

# KNYPERSLEY FIRST SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY



*Part of the*



The ECT Policy in respect of Knypersley School has been discussed and adopted by the Local Advisory Board in Aut 2025

*Chair of Board:* *Miss K Mellor*

*Responsible* *Miss L Leese*

*Agreed and ratified by the Local Advisory Board on:*

*To be reviewed:* *October 2026*

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

At Knypersley First School we are committed to working together to ensure all pupils receive the best education possible and to enable them to achieve to the best of their ability. For this to happen, pupils need to be in school to access valuable teaching and learning opportunities.

This policy aims to make clear what is expected of parents and pupils and to assure parents of our willingness to work positively with them if problems arise.

### **Principles**

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. The school will promote the importance of good attendance through the curriculum and personal/social opportunities.

Good attendance by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We will ensure that parents are aware of attendance concerns and work with them to ensure good attendance and punctuality. To support the school in our commitment to improve school attendance and punctuality, we have employed a Children's First Learning Partnership (CFLP) Attendance Officer who will provide advice and guidance to the school, parents, and pupils.

Pupils are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the pupil. If a pupil is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance and education does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

School staff are committed to working with parents to ensure any problems are dealt with straight away in order for pupils to feel happy and safe at Knypersley First School and achieve to the best of their ability. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school and are on time.

For any attendance related concerns, please contact.

Miss L Leese  
01782 973810  
Office.knp@cflptrust.co.uk

CFLP Attendance Officer  
Rebecca Farrington

## **Registration procedures**

School opens at 8:45am and closes at **EYFS: 3:10pm/ KS1: 3:15pm/ KS2: 3:20pm**

Schools are required by law to take an attendance register twice a day and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil is absent, every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. Therefore, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason e.g., illness, medical appointments, or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents keeping pupils off from school unnecessarily.
- truancy before or during the school day.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- pupils who arrive to school after the close of the register
- school refusal.
- holidays taken during term time that have not been authorised by the head teacher.

When completing the register, school follow the DFE Working together to improve school attendance guidance to determine which relevant code to use; [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921212/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

The register will be taken twice a day, at the start of the morning and the afternoon.

### **Morning registration.**

The morning register is taken at **8:55am**. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before **9:15am** are recorded as late – L.

Registration closes at **9:15am**. Pupils arriving to school after this time are late - after registration closes, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence – U.

### **Afternoon registration**

The afternoon register is taken at **1:15pm**. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before **1:30pm** are recorded as late – L.

Registration closes at **1:30pm**. Pupils arriving to school after this time are late - after registration closes, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence – U.

### **Late procedures**

Parents are requested to contact Mrs Taylor – 01782 973810 if their child is going to be late and provide a reason for lateness.

If lateness is a cause for concern, the following procedures will be followed.

1. Parents will receive a letter informing of the concern.
2. If no improvement, the attendance officer will contact parents to further discuss and offer support and advice to improve punctuality.
3. If still no improvement, parents and pupils will be invited to a meeting with the attendance officer to discuss the reasons for lateness and to offer support. Referrals to wider support services may be offered if needed. The discussion held will be documented by the attendance officer and an action plan to improve punctuality will be devised with parents and the pupil during the meeting and a review date set if needed.
4. If no improvement is seen after the meeting has taken place, the school may follow Staffordshire County Council Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for persistent lateness.

### **Reporting Absence**

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the office and ask for the Headteacher at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. Alternatively, parents may wish to contact the attendance officer.

If a pupil is absent from school, we ask parents to:

- Contact the school office by 8:45am on the first morning of absence.
- Reply promptly to any request or enquiry concerning an absence.

If parents do not contact the school on the morning of the first day of absence, a member of the administration staff will try to contact them to find out the reason for absence. This ensures that the parent is aware their child is not in school enabling the parent, where necessary, to establish that their child is safe. The school may also ask the attendance officer to establish contact either by telephone, text message or a home visit may be completed. If a reason is still not known after 5 school days, the absence will be unauthorised.

### **Early years attendance policy changes:**

In line with recent changes to the EYFS statutory framework, the school has updated its mandatory attendance policy. All absences must be reported by parents or carers on the first day of absence, following the procedures set out by the school. There will be a prompt follow-up of any unexplained absences to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our pupils. Attendance will be monitored closely to identify any patterns or trends, and where concerns arise—such as persistent absence or safeguarding risks—referrals may be made to Children's Social Care or the police, in accordance with statutory guidance.

## **Children Missing in Education (CME)**

In line with the Department for Education's 2025 guidance, schools have a legal duty to refer any pupil who has been absent for 20 consecutive school days without authorisation, or who has not returned following a period of approved leave after 10 school days, to the Local Authority's Children Missing Education (CME) team—particularly where attempts to make contact with the parent or pupil have been unsuccessful or there are wider concerns about the absence. The school may only remove the pupil's name from the admission register once joint reasonable enquiries by both the school and the Local Authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts, or it has been agreed that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return. Both parties must be satisfied that all appropriate safeguarding steps have been taken. To prevent unnecessary referrals, parents are urged to notify the school if they are moving house, relocating abroad, or changing schools, and to provide a forwarding address, contact number, and, if known, the name of the new school.

## **Medical Absence**

Schools have the responsibility to decide whether an absence can be authorised on medical grounds. If the school has concerns about the level of medical absence that a pupil has incurred, they will contact the parents to discuss it further and to find out whether their GP or other health professional has been contacted.

If the authenticity of the absence is in question or the pupil has a prolonged absence, parents may be asked to provide evidence that their child is too unwell to attend school by providing a note from a medical professional or a copy of any prescribed medication. If the school does not receive medical evidence, the absences will be unauthorised.

For pupils with a mental health issue affecting attendance, Knypersley First School follow the DFE guidance [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-responsibilities-where-a-mental-health-issue-is-affecting-attendance)

For more information on medical absence –  
[Illness and your child's education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/illness-and-your-childs-education)

## **Medical and Dental Appointments**

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays whenever possible. If this is not possible, confirmation of the appointment will be required prior to authorising the absence and an M code used on the register to record when the child has attended the appointment.

Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents are expected to return their children to school following the appointment.

## **Monitoring attendance (see below graduated response)**

The school aims to achieve at least 96.4% attendance each academic year. To ensure this, we monitor attendance regularly. The school uses the graduated response when utilising data to improve attendance for all.

Our attendance officer and Miss Leese (Head of School) regularly monitors every pupil's attendance. Where there appears to be a particular problem with attendance, the following procedures are applied.

- A letter is sent to parents informing them of a decline in school attendance and the need for this to improve due to the impact on their child's education and social development.
- If no improvement seen, parents and pupils where appropriate will be invited into a meeting with the attendance officer and Knypersley First School to discuss the concerns and to offer support around any possible barriers, problems at home or at school which may be contributing to low attendance. Referrals to wider support services may be offered where appropriate. The discussion held will be documented by the attendance officer and an action plan to improve school attendance will be devised during the meeting and a review date set if needed.
- If school attendance does not improve, the school may follow the Staffordshire County Council Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for pupils with persistent absence.

### **Rewarding good school attendance**

Our school celebrates and rewards good and improving attendance by:

- Sharing attendance on our school newsletter
- Awarding best class attendance awards
- Phone calls home
- Post cards home
- End of term rewards for 100% attendance achievements

### **Requests for leave of absence**

Amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 make it clear that head teachers should only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this.

If a parent wishes to request leave for their child for any reason, they must apply in advance and in writing using the leave of absence request form which can be found on the school website or obtained by contacting the school office.

Where a child does not reside with both parents, it is the responsibility of the parent making the request to inform the other parent. The school will send a letter to the parent making the request informing them if the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

If a request for leave has not been received and we have reason to believe a pupil is on holiday, a home visit may be completed by the attendance officer and a letter will be sent to parents requesting medical evidence for the absence. If no medical evidence can be provided, the absence may be recoded as unauthorised, and a penalty notice request sent to the Local Authority.

### **Changes to Penalty Notices for School Absence from 19th August 2024**

The new National Framework introduces consistency in the use of Penalty Notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered. The framework increases the amount of the Penalty Notice and introduces a new national limit of 2 Penalty Notices within a 3-year rolling period to break cycles of repeat offending. In line with the guidance, Staffordshire County Council will prioritise the 'support first' approach expecting that support will have been offered to families in cases where it is appropriate. However, Penalty Notices can be issued without a Notice to Improve in cases where support is not appropriate (such as leave of absence in term time) or when support has not been engaged with. Penalty Notices are requested by schools and academies and issued by the Local Authority to the parents/carers of statutory school age children, per parent, per child. For example: two children in a family absent from school for a leave of absence may result in each parent receiving a Penalty Notice for each child at the below rates.

- First offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21, until day 28. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- Second Offence (within 3 years) - the second time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - the third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court under s.444 of the Education Act (1996) or other legal interventions considered. The Magistrates' Court can order fines up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Leave of Absence (Holidays) Penalty Notices can be requested by schools for leave of absence in term time for 5 or more days. This can be consecutive absence, or non- consecutive. In line with the National Framework, the Local Authority retains the discretion to issue a Penalty Notice before the threshold is met. For example, when parents/carers are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking multiple term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events, or a combination of non-attendance due to leave of absence and unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised Absence Penalty Notices can be requested by schools when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. In these circumstances a Notice to Improve may be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the school, this will stipulate the support that has already been implemented and the ongoing support that is available to the parent and child to improve school attendance. The Notice to Improve will also detail the expected improvements that must be made over a set time frame to prevent the Penalty Notice being issued. Further information on the National Framework can be found within Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024. The National Framework comes into effect from 19th August 2024. [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121441/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or

permanent exclusion. Knypersley First School will notify the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance.

A session is equivalent to half a day in school.

### **Elective Home Education**

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child, school will contact the parent and discuss their reasons in more detail, offering support to deal with any issues raised. If after this time the parent still wishes to home educate their child, the school will inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register.

Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record. Prior to deciding to home educate, parents are requested to contact Staffordshire County Council Elective Home Education department.

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Elective-home-education/Elective-Home-Education-Homepage.aspx>

### **Summary**

It is vital to a child's progress that they attend school as often as possible and that they are on time.

There are strong and proven links between pupils' attendance and educational achievement. Just 17 days absence from school in a year could mean a drop in a GCSE grade within all subjects.

### **Impact of absence:**

Missed number of days	Missed number of sessions	Missed number of weeks	Missed number of lessons
1	2	0	5
3	6	0.5	15
5	10	1	25
7.5	15	1.5	35
10	20	2	50
12.5	25	2.5	65
15	30	3	75
17.5	35	3.5	90



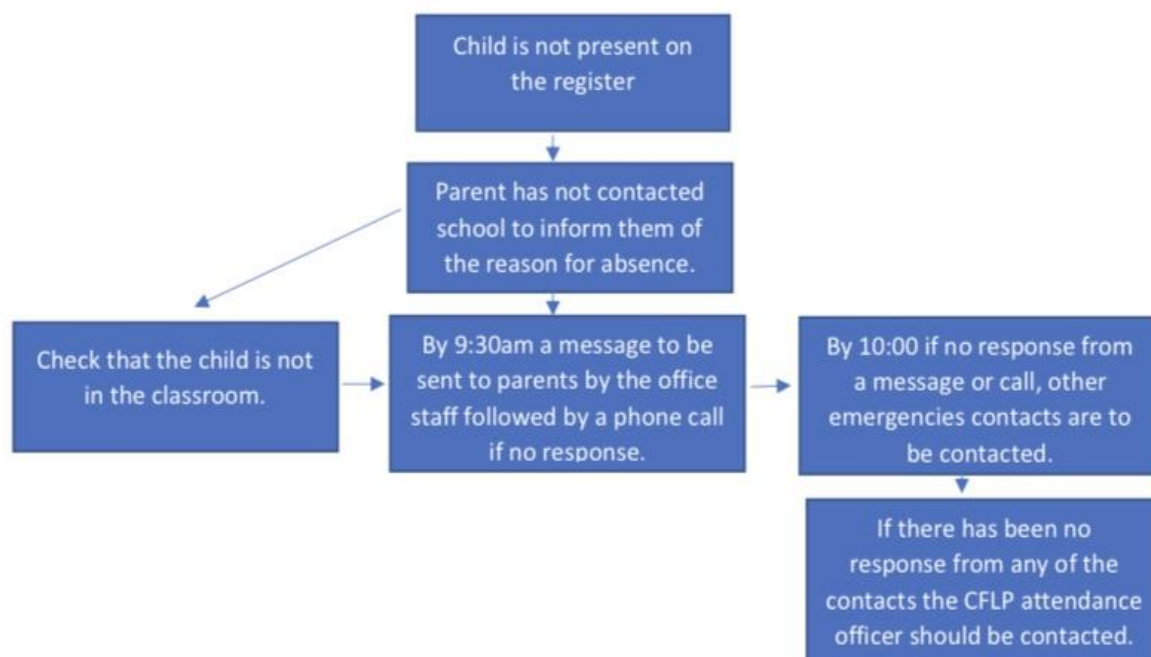
## Impact of lateness over a school year

5 minutes late every day = 3 days absence

15 minutes late every day = 10 days absence

30 minutes late every day = 19 days absence

### CFLP Graduated Response



National or above	96.4-93%	93-90%	Below 90%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter 5 (Sent when back to above National expectation).</li> <li>End of term certificate.</li> </ul>	<u>Register inspection with CFLP attendance officer.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter 1 sent to parents.</li> <li>School 'we miss you' texts.</li> <li>Office and CFLP attendance officer to offer support to improve attendance.</li> <li>Phone conversation with parent.</li> </ul>	<u>Letter 2 sent to parent in conjunction with CFLP attendance officer attendance check.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to offer support.</li> <li>School offer to administer medication at school.</li> <li>Head to contact parents where necessary.</li> <li>School to send 'excited for the week ahead/ well done for a brilliant week' text.</li> </ul>	<u>Letter 3 sent to parent in conjunction with CFLP attendance officer attendance check.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite sent to parents for an attendance support meeting with CFLP attendance officer.</li> <li>Request for medical evidence (where necessary).</li> <li>Office to share attendance breakdown with class teachers.</li> </ul>
Attendance improving (at any point in the cycle)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter 4 sent home.</li> <li>Postcard for improving attendance.</li> </ul>			
Persistent Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance support meeting</li> <li>Home visits</li> <li>Referral to Local Authority</li> </ul>			