

# John Keble Church of England Primary School

## Attendance Policy



Chair of Governors	Tim Johnston
Head teacher	Mrs Catherine Allard
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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- 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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
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- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The link governors for attendance monitor pupil attendance

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Zohra El-Habti and can be contacted via [admin@jkeble.brent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@jkeble.brent.sch.uk)

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Dennise Buchanan and can be contacted via [admin@jkeble.brent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@jkeble.brent.sch.uk)

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office every morning and afternoon.

### **3.6 School administrative staff**

School administrative staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system (Scholar Pack and CPOMS where there is a safeguarding concern)

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 3 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age - Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am. The register for the second session will be taken immediately after the year group's lunch break.

## **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7) on 0208 965 5072.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents will need to show evidence of medical and dental appointments made in school time.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

On-going punctuality issues are identified through analysis on Scholar Pack. Letters are sent out to parents about the lateness. Where a child is persistently late, a referral to the EWO is made.

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may email, conduct a door stop visit, refer to social care/ contact an existing social worker (open case) or contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels on the end of year report. Where a child's absence falls below 96%, a letter will be sent home.

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the front office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- 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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

Local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school promotes good attendance through

- Notifying parents of the importance of good attendance on admission, sharing appendix 2 and 3 with parents
- A weekly display of best attendance
- Weekly mufti days for the class with the best attendance

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the

national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will

- Send a letter home to any child's parent or carer where attendance falls below 96% (Appendix 4)
- Provide regular attendance reports to school leaders and governors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Children who regularly late to school will get a letter notifying parents. Children who are persistently late will be referred to the EWO. (Appendix 8)

## 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Send a letter home to any child's parent or carer where attendance falls below 94% (Appendix 5)
- If attendance does not improve over the next half term, a letter is sent informing the parent or carer that a referral will be made to the EWO if attendance does not improve (Appendix 6)
- If attendance does not improve over the next half term, a letter is sent inviting the parent or carer into meet the EWO (Appendix 7)

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:



- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## APPENDIX 2 - The impact of school absence

If a child's attendance during the school is ...	The child will have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
97%+	5 days or less	27 lessons
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	290 lessons
65%	67 days	340 lessons

**Absence = lost opportunity**  
**Do not take your child on holiday or out of school during term time**

## APPENDIX 3 – The impact of poor punctuality

If in the school year a child is late everyday ...	The child will have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
5 minutes	3.5 days from school	20 lessons
10 minutes	7 days from school	41 lessons
15 minutes	10 days from school	55 lessons
20 minutes	14.5 days from school	82 lessons
30 minutes	22 days from school	123 lessons

**Good punctuality is important to maintain good school attendance and to promote positive habits at an early age.**

## APPENDIX 4 – Letter sent to parents/carers of children below 96%

**Name:** [[firstname]] [[surname]] **Class:** [[form]]

This letter is to inform you that [[firstname]] attendance currently stands at [[percent]].

We are writing to inform you that at present your child's attendance is lower than expected. It is the school policy to inform you and to let you know that we will continue to monitor their attendance. We treat attendance very seriously and we value all the efforts to support us with this.

If you are having any particular difficulties and would like support, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Otherwise, please ensure your child is in school every day.

If a child's attendance during the school is ...	The child will have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
100% 97%+	0 days 5 days or less	0 lessons 27 lessons
95% 90%	9 days 19 days	50 lessons 100 lessons
85% 80% 75% 70% 65%	29 days 38 days 48 days 57 days 67 days	150 lessons 200 lessons 250 lessons 290 lessons 340 lessons

Thank you for working in partnership with us.

Your faithfully

Attendance Officer

## APPENDIX 5– Letter sent to parents/carers of children attendance between 86% and 94%

This letter is to inform you that [[firstname]] attendance currently stands at [[percent]].

Where low attendance from school is due to illness, the school will now require medical proof by means of written doctor's appointment card or a hospital note. We would like you to supply this evidence for our records. We will not authorise any future absence without medical proof. If no proof is provided, we will refer your child to the Education Welfare Officer and school nurse for advise and/ or assessment. Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has unauthorised absences. You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy.

If you are having any particular difficulties and would like support, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Otherwise, please ensure your child is in school every day.

If a child's attendance during the school is ...	The child will have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
100%	0 days	0 lessons
97%+	5 days or less	27 lessons
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	290 lessons
65%	67 days	340 lessons

Thank you for working in partnership with us.

Your faithfully

Attendance Officer

#### APPENDIX 6 – Letter sent to parents/carers of children below 85% Persistent Absences

**Name:** [[firstname]] [[surname]] **Class:** [[form]]

This letter is to inform you that [[firstname]] attendance currently stands at [[percent]].

Unfortunately, attendance has not improved and we would really appreciate your help in improving attendance. As you will be aware, there is a greater responsibility now on schools to monitor the attendance of every child.

Where low attendance from school is due to illness, the school will now require medical proof by means of a written doctor's appointment card or a hospital note. We would like you to supply this evidence when your child returns to school following any future absences.

We will not authorise any future absence without medical proof. If no proof is provided, we will refer your child to the Education Welfare Officer and school nurse for advice and/ or assessment. Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has unauthorised absences. You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy.

If you are having any particular difficulties and would like support, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Otherwise, please ensure your child is in school every day.

If attendance does not improve we will invite you to an appointment to meet with the Educational Welfare Officer, and a fixed term penalty may be issued.

If a child's attendance during the school is ...	The child will have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
100%	0 days	0 lessons
97%+	5 days or less	27 lessons
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	290 lessons
65%	67 days	340 lessons

Thank you for working in partnership with us.

Your faithfully

Attendance Officer

## **APPENDIX 7 – Letter sent to parents/carers inviting them to attend a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer**

This letter is to inform you that [[firstname]] attendance currently stands at [[percent]].

At John Keble CofE Primary School we want our children to succeed and have opportunities to learn and regular attendance is part of this. Despite writing to you to work together to improve attendance, there

has been no improvement and therefore we would like to invite you to attend a meeting on xxxxxxxx, with the Education Welfare Officer and School Welfare Officer for advise and/ or assessment.

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has unauthorised absences. You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy.

Your faithfully

Attendance Officer

#### **APPENDIX 8 – Letter sent to parents/carers for Lates**

**Name: [[firstname]] [[surname]] Class: [[form]]**

We are writing to inform you that [[firstname]] has been late at least x times between [[startdate]] to [[enddate]] . This is detrimental to their attainment and progress.

I am writing to remind you that we are here to support your child to achieve. Children arriving late at school have a poor start to their day, missing important teaching points and information about the day. They also disrupt the learning of other pupils. School data shows a clear link between good attendance and academic achievement.

If you are having any particular difficulties that we should be aware of, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Otherwise please ensure your child is in school on time every day.

Your faithfully

Attendance Officer