



# ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY 2024

This policy was agreed by the Full Governing Body on: (and supersedes all previous policies relating to this area)		
Implemented	November 2024	
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## 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 those 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. Parents can contact the office at [attendance@kilmorie.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@kilmorie.lewisham.sch.uk) or leave a voicemail on option 1.

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 then a home visit may be carried out later on the same day or within 3 days at the latest by the safeguarding team. (See the section 'Children Missing in Education').

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

Pupils in Reception have a staggered start, Lions are expected to arrive at 8.50am, Tigers at 8.55 am and Bears at 9.00am. Years 1, 2 and 3 are expected to be at school when the bell goes at 8.55am. Year 4, 5 and 6 are expected to be in school when the bell goes at 8.50am. Nursery arrive at 8.45am.

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 DSL/Pastoral Care and Family Support Manager monitors attendance with the office.

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. This N code will remain for up to 5 days and can be changed with confirmation of reason for absence. . It is the responsibility of the office attendance admin staff to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are sent an in-app message on the first day of absence within 2 hours of the register having been taken. A follow up phone call is made between 11am and 11.30am . If the message is not opened within 24 hours an email is automatically sent to the parent/carer. If no reason is provided a N code will be given for an unauthorised absence.
- N codes will be changed after 5 days if we hear from the parent/carer and will be changed to the appropriate attendance code. The school will make every effort to establish the reason for the absence but if unable to do so it will be classed as an unauthorised 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)
- If a social worker is involved with a family they will be notified of any absence on the same day.

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 when there are attendance concerns
- 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 and/or diarrhoea then they should not return to school for **the next 48 hours** after the last incident of vomiting and/or diarrhoea. 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 may 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 they should:

- 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

The school will 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 attendance. 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 and no contact has been made then a home visit will be carried out later on the same day or within 3 days at the latest by the safeguarding team. (See the section 'Children Missing in Education').

If a visit takes place and there is no one home the school will seek advice from the Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to discuss our concerns and we may need to contact the police welfare team.

If a child has been absent from school with no contact, or if they have moved and no new school has contacted Kilmore, a referral will be made to the CME team within 10 days.

### **Lateness**

At Kilmore Primary School the register is taken at 9.00 am and 1.00 pm. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and go to the office to record their lateness electronically with. The pupil will be marked as late when registration has closed (Code 'L').

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' (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/Holidays in term time**

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and also that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Lewisham Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence. At Kilmorie 'exceptional circumstances' will be looked at on a case by case basis. 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

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

Where the headteacher declines a parental request for exceptional leave, but parents take their children out of school, the absence will be unauthorised. Kilmorie may request the local authority impose a penalty notice to parents. In cases where parents do not seek permission for absence and fail to advise the school when the children will return or fail to return on the date advised, the child's name may be removed from the school's admission register in accordance with [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

## **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 minimize poor attendance and punctuality through:

- Staff speaking to parents and carers as and when concerns arise
- The Pastoral Care & Family Support Manager contacting families whose attendance is below average to understand what is affecting the child's attendance and to work together to try and improve it
- The Pastoral Care & Family Support Manager meeting with 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

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 Support & Family Outreach Officer.

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

Individual circumstances of the child and the family will be taken into account when sending letters.

### What your child's attendance percentage means ....

Child's attendance	Action
96%+	<b>Excellent</b> attendance
94 – 95%	<b>Good</b> Well done – strive to build on this
Below 95%	<b>Causing concern</b> 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%	<b>Possible penalty notice/legal proceedings</b> Any child whose attendance falls below 90% 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.

### 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
- Anxiety/school refusal

- SEN

If you would like support with any issues affecting your child's attendance you can contact Nicola Cann our Senior Attendance Champion (Pastoral Care & Family Support manager) by calling the school or sending an email to [ncann@kilmorie.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:ncann@kilmorie.lewisham.sch.uk). Help may include practical strategies with routines and boundaries, organising things within school to support your child, 1:1 sessions for your child or signposting to other agencies including the Early Help team.

### **Local Authority Action**

We share our attendance data with the Lewisham Local Authority through a system called Study Bugs on a daily basis as well as submitting data monthly. We work closely together to spot early patterns and support families to improve their child's attendance.

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 .
- 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 £160 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. A second penalty of £160 can be issued if concerns continue. 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



**KILMORIE**

**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## 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 by 10.00am asking them to do so
  - If a parent does not respond to the text, then a phone call will be made to the parent between 11.00am – 11.30am
  - 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 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 then a home visit may be carried out later on the same day or within 3 days at the latest by the safeguarding team. (See the section 'Children Missing in Education').
  - If it has still not been possible to ascertain the child's whereabouts after all these avenues have been explored the school will seek advice from the Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to discuss the concerns and may need to contact the police welfare team.
  - If a child has been absent from school with no contact, or if they have moved and no new school has contacted Kilmore, a referral will be made to the CME team within 10 days.
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## Appendix 2: attendance codes

### 1. If a pupil is present in school the following codes from table 1 should be used

Code	Meaning
/	Present at school AM
\	Present at school PM
L	Late arrival before register closed

### 2. If a pupil is absent from school so that they can attend a place other than school for any of the following reasons the relevant code from table 2 should be used.

Code	Meaning
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA
V	Attending an Educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a Sporting Activity P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity
W	Attending Work Experience
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity
D	Dual Registered at another school

### 3. Pupil is absent with leave

Code	Meaning
C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad
M	Leave of absence for Medical or dental Appointment
J1	Leave of absence for Interview
S	Leave of absence for studying for public examination
X	Non – Compulsory School age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable
C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances

### 4. Pupil Absent other Authorised reasons

Code	Meaning
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes.
R	Religious Observance
I	Illness (not medical appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made

### 5. Pupil Absent – Unavoidable Cause

Code	Meaning
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

**6. Absent for unauthorised reasons**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
G	Holiday not granted by school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed



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