



Introduction

This document outlines the purpose, nature and operational management of pupil attendance in Kelsey Primary School.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Accidents / Illness
- Child protection
- Complaints
- Disability / Equality
- Freedom of Information
- Health and Safety

Aims

The attendance policy is designed to:

- Promote high levels of pupil achievement by promoting good attendance.
- Provide a framework for monitoring pupil attendance and taking appropriate action if attendance falls below acceptable levels without good reason.
- State the policy of the school with regard to attendance for parents and guardians to understand.

Legal Framework

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
 - Amendments to the above dated 2010 and 2011.
- The Data Protection Act 1998.

Statement of Intent

Kelsey Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

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Aims:

- All pupils in our school have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil will be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

Expectations:

Our school has regular day-to-day contact with parents and has an efficient system for contacting parents when needed. This means that many parents are easily contactable which helps us to resolve problems and concerns quickly. If there is a problem relating to attendance parents would be invited to a meeting to discuss the problem discreetly. This may perhaps be by telephone call or letter and then discussing with them the reasons why a possible referral is being made on to the Education Welfare Service or another agency. It would be emphasized that the expectation of this is to support and assist the family. If there are Child Protection concerns then the Lincolnshire Area Child Protection Procedures would be followed immediately.

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To ensure their children to attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework (when appropriate).
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

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Parents and pupils can expect the following from our school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the student or their parent).
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education.

Encouraging Attendance through Good Practice And Rewards

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- A school certificate for 100% attendance every term (3 times a year)
- A certificate for 100% attendance for the year provided by Lincolnshire County Council.
- If necessary our school will establish a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.
- The efficient use of the registration records kept centrally on the school administration system provides valuable, year group, class and pupil level attendance data which enables speedy analysis and timely responses by our school.

Responding To Non-Attendance:

On the first and second day of non-attendance:

- If the child is absent and no explanation is available a member of the support staff will endeavour to make contact with the parents/carers for an explanation.

After three days of unexplained absence the school will respond in the following way.

- If a note or telephone call has still not been received from parents/carers explaining why the child was absent, the parents will be contacted by telephone again to allow them an opportunity to explain the absence.
- Where there is no response, a letter will be sent.
- If there is still no response then the school will contact the Education Welfare Officer (E.W.O.) to explain the circumstances. This may result in a visit being made by the E.W.O.
- Where non-attendance continues, the case will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer for the school and further action planned. This may, in appropriate cases, result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service (E.W.S.).
- After 10 days, unless other action is planned, the parents will be invited by to attend a meeting in school. This meeting will include the appropriate staff,

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E.W.O. parent and pupil and will aim to identify and solve the problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school.

- If there is no improvement, then the case will be discussed again with the E.W.O. with a view to a formal referral being made to the E.W.S. if one has not already been made at an earlier stage. If a referral had already been made then the case will be reviewed and further action planned.

Reintegration.

- The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence will require special planning. For example, it will be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme as detailed in the DfES Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Guidance (Circular 10/99)
- Designated staff will be made responsible for deciding on the programme for return and for the management of that programme.
- All staff will be made aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Support from the S.E.N. Coordinator will be available.
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The success of the Pastoral Support Programme will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the young person and parents. Programmes will be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders may need to be considered as and when the need arises (the school will refer to the law guide and relevant legislation if it feels necessary).

Staff will be notified of the return of the long-term absentees via the staff notices.

Leave of Absence

- The Governing Body will authorise the Headteacher to grant leave of absence to pupils. Leave of absence for family holidays is restricted to 10 school days a year in special circumstances. A longer period may be granted in exceptional circumstances. The decision rests with the Headteacher. The families have no “right” to such leave.
- The application for leave must be made in writing in advance by the parent the pupil normally resides with.

7 School Organisation:

In order for our attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff makes attendance a high priority and conveys to pupils the importance and value of education.

In addition there are specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff:

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Head Teacher:

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, pupils and parents.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence
- To liaise with the E.W.O.

Class Teachers:

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To follow-up immediately any unexplained absence by asking support staff to contact parents.
- To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To inform the Headteacher of concerns in a timely manner.

Governors:

- A Governor has a specific role/interest in monitoring attendance and/or policies. **(Mrs. Penny Crosby)**
- Governors play a valuable role through representation at school attendance panels, parents evenings, etc.
- Receive and monitor attendance progress reports at Curriculum and Pupil Committee Meetings.
- Any areas of concern are raised at full Governor Meetings.

Parents:

- Contact with school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Provide signed and dated absence notes for all absences.
- Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.

Education Welfare Service:

The Education Welfare Service has been described as the "attendance enforcement arm" of most local authorities (DES 1991) which complements the role of the school.

Lincolnshire Education Welfare Service strives to provide a service that recognises the uniqueness of the school and the community it serves. In accordance with the E.W.S. Remit and Procedures they support schools in a variety of ways:

- They will liaise with identified school staff
- Where a referral is accepted, they will undertake home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- Through group work with identified groups of pupils.
- Where necessary they will instigate legal proceedings on behalf of the L.E.A. including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and applying for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- They will accept referrals that meet the E.W.S. referral criteria, initiate contact with parents or carers and undertake assessments.
- They will plan and review casework.
- They will provide feedback to schools.
- They offer strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance, the employment of young people and young people involved in performing.

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- They will support schools in the establishment and management of school attendance panels.
- They will support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts.

The Office Staff:

Our school's administrative staff plays a vital role in supporting the school's attendance and absence management strategies.

- Produce updates from weekly registers, error sheets for teachers' information, termly % information, and individual children's attendance records – weekly and termly.
- Provide information for the Headteacher on % attendance, authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Take messages on absences from parents/carers to relay to teachers.
- Phone parents/carers regarding absences.
- Check attendance registers and enter information on to the school management system.

Liaising With External Agencies

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

Poor school attendance may be a symptom of a wide range of institutional, community, family or individual circumstances. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school or the E.W.S. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people. The E.W.S. may be able to help schools establish multi-agency meetings or may be able to advise on how schools can become involved in existing local arrangements.

Other Agencies to be used where appropriate in individual cases.

- Educational Behavioural and Support Services.
- Educational Psychologists.
- Special Educational Needs Service.
- Social Services.
- Connexions.
- Youth Service.
- Local police.

School Attendance Targets

The Governing Body will approve overall absence targets which are presented to them by the headteacher.

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. We have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Our school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents our school from

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sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

Policy Information:

Date adopted by the governing body: December 2012
Policy Written by: Magnus Smedley (Headteacher)
Policy Review Date: July 2017

Signed:

Chair of governors:

Headteacher:

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Appendix 1

Guidance for Class Teachers at Kelsey Primary School:

Suggested Methodology

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities.

The Importance of Registration:

- Our school attendance registers, must be kept up to date. At the BEGINNING of each morning and afternoon session, pupils must be marked present or absent.
- Our registers must be kept in ink.
- If a child is present in the morning enter /.
- If a child is present in the afternoon enter \.
- If a child is absent at either session enter 0 with the symbol for categorising the absence.
- N – No reason yet provided for absence (unauthorised)
- B – Educated Off Site (not dual registration) (authorised)
- C – Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another code) (authorised)
- D – Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) (authorised)
- E – Excluded (no alternative provision made) (authorised)
- F – Extended family holiday (agreed) (authorised)
- G – Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement) (unauthorised)
- H – Family holiday (agreed) (authorised)
- I – Illness (not medical or dental etc. appointments) (authorised)
- J – Interview (authorised)
- M – Medical/Dental appointments (authorised)
- – Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code or description) (unauthorised)
- P – Approved sporting activity (authorised)
- R – Religious observance (authorised)
- S – Study leave (authorised)
- T – Traveller absence (authorised)
- V - Educational visit or trip (authorised)
- W – Work experience (authorised)
- L – Late (before registers close i.e. after 9.00 a.m. but before 9.30 a.m. and after 1.00 p.m. but before 1.30 p.m.) (present but recorded as late)
- U – Late (after registers close i.e. after 9.30 a.m. and after 1.30 p.m. and no reasonable explanation) (late and recorded as unauthorised)
- X – Non-compulsory school age absence (not counted in possible attendances)
- Y – Enforced closure
- Z – Pupil not yet on roll (not counted in possible attendances)
- # - School closed to pupils

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- Teachers are aware at Kelsey Primary School that accurate marking of registers, and appropriate maintenance of electronic and computerised systems has a significant impact on overall school attendance and absence figures.
- Attendance registers, and bound copies of electronic registration print outs are kept for a minimum of 3 years from the date that the last entries were made.

Unauthorised Absence:

At Kelsey Primary School every effort is made to ensure that if a child is absent a reason is established as quickly as possible.

If a child arrives late (outside of 30 minutes from the beginning of the session i.e. after 9.30 a.m. and after 1.30 p.m.) this will be an unauthorised absence and a 'U' should be written in black in a black 0.

If a child has more than two weeks holiday per year then the days over the initial two weeks will be allocated as unauthorised and will be marked with a 'G' in black in a black 0.

Categorising Absence:

- Only the school, in the context of the law can authorise absence, a note or explanation from parents does not guarantee authorisation. If a class teacher does not accept the explanation offered for absence as a valid reason then the matter must be referred to the Head Teacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence are reported to the Headteacher for him to follow up.

Filling in registers

At the beginning of the academic year

It is the teachers' responsibility to fill in the names of the children, their sex, and their date of birth. Teachers may wish to fill in other details such as addresses, telephone numbers, post codes, names of parents and any other notes but these are all optional (as all this information is kept in the office and is readily available) – this task could be given to a Teaching Assistant.

Please leave a space between the year groups where children arriving mid-term may be added.

Any notes the teacher wishes to keep can be entered on page 2 and 3 of the register.

At the start of each term

It is the teachers' responsibility to fill in the dates for the week endings and the individual dates for the term (including half – term). It is advised that these are all done at the start of the term to save time in the future – this task could be given to a Teaching Assistant.

Each day

It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that the register is completed at the appropriate times (see guidance offered in The Importance of Registration). Teachers should ensure that the daily grid at the bottom of the page is filled in

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accurately indicating how many children were present at each session, how many were absent (both authorised and unauthorised).

The half term break should be dated as other weeks but left blank. Some indication should be written that this week was half term.

If the school is closed on a term day for inclement weather etc. then this should be indicated with the appropriate letter.

Each week

It is the teachers' responsibility to complete the weekly grid at the base of the page indicating total possible attendance, total actual attendance, number on roll in the class, times the register was opened, authorised absences and unauthorised absences.

It is the teachers' responsibility to complete the individual attendance totals at the end of each section on a weekly basis. The individual totals should be completed and the class total indicated at the base of the grid weekly.

At the end of each term

It is the teachers' responsibility to complete the end of term summaries at the end of each section this includes;

1. The **total attendance** for the class (the number of actual sessions attended by all the children added together)
2. The total number of **times the register was opened**
3. The **average number of children on roll** (add together the number of children on roll each week and divide by the number of weeks the register was kept for)
4. The **average attendance** (total attendance divided by the total number of times the register was opened)
5. **Total authorised absences** (add together all the authorised absences from the weekly summaries)
6. **Total unauthorised absences** (add together all the unauthorised absences from the weekly summaries)
7. **The % of absences that are unauthorised** (add together all absences, both authorised and unauthorised and find the % of the total that are unauthorised).

Teachers should be aware that the attendance register of every class in every school has to be made available for inspection during school hours by H.M.I. and from the L.A. It is in teachers' interests to keep their registers up to date and accurate.

Please ensure that your register is up to date and accurate and clear so that the office staff can complete their tasks (i.e. entering all the data onto the school management system).

Appendix 2

Good Practice at Kelsey Primary School:

Good practice occurs with:

1. The Head teacher being charged with specific responsibility for pupil attendance.
2. The school has devised a sensitive scheme for the follow-up of absentees - e.g. either by telephoning home or sending out letters to parents or carers.
3. Class Teachers ensure that records of attendance are as accurate as possible and explanations for absence are produced when pupils return to school.
4. Rewards are available for individual pupils with an excellent attendance record in the form of certificates.
5. The school contacts parents/carers of pupils who are persistently late.
6. Absentees and truants are welcomed back to school upon their return and efforts made to reintegrate them socially and academically.

Pupils Who Are Off Site Should Not Be Marked As Present. The Following Activities Fall Within This Category.

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.

Absences should **not** be authorised under the following circumstances.

- Shopping trips
- Holidays in term time where the permission of the school has not been given
- Minding the house or looking after siblings.
- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff have cause to believe that the note is not genuine or not valid.

Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. The Head teacher will decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents are considered. Further advice is available in DfES Circular NO.1 0/99.

Lateness:

Kelsey Primary School actively discourages late arrival by children who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.

Our school's policy on how long registers remain open is thirty minutes from the beginning of registration. In the event of bad weather this period is extended.

Where a pupil arrives during the period when the register is open they may be marked present.

Where a pupil arrives after register closure without good reason, they are marked with a letter 'U' in black to indicate that they were late but that they are on site. The late arrival will be recorded as an unauthorised late arrival on the school management system.

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Where a pupil arrives after 9.00 a.m. but before 9.30 a.m. and after 1.00 p.m. but before 1.30 p.m. they are late but within the open periods of the registers. Teachers indicate the late arrival with an 'L'. This will record as a late arrival on the school management system but not as an absence and will indicate to teachers that the child is on site.

Removal from the school roll

There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. These are detailed in Circulars 1099 and 111/99 and the Schools Administration Handbook (section A2). **Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal.**

- Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Head Teacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Education Welfare Service to obtain information on the cause of the absence.
- Where the Head Teacher has been notified that the pupil has died.
- Where a pupil in the nursery class has not transferred to a reception class at the school.
- Except in the case of a boarder, the pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- Where a pupil will cease to be of compulsory schools age before the school next meets and has been notified an intention to discontinue in attendance.
- Where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee.

Ensuring Pupil Information is up to date

Our school ensures, as far as possible, that the information we hold on pupils and parents is accurate and up to date. This helps to ensure that contact with families is productive and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively. Principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998 states 'Personal Data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date',

Pupils who are missing

Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Common Transfer File is completed and uploaded to the DfE National Missing Pupils Database.

Appendix 3

Guidance for Parents:

Suggestions for securing parental involvement in ensuring regular attendance.

Our Home-School Agreement presents us with an opportunity to underline the importance of regular and punctual attendance at school. The following may be used as a basis for a statement in the Agreement.

Our school is committed to providing a quality education for all pupils. We believe that pupils can only benefit from the education in our school through regular school attendance. We will, therefore, strive to achieve the maximum possible attendance for all pupils and we will make sure that any problems are identified and resolved quickly. Wherever possible, we will make contact with parents where a pupil is absent from school without good reason.

How parents can help us:

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly and that they arrive on time.
- Contact the school whenever their child is absent, giving details of the reason or the absence and the length of time the child will be away.
- Help their child prepare for the school day by ensuring that homework has been done and he child has everything he/she needs for the day ahead.
- Attend Parents' Consultation Evenings to discuss progress or problems and talk to the staff if there are problems or changes in family circumstances which may affect the child.
- Contact the school if problems arise which may keep their child away from school, so that the school can help.
- To avoid, wherever possible, taking family holidays in term-time. Term time absences, especially during SATs and examination periods, may seriously affect the progress of your child.