



Attendance Policy 2019

(Approved Autumn 2019 for review Spring 2021)

Attendance Policy

Aims

Good attendance means that children can make good, consistent progress in their school work.

Lakes Academies Trust expects good attendance from its pupils, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that school has to offer. We rely on our partnership with parents to ensure that this is achieved.

We aim to meet our 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 support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

It is the aim of the LAT to have school pupil attendance figures of 96% or above.

School procedures

Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and again after lunch ready for the start of 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

It is every parents legal responsibility to ensure their child receives an education

See appendix 1 for details and timings of the school day

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.

See appendix 1 for details on how to report absence

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late, but before the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

See appendix 1 for details and timings of the school day

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Reporting to parents

Parents will receive a report on their child's attendance record in the termly reports. Attendance information is passed on to new schools when a child moves, including secondary schools.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

Unauthorised absence include

- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having hair cut
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about, either by letter or telephone
- Any family holiday, in term time.
- Birthdays.
- Headlice

Holidays during term time will be **unauthorised** and if 5 days or over will be subject to a **Fixed Penalty Notice** issued by the Local Authority.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age (e.g. if a child has at least 10 unauthorised sessions over a 12 week period or an unauthorised term time holiday is taken). If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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

Strategies for promoting attendance

We expect full attendance from all of our children. Where this is not possible, please notify us of all absences on the first day with a reason for the absence. If you need support to ensure regular attendance, our family support teams are here to work with you.

Where we have concerns about a child's attendance our family support team may ask to meet with you to see how we can support regular attendance, you may receive a letter home, a home visit, be invited to a meeting with the school or asked to complete a parenting contract whereby the parent is agreeing to attendance targets.

If after sufficient time, there is still no improvement, schools will invite the parent to an Attendance Interview where concerns will be formally highlighted and a plan will be agreed for the child to return to school. If attendance does not improve the parent will be invited back for a Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) interview with a Milton Keynes Council Officer which could lead to criminal prosecution.

Where there are additional concerns about a child or family, schools may refer to the children and families Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

See appendix 1 for details of actions taken to follow up on absence

Attendance monitoring

The Family Support Team and Headteacher monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. Parents are expected to call the school each day a child is ill. Emails and messages will not be accepted. If we do not have contact from the parent, or we have further concerns regarding a child's absence, the Family Support team will visit the child's home to ensure they are safe and to see how we can support them back into school.

Where there are concerns about a child's safety or well being, schools may refer to the children and families Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Thames Valley Police.

We track the attendance of all children and will contact the parent if the child's attendance falls below 96% to discuss the reasons for this.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a child's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. If your child's attendance falls

below 90% we will monitor and track their attendance closely as a child who is in need of intervention and support.

See appendix 1 for details of actions taken to follow up on absence

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board / Trustees

The Governing Board and Trustees are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. They also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The Headteacher also supports the Family Support Team in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Family Support Team

The Family Support Team:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with Milton Keynes Council officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Classteachers

Classteachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. The classteachers will chase up any unexplained absences with the parents.

Office / Reception staff

Office and Reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. If the office team have any concerns about the child or their attendance they will share these concerns with the Family Support Team, Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Monitoring arrangements

Trustees review this policy every 2 years. The trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

**Attendance Information for Parents
Knowles Primary School**

What does good attendance mean?

Being in school at least 96% of the time or 180 to 190 days

We want all of our children to have good attendance so that they have the best possible chance of success therefore we work to ensure we take action early with any child and family where we feel concerned. In this instance the following process is implemented:

Attendance		Action
100%	Expected	Your child has the best chance of success
96%-100%	Good attendance	Your child has the best chance of success
90.1% - 95.9%	Poor attendance - less chance of success School is worried	Meeting with the Class teacher to discuss concerns / issues / barriers that may be affecting or preventing good attendance
		Letter of concern sent home
		Second letter of concern sent home if there is no improvement
		Meeting with a member of the Family Support Team to discuss strategies and support needed to improve attendance
		If no improvement is made a further meeting with a member of the support team to set up a parenting contract with clear targets for improvement (reviewed after 4 weeks)
		Once attendance falls below 95% you may be required to provide proof of absence if related to medical appointments or illness
		Without such evidence absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'
80.1% - 90%	Poor attendance - less chance of success School is worried	Attendance interview with Headteacher and Family Support workers
		Children who have 19 days or more absence (10% absence) are classed as 'Persistently Absent' and are tracked by the school
80% and below	Very poor attendance - serious impact on education and reduces life chances	If everything else fails, the school will make a referral to Local Authority for a Police and Criminal Evidence interview (PACE)
		School and the local authority are seriously

Attendance Team at Knowles



Nicola Quilter



Sarah Rice



Cheryl Weight

Knowles Daily Attendance Routines

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day (**9.00**) and again after lunch (**1.00**) ready for the start of 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

It is every parents legal responsibility to ensure their child receives an education

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.00 am on each school day

- Gates open at **8.50**
- The register for the first session will be taken at **9.00** and will be kept open until 9.15
- Learning begins at **9.00**, therefore any child arriving after 9.00 will be marked as late
- A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as **absent**, using the appropriate code (U)
- The register for the second session will be taken at **1.00 pm**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence (e.g. illness) by 8.50 or as soon as practically possible

- Ring the school office on **01908 373588** (from 8.00) and speak to a member of staff. Emails or messages will not be accepted.
- Absence due to illness will be **authorised** unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or unless your child's attendance is poor (below 96%).
- If your child's attendance is poor (below 96%) the school will ask parents 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, or the child's attendance is below 96% and no medical evidence has been provided, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Please give advance notice of medical or dental appointments

- Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
- However, we encourage parents 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
- We will require evidence of medical or dental appointments where attendance is poor

Home visits

- If we have not heard from you on the first day of absence a member of the Family Support Team will try to make contact with you on the phone or a number on your contact list to make sure your child is safe.
- If we can not get a hold of you or someone on your contact list, a member of the Family Support Team will come out to the home on a home visit to make sure your child is safe.
- A member of the Family Support Team will visit your child by the third day of absence to see if they can offer further support

Holidays

- Holidays **will not** be authorised in term time except in exceptional circumstances. Please book an appointment to discuss with the Headteacher.
- Unauthorised holidays will be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 per child, per parent or liable to prosecution by the local authority.

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Lateness = Lost learning	Every School Day Counts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 minutes late each day = over 3 days lost over a year. ● 10 minutes late each day = about 6.5 days lost ● 15 minutes late each day = about 13 days lost ● 30 minutes lost each day = about 19 days lost!!!! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 100% attendance = 190 school days = 0 weeks absence ● 96% attendance = 180 school days = 2 weeks absence ● 90% attendance = 171 school days = 4 weeks absence ● 85% attendance = 161 days = 6 weeks ● 80% attendance = 152 days = more than half a term ● 75% attendance = 143 days = more than 9 weeks lost!!!

Appendix 2

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 the reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed