
Attendance Policy

Date of last review: September 2021
Lead reviewer: Nicola Penlington
Approved by: Local Governing Body
Approved on: October 2020
Date of next review: September 2022

Aim:

To ensure that children receive their full entitlement to teaching and learning opportunities at Keresley Grange Primary Academy by being punctual and obtaining the maximum possible attendance. Daily attendance for all children of statutory school age is a legal requirement.

Context:

The government expectation for attendance is 97%. This is deemed to be the level of attendance that gives pupils the greatest opportunity to achieve to the best of their potential in school, both academically and socially. However, we aim for an attendance rate of 98% for all children, without specific additional medical needs which have been identified by doctors/consultants/paediatricians as being reasonable to result in being an attendance of lower than 98%.

Attendance of less than 95% gives us cause for concern. Attendance below 90% is deemed persistent absence, and is treated as a significant concern.

Persistent Absence:

All pupils who are PA, or are considered to be on track to becoming PA, will be referred to the school's LA Officer and may also be referred to appropriate external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section (1) offence and a £2500 fine and up to a 3 month prison sentence, under a Section (1a) offence.

Registration:

Children must be in school for 8.50 each morning, ready for registration. The school register closes at 9.00am. Any child arriving at school after this is marked as late. There is a small window for lateness; and any child arriving after 9.15 is an **unauthorised** late. An unauthorised late will affect the child's attendance percentage.

The legal status of school registers is regularly stressed to all school staff and meticulous effort is made to ensure they are accurately kept. A register is taken for each morning and afternoon school session. New staff are provided with training in both the detail of accurate register marking, and methods and strategies for encouraging pupils to be punctual and regular in their attendance. Lateness is considered alongside attendance.

Attendance Procedures:

We will contact parents where there are concerns over attendance and punctuality. This will be via telephone, letter and individual meetings with the Headteacher, in the first instance.

Process:

- Daily monitoring of attendance.
- Daily phone call from SLT for absent children with attendance below 95%.
- Text message to parents outlining key learning that has been missed – for children under 90%.
- Learning Sticker in books with a note of absence for all children.
- PPG children – identified child within each class to provide 'catch-up' learning as far as practicably possible.
- Informal discussion with the School Attendance Officer.
- Attendance below 95% - letter from the Headteacher.
- Attendance below 95%, and no improvement following a letter – meeting with the Headteacher and target date set for improvement.
- Failure to respond to the above, for reasonable reasons, referral to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.
 - where there are no firm medical reasons for absence
 - when absence is unauthorised
 - when absence or lateness gives cause for concern
- Meeting with the Local Authority Attendance Officer, School and Family.
- Parenting Plan will be agreed.
- Failure to improve/comply will result in a fine.
 - The penalty is issued for £120 to be paid within 28 days; however, this is discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days. Parents who do not pay a fine within 28 days may be prosecuted.
 - In the event of persistent absence from school when strategies set up for improvement have failed, the Local Authority Attendance Officer will send formal letters warning of prosecution and prepare and present prosecution files to court for non-attendance.

Reporting:

- Individual attendance and punctuality data is recorded on pupil's end of year reports.
- The Head Teacher will report on attendance as part of the termly report to Governors.

Removal from Roll:

In the event of school transfer or a pupil moving to another area, a pupil will normally remain on roll until notification is received from a receiving school. Should no notification be received, the school will make every effort to locate the pupil in conjunction with the Local Authority. If unsuccessful, a missing person form must be completed and sent to the Local Authority and the pupil removed from roll after four weeks. If a pupil fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date following a holiday they also may be removed from roll.

Parental Support and Responsibilities:

It is expected that parents actively value the importance of education provided by Keresley Grange Primary Academy for their children. The importance placed on regular attendance and punctuality is explained to parent when they first enrol their child in the school. At different times through the school year attendance issues are also reiterated in school newsletters. Keresley Grange Primary Academy have high expectations of punctuality and attendance and expects parental support in this, in understanding the importance of every minute of school time.

Parents are regularly informed that should their child be unavoidably absent they must telephone the office on the first day of absence before close of register at 9.15 am. The **exact reason** for absence (not just 'ill' or 'unwell') and the expected date of return. Medical appointments should be validated with the letter or appointment card.

A telephone call will be required in all circumstances. If no reason is provided, a letter/text message will be sent home asking for the reason for absence.

Parents have been provided with a pack of work to show how much learning takes place during a school week, and examples shown on the school website.

The school reserves the right to not authorise an absence. If the school refuse to authorise an absence, parents will be informed. Contact from the parent is essential for the authorisation of absence. Should no contact be forthcoming, the school will contact the parents by telephone or by letter. A visit to the home may follow.

At planned days during the term, the Headteacher and Learning Mentor will spot check all of the children not attending school on that day and undertake a home-visit.

Holidays:

Keresley Grange Primary Academy recognises that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. Therefore no holidays are authorised, regardless of the reason.

Holidays taken, will result in a fine – following the Coventry City Council procedures: https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/33563/fixed_penalty_notice_leaflet_july_2020

Further information can be found <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/attendance>

Coventry considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that Penalty Notices will be used where unauthorised absence occurs:

- Leave of absence or holidays in term time and/or excessive delayed return. Parents can be fined when a pupil has had a minimum of 10 school sessions (i.e. 5 school days) lost to a holiday or leave in term time.

- Inappropriate parentally condoned absence, including persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (those for which the school cannot or has not given permission).

Penalty Notices are issued by post to the home address.

Payment is required within 21 days of receipt of a Notice; and this is £60 per parent, per child and £120 per parent per child, if paid after this, but within 28 days.

Should the school believe, through reasonable evidence that a holiday has been taken and another reason given, then a fine will follow if the holiday meets the above criteria.

Emails are no longer accepted as a request for a term-time holiday; and parents are required to complete a school holiday form which can be collected from the school office.

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

Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.

Amendments have been made to the 2007 penalty notices regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure that his/her children's regular attendance at school. The penalty is issued for £120 to be paid within 28 days; however, this is discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days. Parents who do not pay a fine within 28 days may be prosecuted.

The procedure for issuing Penalty Notices will be in accordance with the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Protocol.

Religious Observance

Keresley Grange Primary Academy acknowledge the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. Parents/carers are requested to give advance notice if they intend their child to be absent.

It is reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Rewards and Strategies:

The achievement of pupils with an attendance of 98%+ will be celebrated on a regular basis, as will pupils with significant improvement in attendance. Reward systems will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are kept fresh and motivational. The school will look for every opportunity to raise the profile of the importance of good attendance with pupils and parents. The school also aims to help pupils develop their own motivation for daily, punctual attendance.

The following rewards and strategies are currently in place:

- Attendance Boards in the foyer of the school.
- Attendance Boards in each classroom (children with medical concerns not included)
- Weekly Class Attendance prize.
- Half Termly reward for all children with 98%+ for that half term.
- Family activities to encourage commitment to school.
- Target families invited in for activities.
- Forest School/Gardening – additional time for lower attending groups of children statistically – i.e., Pupil Premium
- Curriculum activities – Y5/6 review of real life attendance policies from key employers.