultations. Attendance percentages to date are provided to parents in consultations and written school reports.

9.3 Along with other reports, attendance records are passed to receiving schools when a child moves school.

## **10. Training of Staff**

10.1 The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

10.2 Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

## **11. Monitoring and Responding to Absence**

11.1 School staff are available daily at drop-off or pick-up, if a parent wishes to discuss a child's attendance. A parent may also visit the school office to discuss attendance or arrange an appointment with the Head Teacher or Attendance Lead.

11.2 School staff are committed to the well-being and development of pupils. They will also consider a family's needs and offer additional support where possible to enable children to attend regularly.

11.3 The school operates a policy of First day absence calling- this means that if a child does not attend and the school has not heard from the parent by 9.15am, the office will

contact the parent by calling all the numbers in order of parent preference agreed at the start of the school year.

11.4 If the school has not heard from a parent concerning the reasons for absence by mid-morning, a call may be made to the safeguarding team, if there are any concerns about the safety of that child.

11.5 The school's Attendance Lead will review whole school data half-termly, evaluating the data against the school's target, past performance and in relation to specific groups. The Attendance Lead will identify children whose attendance is of concern and consider appropriate intervention in accordance with the staged approach detailed overleaf. This evaluation should be performed with reference to number of days absent, number of periods of absence and the relevant circumstances.

11.6 If a child's attendance is 90% or below, the school may refer the child to Warwickshire Attendance Service.

## **12. Contact Information**

12.1 Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up to date details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.

## **13. Monitoring and Review**

13.1 The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

13.2 Details of our absence levels can be found on our newsletters.

13.3 This policy is reviewed every year by the Head Teacher and Attendance Lead; the next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2022.

## 14. Staged Approach to the Management of Attendance.

Staged Approach to the Management of Attendance		
Whole school attendance is monitored at a minimum of every half term but more frequently as appropriate to needs of the school or individuals. The whole school attendance target is based on the evaluation of the last 3-5 years previous attendance. Attendance is more closely evaluated of pupils whose attendance is below the whole school target.		
Stage	Trigger	Outcome
1	Attendance falls below the whole school target of 96% (subject to adjustment in line with National Data) and the child's attendance is of concern.	<p>Letter 1 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing concern about attendance</li> <li>Informing the parents of current attendance</li> <li>Enclosing a registration certificate</li> <li>Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities</li> <li>Notifying parents about the child's attendance is being monitored and of the dates of the monitoring period.</li> </ul> <p>Attendance is monitored for a fixed period.</p>
2	Parents have received a Stage 1 letter and attendance remains of concern.	<p>Letter 2 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance</li> <li>Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period</li> <li>Enclosing a registration certificate</li> <li>Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence'.</li> <li>Notifying parents that the child's attendance is being monitored and of the dates of the monitoring period.</li> <li>Requesting that the parents provide medical evidence of absence for illness, to enable the school to consider the authorisation of absence.</li> <li>Welcoming parents to arrange an appointment if they wish to discuss attendance further.</li> </ul> <p>Attendance is monitored for a fixed period.</p>
3	Parents have received a Stage 2 letter and attendance remains of concern.	<p>Letter will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance</li> <li>Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period</li> <li>Enclosing a registration certificate</li> <li>Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence'.</li> <li>Inviting parents to an appointment with the Head discussing attendance, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, and setting an internal school attendance target.</li> <li>Notifying parents that should they choose not to attend, the meeting may take place without them.</li> </ul>

4	Parents have failed an internal school attendance target and attendance is below the level of Persistent Absence (90%)	<p>Letter 4 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance</li> <li>• Informing the parents of attendance during the target period</li> <li>• Enclosing a registration certificate</li> <li>• Notifying parents that the school intends to discuss their child's attendance with its Education Casework Officer, of the Warwickshire Attendance Service's Traded Service, and may take a formal referral.</li> </ul>
	During a monitoring period, attendance improves.	<p>A letter of Praise will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period</li> <li>• Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor attendance to ensure sustained improvement.</li> </ul>

Updated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

J Morrison-Jones

