



Killamarsh Infant and Nursery School

School Attendance Policy

September 2025 (V:4.0)

Introduction

The school accepts the policy and practice laid down by Derbyshire LA and DfE.

We believe that good attendance is crucial in ensuring that children make the best possible progress. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage which can seriously affect a child's chances in life.

It is expected that a normal healthy child will achieve an attendance level of 95% each year. Children whose attendance falls below 95% will be deemed to have 'poor' attendance and parents notified. Children whose attendance falls below 90% will be a cause for concern and the school will work with parents to improve this.

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Killamarsh Infant and Nursery School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at the school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school and is available on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from Derbyshire County Council.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head teacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Ethos

At Killamarsh Infant and Nursery School want our pupils to:

- Be resilient, reflective and to take responsibility for what they do.
- Be motivated and enjoy learning
- Develop a range of skills to equip them for a successful adult life, such as independence and ambition
- Be confident, happy and feel safe
- Be friendly, respectful, caring and polite
- Develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

In a school that:

- Fosters individual talents and abilities in every child
- Has the highest expectations for itself, its staff and students
- Celebrates success and achievement in all its forms
- Values the role parents and carers play
- Is continually striving to improve
- Actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Support so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.

- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.

- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality.
- To refer to the Early Help Team any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To report attendance statistics to Derbyshire Local Authority and the DfE where requested.
- All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Senior Leadership Team and School Business team.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Being a good role model for students by arriving on time and being ready for the school day
- Being responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, promptly and accurately, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office.
- Giving attendance and punctuality the highest profile, sharing attendance figures with students.
- Praising students for arriving on time.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers
- Informing the Senior Leadership Team where there are concerns and acting upon them

- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Following up absences (in partnership with the admin team) with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary

School Staff

- Be a good role model for students by arriving on time and being ready for the school day

Head teacher

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Strategically lead and develop the school roles outlined previously.
- Work on strategic action plans and school policy that bring about improvements in student attendance
- Monitor and evaluate the systems in school designed to support students in their academic progress and their health and well-being.
- Monitor and evaluate school systems and interventions designed to promote exceptional attendance and behaviour.
- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Making referrals to Early Help and external agencies where required.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's Attendance lead
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

Administration staff

Staff in the School Office are responsible for:

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Keep accurate records of responses from parents/carers when their child is absent.
- Ensuring the Absence/Late records are completed
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been received in the morning of the first day of a child's absence (by text or telephone call). Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately on the first day of absence of a student with a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need or a Child in Care.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Head teacher
- Issue attendance awareness and warning letters to parents/carers where appropriate.
- Prepare weekly certificates for the Class Attendance Award and termly pupil certificates for excellent attendance.

The Governing Board

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil the expectations and statutory duties.
- Review and challenge 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.
- To support staff in school in high level intervention strategies, namely School Attendance Panel.

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school daily and punctually and equipped to learn unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence ideally before 8.30am.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter) Where possible make any medical or dental appointments outside of school hours or not in term time.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- Tell a member of staff if there are problems attending school for any reason, e.g. being bullied, feeling unhappy, problems at home.
- Do not book any holidays or take children out of school during term time.

Registration

The school is open (doors and gates) to children at 8:40 and the registration period closes at 8:50. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The class teacher must complete the attendance register by 8:50 and by 13.10. (Attendance code / and \ for pupils who are present). Registers are usually completed electronically. In the event of technical difficulties, or on occasions where temporary/supply teachers are taking the register, a paper copy is used which is then updated to the electronic system by office staff. All attendance records are documented using RM Integris software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure in line with current Data protection legislation and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

Lateness

Once the doors/gates are closed at 8:50 the only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way from 8:50 will be marked as late in the attendance record unless prior arrangement has been made with regard to an adjustment for SEND access arrangements. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L after 8.50 am and before 9.00am before register closes / Attendance code U after the register closes).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.00am when the register closes will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, the beginning of the day is often the most important aspect as this is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then we send a letter requesting these details to parents/carers to complete. If this letter is not completed and returned by the specified date then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O)

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers from 9:00 to 9:20 on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence. Please ensure we always have up to date telephone numbers for your child.

Illness

When we are informed, or we have ascertained from initiating first day contact, that a child is ill. They will be recorded as such (Attendance Code I). If the illness absence continues the office staff will ring every 2 days to check on the pupil's attendance status and health (unless parents have already supplied information about the length of absence expected). When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where, over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future

period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013, the government abolished the right of headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 95%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their primary school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. In our schools we rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore, where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed of our concerns. Initially concerns about attendance are raised with parents via the school communication system Parent Hub and letters, which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Attendance Welfare Officer.

The Attendance Welfare Officer will work with school and families on a case-by-case basis and has the authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Fine.

In addition, education-related parenting orders are available by direct application by a school or Local Authority to the Magistrates' Court as an ancillary order following a successful prosecution by the Local Authority for irregular attendance or breach of a school attendance order.

The Attendance lead for the school checks and monitors attendance. They carry out regular checks to identify children with low attendance (usually below 90%). The School Pastoral Support Officer will work with school staff and parents to improve attendance and if required will request a fixed penalty fine to be issued.

A fixed penalty fine is usually issued when there has been no improvement in attendance within a set period despite support from school and School Pastoral Support Officer being made available.

Monitoring Attendance

Our office staff have the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the RM Integris software. Regular meetings are held with the Headteacher to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents.

The Headteacher updates the governing boards regarding attendance at meetings and shares the strategies being employed to improve it. The Headteacher and governing

boards are committed to promoting and supporting good attendance across the schools so that it's in-line with, or better than, the national average.