

Kirkby Church of England Primary School



Mission Statement

“Building on a tradition of achievement and values in a caring environment” At Kirkby C of E Primary School, we aim to enable children to grow in confidence, curiosity and independence, with a positive mind-set that enables them to try new things and reach for their goals.

Attendance Policy

September 2025

KIRKBY C OF E ATTENDANCE POLICY

Information for Parents

“Attendance matters...”

Philosophy

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. At Kirkby C of E Primary School we are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all our pupils. Regular absence from school breaks the continuity of a child's learning and consequently his/ her progress is significantly limited.

Similarly persistent lateness is disruptive to the individual, the teacher and the rest of the class leading to loss of valuable teaching time. If allowed to go unchecked this could set a pattern for future behaviour and encourage disaffection.

Kirkby C of E believes teachers, parents, carers, pupils and all members of our school communities have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

As a school we aim to:

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Maximise attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Provide advice, support and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Early Help, School Health and other partner agencies.

To achieve these aims the school will:

- Carry out first day response to unexplained absences.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality closely.
- Communicate effectively the policy for attendance and punctuality.
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Work closely with School Attendance Service, Health Services and Social Services.
- Provide personalised support for children and vulnerable groups where attendance and punctuality are a concern.
- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality during assemblies with prizes, rewards and certificates.

Expectations of Parents/Carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/ carer legal responsibility. (Section 444 of the Education Act 1966 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

However, parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular attendance at school. Parents/carers should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. In addition they should regard themselves as partners with the

school in the education of their children. This means instilling in their children a respect for education and those who deliver it. Parents\carers should impress upon their children the need to observe the schools' code of conduct and reinforce this through discipline at home.

A parent/carers should:

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- Contact school on the first morning by 8.00aam if your child is unable to attend, giving the reason for the absence and an indication of when the child will return. This may take the form of a note, parent app, phone call, email, leave of absence request and personal contact.
- If you receive a phone call or email as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is safeguarded appropriately.
- Contact the school office 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
- Arrange dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.
- Bring your child to school before and returning them after a hospital or other medical appointment.
- Keep us updated by telephone, email or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness. Provide medical evidence for absences of 5 days or more.
- Encourage your child to attend school.

If a pupil is absent school will:

- Telephone or email on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 10.00am.
- If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with all contacts shared with school.
- Follow up all unexplained absences after registration, with a phone call.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, on the Parent App, the school prospectus, the Home-School agreement and the school website.
- Send Red, Amber and Green letters home every half term informing parents / carers of their child's attendance and monitoring level. (Level 1 – Green above 96%, Level 2 Amber 91% -94% and Level 3 Letters – Red below 90%)
- Publish your child's attendance rate with her/his annual school report.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality and support those children and families who are at risk of falling below expected levels.
- Encourage and motivate the pupils to attend regularly through positive encouragement and rewards. (See appendix 1)
- If a pupil's absence continues the parent/ carer will be invited to meet the learning mentor, SLT, and or teacher as appropriate.
- If a parent/ carer does not attend the meeting and engage in support offered by school or external agencies and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, he parents/ carers may be issued with Education Penalty notice.

Understanding types of absences

Kirkby CofE Primary school has to legally record every absence. This is why it is important that parents/ carers directly inform school regarding the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Parents are unwell or unforeseen family circumstances (*call us, we can help to get your child to school*)
- Late after registration (9.20am)
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child’s birthday
- Holidays

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 work together to gain a resolution.

Parent and carers are asked to contact the class teacher in the first instance.

Severe Absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education (DfE). This cohort of pupils are a priority group and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance. It is essential that parents/ carers work in partnerships with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

Leave of Absence

The law does not give any entitlement to parents/ carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the Head teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governing Body who is supporting Knowsley Council's Guidance. Any application of leave must be truly exceptional circumstances and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The school support the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils. The Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006 make provision for holidays in term time only with the permission of the Head teacher. The regulations state that holidays in term time should only be authorised under special circumstances & that under exceptional circumstances.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking. Please complete the leave of absence on the parent app or ask the school office for a form.

Penalty Notices

Parents/carers are committing an offence if their child fails to attend school regularly. In some circumstances parents/carers, as a last resort, may be prosecuted under section 444 of The Education Act 1996. A penalty notice is an early intervention strategy, which does not require an appearance in court whilst still securing an improvement in a child's attendance. Non-payment of a penalty notice will trigger, where appropriate, the fast track prosecution process under the provision of section 444, of the 1996 Education Act.

Reasons for Fixed Penalty Notices

- Clear and open truancy
- Parents and carers actively allowing absence
- If a child has 10 sessions (5 days) of consecutive unauthorised absences for a holiday
- Persistent late arrival in school (late after register closed) The Department for Education guidance in respect of registration period is 30 minutes, if for example the close of register will be 9.20am . A pupil arriving after this time may be marked as U (late after register closes) which is an unauthorised absence.
- Intervention strategies have failed to bring about an improvement in attendance For more information please Knowsley Council Website

The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd offence another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

More information can be found following the links below.

[Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct September 25 Final.pdf](#)

[Knowsley Council's responsibility | Knowsley Council](#)

Punctuality

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.

How we manage punctuality

- Classroom doors open at 8.40am. Morning registration is at 8.50am. This is the time your child must be in the line in the playground/or the classroom.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance. Registers close 30 minutes after the start of the school day.
- We will let you know by letter or phone call if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- If you are unexpectedly delayed at the end of the school day, please ring school to let us know. Children who are often collected late will be placed in after school club and a charge for their supervision will be made.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be taken to the main reception area where we will endeavour to contact parent/guardian. In the unlikely event that we are unable to contact anyone we would have no option but to inform social services and the police.

School will:

Contact parent/ carer if a child is late more than once in the week and offer support. If punctuality does not improve, parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Learning Mentor to discuss the any issue and support offered.

If a parent/ carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact school office who will inform learning mentor or SLT who will offer support to resolve the problem.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The education welfare officer – provides support for parents/ carers and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school. The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family (at an

AIMS meeting), but if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupils attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the local authority.

School outings / visits / residential trips.

Opportunities for children to attend these activities are provided. If they do not go, the children **are expected in school**, where alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Governors **will not authorise** absence if the child does not attend school during this time, unless there is a valid medical reason (*a bad cold is not acceptable*) or medical certificate provided or there are exceptional family circumstances.

School Procedures

- Log kept of children who arrive late. All lates are recorded on SIMS.
- Log kept of all children daily for whom no notification for absence has been made and of phone calls made.
- Reason provided from parents/ carers are logged on SIMS.
- If no reason for absence is provided a letter will be sent home requesting an explanation for the absence.
- If we have concerns regarding your child attendance or punctuality we will inform you by letter or invite you into school for a meeting.
- A Key Action List is compiled every six weeks by the Attendance Officer (LA) and the Learning Mentor. The list consists of all children who are below 90%. Poor attendance is categorised using 4 levels.

People responsible for Attendance Matters at Kirkby Church of England Primary School

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

Removal from Roll

From 1s September 2016 changes were introduced to the pupil registration regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As schools, we are now required to: inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:
Provide school with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing.

If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above the information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's services, the police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Knowsley: Attendance Graduated Response

<u>Level 1</u> Universal – School based interventions.	• First day response. • Phone Call(s) class teacher/ learning mentor/ SLT • Correspondence – highlighting concerns. • Meeting in school with parent/ carer. • Attendance Panel – SLT /SAS • Home Visits. • Pick up / Drop off. • Learning Mentor intervention/ class teacher intervention. • Support Plan – targets set and reviewed. • External agency support. (eg school nurse) • Knowsley Early Help Assessment. • Rewards
<u>Level 2 Step 2</u> Traded School Attendance Officer	• Traded School Attendance Officer arranges an AIMS meeting. • TSAS decides what external agencies to invite. • TSAS creates an Action Plan. • TSAS Early Intervention support and strategies. • TSAS reviews action plan after 3 weeks. • 6 week monitoring period.
<u>Level 3- Family First</u>	• TSAS follows the step up process. • Referral to Family First or Statutory Officer. • TAF meeting.
<u>Level 4 – Social Care</u>	• Referral to Attendance for Vulnerable Children Group for Educational neglect or Level 4 Children's social care.

Non engagement Level 1 -3 MARF referral.

Parents/ carers are informed of their child's Level and offered appropriate support every half term. Attendance of all 4 Levels is monitored closely. Throughout the half term parents/ carers will receive letters or phone calls requesting an intervention or just for school to share important information.

All pupils whose attendance is below 90% the previous academic year or half term will be monitored closely the following half term. Any illness will need to be supported by medical evidence. Children and parents will receive support and offered an intervention.

All pupils whose punctuality was a concern over the previous academic year or half term will be monitored the following half term. Children and parents will receive support and offered an intervention. They will have targets and these will be discussed at parent meetings.

An attendance panel meeting (consisting of either school nurse, senior leader, learning mentor and SAS) can be held if a pupil's attendance falls into any of the category's below any half term.

1. If a pupils absence falls below 90% during the half term.
2. 5 days absence with no medical evidence.
3. Persistent lateness. 5 lates or more.
4. If your child is classed as a PA (Persistent absentee) in the previous half term and attendance continues to be a problem.

The local authority attendance service will conduct a home visit if a parent(s)/ carer(s) fail to engage with any of the above interventions. Or school feel the need to request the intervention.

“Every day counts...”

Appendix 1

Rewards for good and improved attendance include:

Class Rewards

Weekly

Weekly rewards and or initiatives to support punctuality and attendance with individual classes. eg. 100% weekly raffle. One pupil from every class who has been in school every day is entered into a raffle. They receive a certificate and a small treat.

- Weekly class winner gets to sit on the benches for all assemblies the following week and have toast on Friday.

Half Termly

- Class with highest attendance percentage receives certificate and Gold Medal and class treat chosen by the school attendance Ambassadors.
- Any child whose punctuality has improved receives a certificate.
- Any child whose attendance has improved after being monitored receives a certificate.

Class with highest attendance at the end of every half term receives extra 10 minutes playtime.

Class with the best punctuality at the end of every half term receives an extra 10 minutes playtime.

Annually

- Class with best attendance receives a special prize such as reward activity.

Individual Rewards

Term 1

- All children with 98-100% attendance from September - December will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge)
- Improved attendance award - certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - certificate.

Term 2

- All children with 98%-100% attendance from January – April will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge)
- All children with 98%-100% attendance from September – April will receive the **Silver Award** (silver certificate, silver badge)
- Improved attendance award - certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - and certificate.

Term 3

- All children with 98%-100% attendance from May – July will receive the **Bronze Award** (bronze certificate, bronze badge)
- All children with 98%-100% attendance from January – July will receive the **Silver Award** (silver certificate, silver badge)
- All children with 98%-100% attendance from September – July will receive the **Gold Award** (gold certificate, gold badge) and will be invited to attend our end of year trip.
- Improved attendance award - certificate.
- Improved punctuality award - certificate.

Policy Written: September 2025

Sent to the Governors: November 2025

Next Review: November 2026

Staff Responsible: Head teacher | Attendance Lead