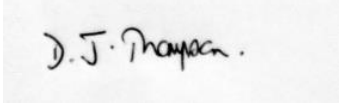




Keighley St. Andrew's C of E Primary School and Nursery
Attendance Policy

Policy revised	July 2017
Date of Next Review	Triennial
Signed	20/09/2017 

Good attendance at school is important for your child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. Under current government legislation, unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy and all absence figures have to be reported to Local Authority and the Department for Education and are recorded on a child's annual report. It is also important that your child arrives on time for school, as the start of the day establishes the learning activities for the day. Lateness is recorded in the register.

Every child's attendance and punctuality is looked at carefully over each half term as a minimum.

Incentives for good Attendance Include:

- Bronze, Silver and Gold 100% badges
- Prize draws with 'stationery / book tokens'
- Annual prize draws
- Spot prizes / punctuality raffle
- Weekly trophies (best attending classes)
- Golden Stickers
- The prizes reward individuals and classes

1. Extended leave and family holidays in term time:

NO FAMILY HOLIDAYS OR EXTENDED LEAVE WILL BE GRANTED for any child unless in exceptional circumstances which must be discussed with the head teacher. Families must note that if they decide to take unauthorised leave e.g. go on extended leave in term time, then school will actively pursue the issuance of a fixed penalty notice which could lead to a minimum fine of £60 per child per parent.

Eg. If you have 3 children with a mother and father, then each parent will be fined £60 per child 3 x £60 = £180 which would be £360 fine for the family.

Additionally, unauthorised attendance may result in your child losing their school place and being taken off roll.

2. Absence from School

Parents/ guardians are responsible for ensuring their children attend school every day but where a child is ill and it is not appropriate for them to attend, then absence will be authorised. However, in the past, a minority of parents have abused the system, resulting in their children having extremely low attendance. For this reason, when children are absent through illness, we ask that they see a doctor and that the appointment card and medication is shown at the school office.

- Illness will not be accepted as a reason for absence where children have regular, minor illness which cannot be substantiated.
- Staff will ask questions when parents telephone about illness so that they can give the correct advice about how long the child should remain absent etc.

Parents must note that where a child has ten unauthorised sessions (1 session is half a day so 10 sessions = 5 days) in any 6 week period, then this could lead to the issuance of a fixed penalty notice which could lead to a minimum fine of £60 per child per parent, if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Parents must take every reasonable step to ensure that they bring their child to school. School will work alongside families to resolve any issues and offer support from our Early Help team (if a home based issue). Absences due to a child/ parent feeling upset will not be authorised (unless there are exceptional circumstances which the Head teacher has authorised).

3. Children Missing from Education (CME)

To safeguard our pupils/ families, school follows the local authority guidelines to ensure that agreed procedures are followed when children are missing; this includes children who do not return from leave of absence within 10 days of the stated return date; families whom school has heard have moved out of the area but have failed to notify school. School will endeavour to contact families through phonecalls, home visits and letters and will refer families to the Education Social Work Service. If children are deemed vulnerable (child protection) the Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow Child Protection referral protocol in addition to the above measures.

Children missing from or absconding from school

School follows its own policy and procedures regarding the event of a child going missing from school (absconding/leaving grounds). It also follows Local Authority guidance on 'Reporting children to the police as missing persons' (September 2017). If a child is known to be at risk of 'going missing/absconding' from school, a risk assessment will be prepared for that child.

At Keighley St. Andrew's we aim to reduce persistent absenteeism/ lateness with the following actions:

Regular monitoring by the attendance team

Attendance code data is used to identify patterns, trends and triggers, at a pupil, group (eg: Pupil premium or SEN) class, year and whole school level.

First day absence and poor punctuality for vulnerable children is reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead and team and followed up swiftly with phone-calls, home visits and meetings.

Attendance Challenge

Any child with attendance below 90% in a 5 – 6 week period will be placed on the 100% Attendance Challenge for 4 weeks. This is a closely monitored program to encourage attendance to improve. If attendance does not improve during this time then there will be a referral to Education Social Welfare and this will involve meetings with the Educational Welfare Officer and Senior leaders in school.

Attendance Blitz

The Parent Involvement Worker and Educational Welfare Officer will make unannounced home visits to any parents/carers who have not notified school of their child/children's absence. In addition, they may also visit the homes of any absent children who fall into the persistent absentee group.

Parent Panel Meetings

Parents/Carers who fail to meet persistent absence targets or for whom punctuality is a concern will be invited to meet with the Education Welfare Officer and school leader/s to discuss barriers, set targets and identify support if needed.

Early Help

The school safeguarding team will contact families of children with persistent absence and meet with them to discuss barriers and offer support .

Early Intervention monitoring for Pupils with attendance between 90 - 95%

These pupils receive a letter reminding them that attendance has dropped and their attendance will be closely monitored for the next 4- 5 weeks. Parents / carers will be informed that they may be referred to the Educational Social Work service / Attendance Challenge if attendance continues to decline.

The following is taken from the Keighley First Locality Agreed Attendance Policy

School Holiday Patterns

All Keighley First schools will:

- Agree to follow a common holiday pattern throughout the locality.

Religious Observance

All Keighley First schools will :

- Use the flexibility available from occasional days and disaggregated staff training days to enable parents to celebrate Eid without affecting children's attendance at school.
- Agree to engage with the local mosques with a view to minimising disruption regarding religious festivals.

Medical Matters

Examination of attendance data for Keighley First demonstrates that the chief reason for absence is Illness (Code I).

All Keighley First schools will:

- Follow medical guidance regarding number of days absence for specific conditions
- Regularly monitor levels of absence due to illness for individual pupils
- Consult with the School Health Service to assess the reasons given for illness absence and provide guidance to parents.
- Encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school time.
- Engage with the local health providers to encourage the making of appointments where possible outside of school time.
- Ask parents to provide a medical certificate for medical absences longer than five days.

Lateness

Schools in Keighley First recognise that lateness is not acceptable as it disrupts lessons and may lead to more serious absence. Punctuality is a life skill which must be taught and encouraged.

All Keighley First schools will

- Follow DfE guidance which states that schools should close the register to pupils 30 minutes after the start of the session.
- Apply the following coding:
 - L is used if a child arrives after the register has been called, but within 30 minutes of the start of the school day.
 - U is used if a child arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of the school day.
- Examine their practice surrounding the start of each session to encourage and facilitate the prompt arrival of children at the beginning of each session.

Unauthorised Absences

All Keighley First schools will

- Not authorise absences for pupils with less than 90% attendance. Absences will not be authorised unless the parent provides medical evidence, e.g. an appointment card, recently prescribed medication etc.
- Not authorise absences for unacceptable reasons, for example:
 - My brother/sister was ill.
 - We went shopping or I had my hair cut.
 - We took my grandparents to the airport.
 - We were moving house or we went on holiday without authorisation.
 - It was my birthday.
 - We went to visit relatives.
 - I was late so I stayed at home.
 - We went to visit someone in hospital.
- Will contact the parents of the pupils who regularly have unauthorised absence in an attempt to improve attendance. If the school is unable to achieve this the child and family will be referred to the Education Social Work Service who may use legal interventions to improve attendance
- When a pupil has more than 10 sessions unauthorised absence in a six week period, this may result in a warning being given by Children's Services of the possible issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any unauthorised absence in the following 4 weeks will result in a Penalty Notice being issued. The Penalty Notice is for £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.