



## Pupil Attendance Policy 2022 - 2025



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School attendance lead	Danielle Marks – Deputy Headteacher	Reviewed:	March 2022
Approved by:	Advisory Board of Governors	Next review date:	March 2025

## **THE LEGAL POSITION**

Kibworth CE Primary School support the view that regular school attendance is important, believing that only when people regularly attend school can the school be effective. Regular attendance is defined as above 95 %.

Under Section 36 of the 1944 Education Act, parents / carers of all children of compulsory school age must ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education. Usually this is achieved through attendance at school. Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly. Failure to do so is an offence punishable by law.

## **UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE:**

By law, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required. Authorised absences are morning and / 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 causes which are supported with medical evidence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and /or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- parents /carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (ie condoned absence)
- truancy during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- absences linked to shopping, looking after other children, birthdays
- trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes a child can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular attendance should be addressed by the school, the parents /carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, please alert the school in the first instance so we can support rather than excuse them from attending as this can give the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

## **PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

We will encourage good attendance by:

- accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session within 10 minutes of the start of the session
- following-up absence on the first day
- undertaking attendance checks at appropriate times
- recording attendance on pupils' reports
- collecting data on attendance for the whole school and by year group and making this available to the Advisory Board of Governors
- award individual pupil certificates termly for full attendance.
- award individual certificates to pupils with 100 % attendance for the year

## **REPORTING ABSENCES**

If a child attending Kibworth CE Primary School is absent for any reason, a telephone call or message via the ParentMail electronic system will inform the school office of the reason for absence and the anticipated length the pupil is likely to be away from school. For child protection and safety reasons, it is essential that school is notified before 10 am. The school will make every effort to contact parents after 10 am on each morning of a child's absence if he / she has not arrived at school and no reason for absence has been given. If no contact is made and the school cannot get hold of an emergency contact, school staff are required to make a door step visit.

If the reason given is valid, the absence will be authorised. If the reason is not satisfactory in the opinion of the school, the absence will be treated as unauthorised. Similarly if no explanation is offered at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

If a pupil is absent for five days or more without a relevant adult being able to be contacted, the school is obliged to inform Leicestershire County Council's Inclusion Service. Schools must also inform the Inclusion Service if a child is absent for 15 days or more (whether consecutive or cumulative) without permission. The pupil's name and address may also be given to the school's Education Welfare Service – Caws Attendance (<http://www.childrensattendance.co.uk/>) if she / he fails to attend regularly. Please see appendix 1 – school attendance protocols for information about this.

## **ILLNESS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

Pupils are occasionally absent through illness and for most pupils this is a short absence. If there is doubt about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, either the school or the Education Welfare Service can refer the matter to a doctor or make contact with the family GP. Children who are regularly absent due to medical reasons will need to communicate effectively with the school and will need to provide supporting evidence for this in order that the school can best support the child.

Leave for dental treatment and doctor's / hospital appointments will be authorised if the school is properly notified and the appointment cannot be taken out of school hours. Parents / carers are asked to use the sign out book in the school office if they take their children out for an appointment during the school day. They are also asked to provide evidence of the appointment – e.g a letter or

screen shot.

## **LATENESS**

The school discourages late arrival at school. Every school, by law, the school has to register pupils twice in the day; at Kibworth CE Primary School registers are taken at 8:55 am and again at 1:15 pm. Children are recorded as late once the register has been taken and submitted. Registers will remain open for the first thirty minutes of the day. The Secretary of State has determined that 30 minutes late will constitute an unauthorised absence if no valid reason has been given.

If your child arrives at school after the start of registration time, but before the register officially closes, they will be given a late mark (L). This means the school will accept the explanation given for the late arrival as valid and reasonable e.g. a late bus, a car breakdown, a one-off family difficulty. If your child is late due to exceptional circumstances, no action will be taken.

However, if your child is frequently late (3 times or more per term) we may ask to meet with you to identify any issues that are causing your child to arrive late at school. Please see appendix 2.

If your child still arrives late, the school may decide not to authorise the late arrival and enter an unauthorised late mark. CAWS Education Welfare Service regularly monitors lateness and may be present in school to do this.

Your child's education is important and being late will mean:

- Missing the beginning of lessons
- Not hearing important information about school and lessons.
- Not being able to complete work because your child was not given vital information
- Your child being embarrassed at having to enter a room where a lesson has already begun – this can cause anxiety
- Being late for the start of important assessments
- Your child failing to learn an important life skill – being on time – this will feed directly into their working life

## **HOLIDAYS WITHIN SCHOOL TIME**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/ carers to help their child by not taking children away in term time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education and Fixed Penalty Notices.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday or on other trips. All applications for leave must be made in advance by completing the leave of absence form from the school office. In accordance with the law, agreement will only be given where the Headteacher considers the reason for the request to be exceptional. The decision made will be confirmed in writing. Without this written confirmation, it cannot be taken that there is agreement to authorise all or any of the absence.

Any period of leave taken without the Headteacher's written confirmation, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to each parent for each child. Penalty Notices are fines of £60 which increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay by the 28th day will usually mean that the Local Authority proceeds to the Magistrates' Court in relation to the parent's failure to ensure regular

attendance.

### **FAMILY BEREAVEMENT**

The death of a member of the close family is a traumatic event in a pupil's life. The school will always respond sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend funerals or associated events and such absences will always be authorised.

### **RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS**

Absence for observance of religious festivals is classed as authorised absence.

### **OFF SITE ACTIVITIES**

Approved educational visits are treated as authorised absences e.g. music / dance exams.

### **EXCLUDED PUPILS**

Such absences will be treated as authorised.

### **MONITORING ABSENCE**

Absence and attendance will be monitored by the Foundation Committee of Board of Advisors, the Deputy Headteacher and school admin support. Whole school attendance is reviewed on a monthly basis and regular reports are submitted to the Advisory Board of Governors.

### **PERSISTENT ABSENCE:**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance is at 90 % or below. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need full support and co-operation to tackle this. Kibworth CE Primary School monitors all pupil absence closely and where there are concerns about your child's attendance, we will be in touch with you about this. Pupils who are identified as persistently absent are monitored carefully. Persistent absence is highly likely to result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service. (Appendix 1)

### **FURTHER INFORMAITON**

- DfE School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities August 2020

## Attendance Protocol

**First day calling for all absences**



**Trigger point 1 – 93 % and below. Initial concern letter or phone call from school.**



**Trigger point 2 – 90 % and below. Second concern letter. School meeting or phone call. Possible referral to Education Welfare Officer; possible home visit; Possible ELSA support in school.**



**Further decline or unauthorised absences could result in Court Action and a Penalty Notice.**

**£60 per child per parent, rising to £120 per child per parent if not paid within 21 days.**

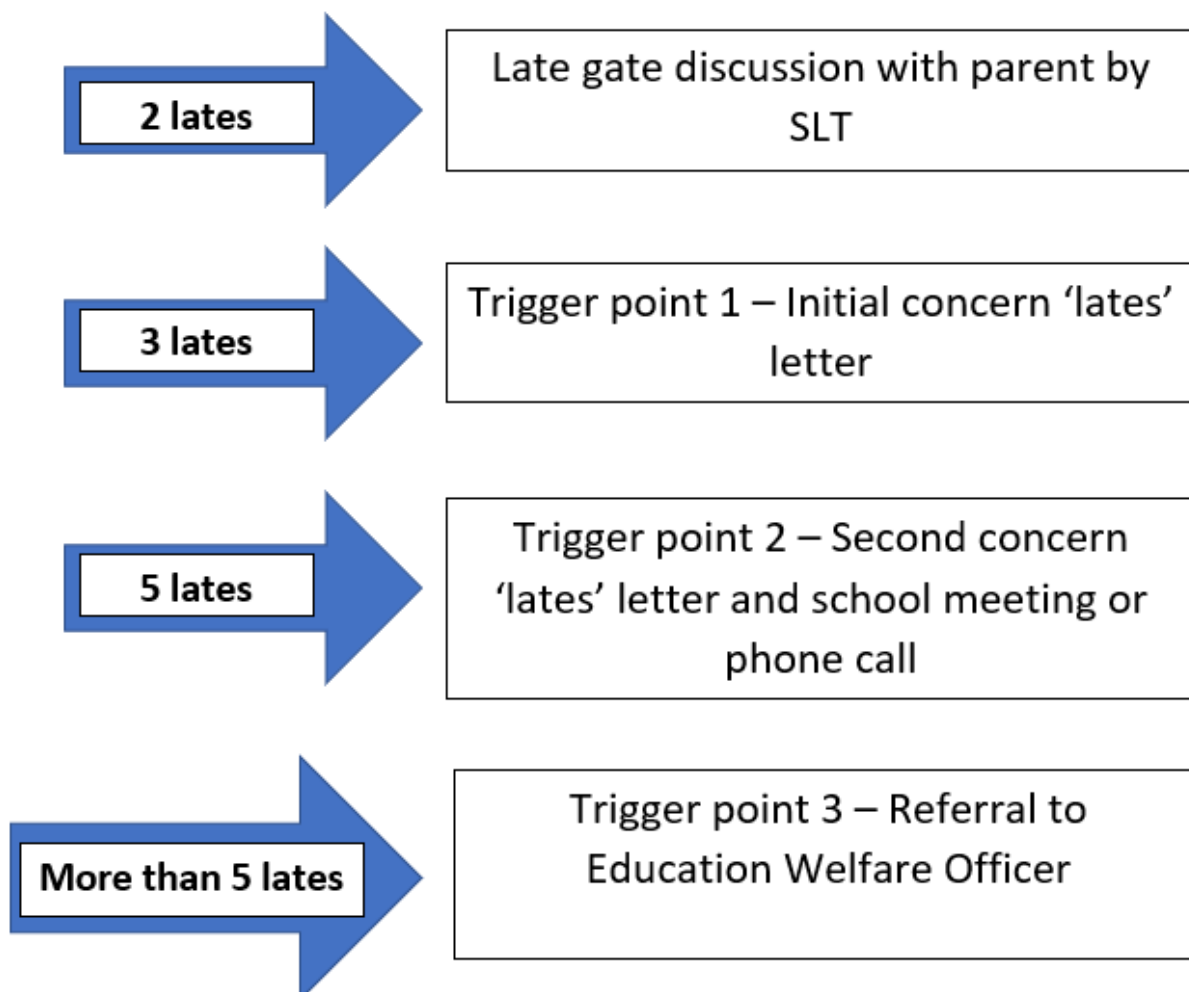
**Unauthorised holidays may also result in a penalty notice and referral to the Education Welfare Officer.**



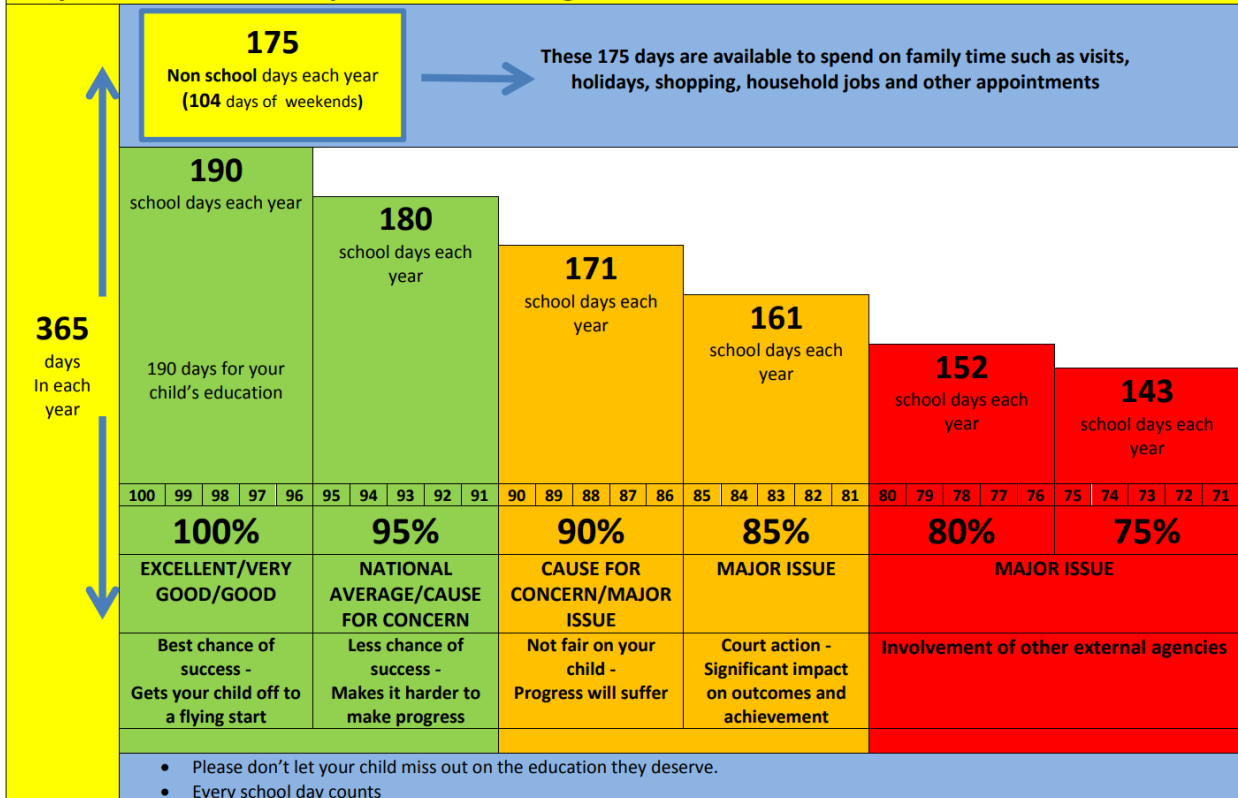
## Attendance - Punctuality

School Starts at 8:55 when registers are taken

- ALL lates are recorded as 'L' after register closes
- ALL lates beyond 9:10 are recorded as 'U' – unauthorised absence



## Days off school add up to lost learning!



- Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve.
- Every school day counts

Here are some basic reminders about attendance.

- We all feel in our comfort zone if our child is achieving a high percentage in tests and examinations. 80% in a test is generally excellent news! The danger is that we may feel the same way about attendance until it is explained.
- If a child has an attendance percentage of **80%** then this is equivalent to **missing a whole day every single week**
- If a child has an attendance percentage of **80%** from **Year 7 to Year 11** then this is equivalent to **missing an entire year of school**.