



Attendance and Lateness Policy

September 2020

To be reviewed September 2021

Statement of Intent

Kilmorie Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. The Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Kilmorie Primary School.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent, preferably by 8.30 am. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that the child is safe. Parents must ensure that contact details are up to date and that a minimum of 2 emergency contacts are provided.

If a child is absent and the parent has not contacted the school then, as part of our safeguarding policy:

- The school office will send a text reminding them to make contact
- If there is no response to the text, the office will try to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts. The purpose of this is to check on the safety of the child
- If it has not been possible to contact either the parent/carer or emergency contacts the school will give due consideration to making a home visit based on their knowledge of the child. If no contact has been made after 3 days, then a home visit will definitely be made. (See the section 'Children Missing in Education').

This process has been summarised for parents and can be found in appendix 1

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8:55 am when a bell goes in the playground for them to go into class. Parents or carers are asked to contact the school if they are experiencing difficulties getting their child to school.

The Role of the School Staff

The headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance and has to report termly percentages to the local authority. The Deputy Head monitors attendance together with the Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils present or mark as an 'N' if a child is absent. The office attendance admin officers will mark in late or absent children in the morning and telephone or text the parents of any absent children if they have not already made contact. It is the responsibility of office attendance admin officers to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence within 2 hours of the register having been taken. If no reason is provided, then the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised' 2 weeks following the absence.
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- When a reason has been provided the office staff will ensure that the appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes – see appendix 2)

Only the office staff, the Deputy Head and the Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager can change attendance codes (e.g. changing N to O), that member of staff will date, initial and give a brief reason for the change.

Illness and Medical Appointments

When a child is unwell, parents are expected to contact the school before 8.30 am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.

- a) Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- b) An appointment card or verification by the doctors/dentist/hospital is required for medical appointments
- c) If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- d) If a child is absent due to vomiting then they should not return to school for **the next 48 hours** after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the school.
- e) **For more than three days of absence** or where there is repeated absence due to illness, the school will request medical evidence (this can take the form of an appointment card or a copy of a prescription)
- f) Where there are concerns about a child's attendance (particularly when it drops below 90%) the school will request medical evidence for any absence

Moving School

If a family are moving out of the area there are a number of things we require them to do:

- Notify us in writing at least 2 weeks in advance, including contact details for where they are moving to and if possible the details of the school their child will be attending
- Notify us in writing when the child has started their new school

We will also

- Request an email from the new school to confirm when the child started regardless of the country the new school is in

- If we do not hear from the family about their child's new school, we will contact the local authority where they have moved to find out whether the child is in school. If they are on the waiting list or have started school, we will request a confirmation email and off roll the child after one week following this confirmation

Children Missing from Education (CME)

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Attendance Service.

If no reason has been given for a child's absence after 3 days and the school have not been able to contact parents/carers or any emergency contact, a home visit will be arranged. If a visit takes place and there is no one home the school may contact the police (having sought advice from the LA)

If a child has been absent from school for 2 weeks with no reason given, or if they have moved and no new school has contacted Kilmorie, a referral is made to the CME team.

Lateness

At Kilmorie Primary School the register is taken at 9.00 am and 1.00 pm (Reception – Year 2) or 1.30 pm (Year 3 – Year 6). Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to our pastoral care manager (Nicola) who will record their name and reason for lateness. The pupil will be marked as late when registration has closed (Code 'L'). If you and your child arrive after Nicola has gone into school, please report to the school office.

The register will close at 9:05 am and 1.05 pm (Reception and KS1) or 1.35 pm (KS2). Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'L'), pupils arriving after 9.30 am will be marked as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence.

Parents will be contacted by the school if their child is late regularly. If punctuality continues to be a concern the Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager will meet with parents to discuss any issues which are causing lateness and how things can be improved.

Please note that persistent lateness after 9.30, when children are marked as 'U' may result in the local authority issuing a fixed penalty notice warning.

Leave of Absence

From September 2013 the Department for Education amended the Pupil Registration Regulations, removing the Headteacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

The Headteacher **may** authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation, a letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

A written application **must** be made to request a leave of absence, the headteacher will give due consideration to the circumstances and the child’s past attendance history. The application for leave of absence must include a return date. Children who return 10 days or more after the expected date will be reported to the local authority as a ‘Child Missing in Education’ and may be taken off the school roll.

Where leave has been granted this will be marked ‘C’ in the register, where a family request leave and it is not granted this will be marked as ‘G’. Unauthorised holiday of 10 sessions (5 days) or more can result in the local authority issuing a fixed penalty notice.

The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child’s/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays
- Absence of child as a result of another member of the family’s illness or medical appointment

Monitoring Attendance and Lateness

Our expectation is that a child’s attendance is 96% or above at the end of the school year. The school closely monitors attendance and lateness to try to minimise poor attendance and punctuality through

- Staff speaking to parents and carers as and when concerns arise
- The Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager contacting families whose attendance is below average to try to find ways to improve
- The Deputy writing to parents when attendance or punctuality does not improve

The school monitors children’s attendance when it drops below 96%. A series of letters is sent when attendance does not improve, approaches or drops below 92%

Letter 1 – advising parent or carer that attendance is low and requesting medical evidence if appropriate

Letter 2 – raising concerns that attendance has not improved and setting the expectation that all future absences need to be accompanied by medical evidence. This may be accompanied by a telephone call from the Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager

Letter 3 – either a meeting with Deputy Head and Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager to review attendance or an attendance panel meeting with the LA Attendance and Welfare Officer

What your child’s attendance percentage means

Child’s attendance	Action
96%+	Excellent attendance
94 – 95%	Good Well done – strive to build on this
Below 95%	Causing concern Children’s attendance is below average and they will be missing out on what other children are learning and doing. Parents need to work closely with the school to improve the situation. The children’s attendance will be carefully monitored and families written to whenever there is a broken week. Contact will be made by Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager if attendance does not improve.

Below 90%	Possible penalty notice/legal proceedings Any child whose attendance falls below 92% is regarded nationally as a child who has persistent absence. The Government is very concerned with this and has invested heavily to monitor the attendance of these children. Schools have targets to reduce the levels of persistent absence and the school and local authority work closely with families to support them in getting their child to school each day. However, if a child's attendance does not improve next steps may include a penalty notice and possible legal proceedings – for more details see below.
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Persistent absence

Your child will be considered as persistently absent using the following criteria:

Term	Number of sessions missed since the start of the year (a session is half a day)
Autumn 1	7 or more
Autumn 2	14 or more
Spring 1	20 or more
Spring 2	25 or more
Summer 1	31 or more
Summer 2	38 or more

Support from the school

The school understands that from time to time situations may arise which make it difficult for parents to ensure their child is in school. For example

- Housing issues
- Health issues
- Children's behavioural issues
- Financial issues

Please let us know if there are issues which are affecting your child's attendance.

Local Authority Action

When there are concerns about a child's attendance and it does not appear to be improving, the school will refer to the local authority attendance service who may consider the following:

Education Welfare Officer Actions

This may include:

- Invitation to Attendance Panel meeting
- Home visits
- multi agency meetings
- Sign posting to supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services and Family Group Conference Service.
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance

• Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct. • The Attendance Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded • If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:

• Truancy • Parentally-condoned absences • Persistent lateness after the register has closed • Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Other policies to refer to

Kilmorie Safeguarding Policy

Kilmorie End of Day Policy

Addendum

Due to COVID-19 this policy is subject to change, please see End of Day Policy to see how timetable changes has affected lateness.

Children who are self-isolating due to suspected or confirmed cases of Coronavirus will not be penalised, the appropriate code will be used on the register.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2021

Appendix 1

Protocol for contacting parents or carers of children absent from school

For the purpose of this document the term parents also covers carers

- It is the school's expectation that parents* contact the school before the start of the day if their child is going to be absent
- When they call the school regarding illness, parents are asked to say when they expect their child to return to school (for example in cases of vomiting or diarrhoea the child will return after 48 hours). If the child is still unwell after this time the parent must contact the school again
- It is school policy that if a child is off for more than 3 days then medical evidence must be provided in order to authorise the absence
- If a parent does not contact school when their child is absent the school will send a text asking them to do so
- If a parent does not respond to the text, then a phone call will be made to the parent before lunch time
- If it is not possible to contact the parent, then the office will phone the emergency contact numbers provided
- If it has not been possible to ascertain the child's whereabouts after all these avenues have been explored then a home visit will be undertaken by the school within a maximum of 3 days. If there is no response from the home, then the school may contact the police (advice will be sought from the Local Authority)

Appendix 2: 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
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day