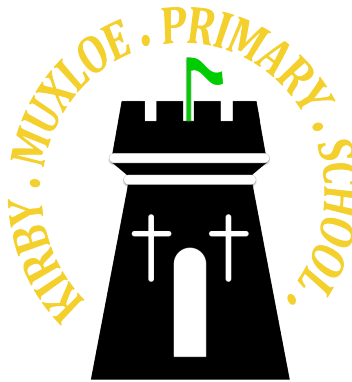


Kirby Muxloe Primary School



Pupil Attendance Policy

Status: Voluntary

Date adopted by Trust Board: October 2022

Date for review: Autumn 2024

Kirby Muxloe Primary School is committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance. We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for children to achieve their best academic attainment and to give every pupil the best educational experience possible.

For a child to reach their educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promoting punctuality

The law entitles every child of compulsory age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education. Where their parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have the additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means the child must attend school every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being ill or being given permission for an absence in advance from school.

The DfE has produced guidance for schools: Working together to improve school attendance. Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

The policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school.

It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed that attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

The policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which all pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, everyday the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

School Attendance, legislation and guidance.

This policy meets the requirements of the Working Together to Improve School Attendance for the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibilities measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
 - Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
 - Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

Promoting Regular Attendance

At KMPS, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and well-being.

Please see the chart which shows how absence impacts attendance:

Every School Day Counts		
Attendance during the school year	Equates to days absent	Which is approximately
97%	6 days	1 week
94%	10 days	2 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
75%	48 days	10 weeks
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this well we will:

- Promote attendance in our newsletters
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance (95%)

Requesting a Leave of Absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form, available from the school office, in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds the parents/carers can be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance with the code.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect those or learning. Any pupils absence or lateness disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class too. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing regular absence from school without a good reason may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical, or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the close of register are marked a 'U'. This indicates they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as absence for the session.
- Shopping trips
- Their own birthdays or family birthdays
- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headteacher.
- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Appendix 1 summarises the different authorised/ unauthorised absence and related codes.

Appendix 2 explains other types of absence

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason: this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will need the full support and cooperation of parents to resolve this with the support of school as necessary.

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent from school the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 8 am using Weduc, email (admin@kmprimary.leics.sch.uk) or phone call (01162393410). We have a 24hr answer phone for out of school hours.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8am.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. Please make sure that you have given school at least two contact numbers.
- Contact you if your child's attendance is below 95%
- Meet with you to discuss how we can increase attendance and punctuality
- Refer the matter to the LA for support if attendance deteriorates.

We regularly monitor all absence, and the reasons given, thoroughly

If absence continues we will:

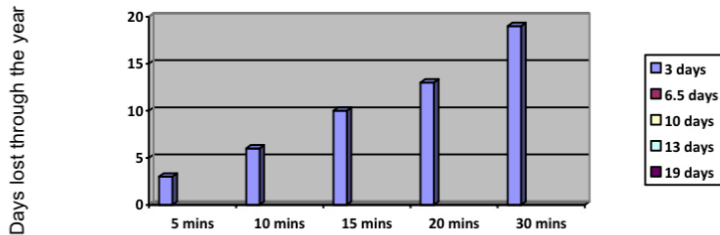
- Contact you if your child's attendance is below 95%, or where punctuality is a concern.
- Invite you into school to meet with the class teacher and Attendance Lead if absence is persistent.
- Create a personalised action/support plan to address any barriers to attendance or punctuality.
- Support your child in school with pastoral support if needed.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate.
- Refer to the Local Authority if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Punctuality/Lateness

Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. The school day starts at 8:30am and the register is taken by 8:45. Your child will receive a late mark 'L' if they are not in school by 8:45. After the gates are locked the children are required to come in to school via the School Office, accompanied by a parent/carer in the younger year groups and provide a reason for their lateness which is recorded.

Pupils who arrive late can disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital input and work and important messages from their class teacher. Lateness is monitored closely and the school will contact you if the lateness is persistent. This will be through the class teacher at first, followed up with a phone call and/or letter and meeting with the Attendance Lead if it continues. If you need any support and advice or are having problems getting your child to school on time please approach your class teacher.

The following graph clearly illustrates how being late can add up to a loss of learning:



As you can see, if your child is late for just 5 minutes every day that can add up to over three days lost each year and arriving 15 minutes late each day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year: for that reason it is imperative that your child is punctual.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may have occasional time off school due to illness, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved through the school, the parents and the child. If a parent/ carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide necessary support. Within school we have the expertise of different teachers as well as our Attendance Lead (Sharon Jackson) and the Pastoral Support (Suzanne Carvell). We can also use outside agencies such as the school nurse, early help and family support or relevant Local Authority teams. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may well be invited to attend a team meeting to consider what is working well, what needs to improve and evaluate support. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and reviewed regularly.

Some pupils can face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils with long term medical needs or have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities within the family. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers. We can discuss reasonable adjustments, including a reduced timetable, phased return and additional support.

Supporting good attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong relationship between the school, parents and the child.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional

To support your child's attendance in school, make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that they leave home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value their education

Children Missing Education (CME) :

- Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to identify of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.
- There is a stringent local authority CME procedure that schools must follow
- All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Local Authority attendance support.

Local Authority Attendance Specialists will support schools with Targeted Support Meetings (TSMs). Support will included :

- Communication and advice - for example, regularly bringing schools and trusts together to share best practice
- Targeting support meetings (termly conversations with schools) - for example, to agree targeted actions for specific pupils and cohorts identified in the data
- Multi-disciplinary support for families - for example, to provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families
- Legal intervention

The LAs is currently transitioning to meet these expectations.

Attendance - DFE summary of responsibilities effective from Sept. 22. This includes, parents/carers, schools and LA https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

Appendix 1: absence codes

Authorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late Arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study Leave	Pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Appendix 2: Other Types of Absence

Religious observance

Where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Removal of a Child from School

If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to the junior school/secondary school, parents are asked to:

1. Give the school 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
2. Arrange a meeting to discuss home education. We strongly discourage parents from this option and would aim to work with you to keep your child in school

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.

Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they may wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Prior attendance will also be taken into account. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Prior attendance will also be taken into account. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

Absence of a child from a Traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away, the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.