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# ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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## Parent Summary



<b>Policy Author:</b>	<b>Mrs Hayley Ahlquist</b>
<b>Date of Policy:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> August 2024</b>
<b>Date approved by Governors:</b>	
<b>Next annual review date:</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b>

At Kedington Primary Academy we want all pupils to aim for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all and expect pupils to be in school every day that school is open unless they are too unwell to attend. This is really important so we can give your children the best education we can, and the education that they are entitled to.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and we will work together with parents, carers, guardians, pupils and any relevant partners to remove any barriers getting in the way of pupils attending regularly. Pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance will be fully supported by the school, in partnership, where necessary, with any health or external professionals. Promoting and supporting excellent attendance is everybody's concern within our school and community.

The provision of a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive school where all pupils feel that they belong, and want to be, is of paramount importance to all us. We will work together with you to explore and support any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly.

## Key Attendance Contacts – Full List

**School Attendance Lead Name:** Vicky Doherty (Executive Head)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787 **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

**School Attendance Champion Name:** Hayley Ahlquist (Head of School)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787 **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

Please see the end of the document ([Appendix 1](#)) for a full list of our school's attendance contacts.

## Why is attending school regularly so important?

Excellent attendance is important for pupils to feel part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. This supports each pupil's all-round development, mental health, and well-being.

If attendance over the school year is:	...a pupil will miss this many days:	...and this many lessons:
100%	0	0
95%	10	50
90%	19	95
85%	29	145
80%	39	195
75%	49	245
70%	58	290

Children who attend regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all students to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. We want to work in partnership with you and these are the things we ask you to do:

- Contact the school early if you are at all worried about your child - no matter how small the concern - so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with. If you are aware of any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness (e.g. a sick parent/carer), please let us know as soon as possible.
- Make sure your child attends every day and on time. Children need to be in school in time for morning registration and before the gate closes at **8:40**. Children who arrive after this time will be marked as 'late'. After **8:55**, once the registers close, your child receives an absent mark (this is a legal requirement).
- Call the school 01440 702787 to report your child's absence before 8:40 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence or ideally email [absences@kedingtonprimary.co.uk](mailto:absences@kedingtonprimary.co.uk) . We ask that you give full details of the absence and avoid using generic phrases such as "poorly" or "sick" - tell us what symptoms your child has and when you expect them to be back at school. **You must repeat this for every day of absence**, unless by prior agreement with the school. This helps us to safeguard your child as we will otherwise not know if they have left home and not arrived at school. We may call you back if we need more information.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for your child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for your child are made outside of the school day, avoiding registration periods. If a school-time appointment is unavoidable, your child should attend school before and after the appointment.
- Inform 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 (e.g. an appointment card/letter/prescription paperwork or packet.)
- Request any exceptional leave of absence giving 3 weeks' notice. An absent request form must be completed prior to this absence.

We understand that children do get ill sometimes.

If we are concerned that your child is missing a lot of school that you are reporting as illness, we will contact you to get more information, try and find out what is happening and discuss whether we can put support in place at school, or support you with referrals for help from other professionals.

If we are still worried, we may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to supply this evidence, and the school may decide not to authorise the absence if the evidence is not forthcoming. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make our own enquiries. We will not do this for every absence, only if we are concerned about the validity of absences and we will let you know if this is the case. An individual

decision will be made in all cases.

If we are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

When students have an illness, confirmed by a medical professional, that means they will be away from school long term, where appropriate, the school will do all it can to send learning material home, so that your child can keep up with their schoolwork. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the LA to discuss what extra support might be available.

## How do we reward good and improving attendance

Pupil attendance is closely monitored, and we communicate regularly to parents and staff where attendance is improving or of a concern. Through weekly assemblies, we celebrate the class with the highest attendance and send positive letters home to parents where attendance has improved. We also celebrate class and individual cases of improved attendance with staff during weekly briefing meetings/attendance newsletters.

## Absence requests

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take a child out of school during term time for any reason, including a holiday. Only in very, very exceptional circumstances will absence requests be authorised.

We need parents/carers to complete an absence request form as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (at least 3 weeks). An absence request form can be collected from the school office or found in appendix D of our policy on the school website.

Absence requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Head of School who will, in turn, liaise with Headteacher(s) of siblings' schools, if the sibling attends a Trust school, and will endeavour to do the same for siblings' schools not in the Trust. The Head of School will consider every request individually. But we will not agree exceptional leave for:

- Relatives coming to visit
- Holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Employers declining parents leave during school holidays.
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays
- family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

The decision of the Head of School is final and, if the leave of absence is not agreed, the child's/young person's absences will be marked as unauthorised.

It is within our policy to report unauthorised absences to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) or inform the Local authority if absence has been taken without permission by school. It is important that parents understand that this could result in a penalty notice/prosecution by the Local Authority.

## Unauthorised absence

An absence will be unauthorised if your child is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst as parents you can provide explanations for absence, it remains the school's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips, errands
- Absences whereby parents state they are waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless in very, very exceptional circumstances as agreed in advance by the school)
- If a pupil is kept away from school longer than has been agreed -any additional absence will be unauthorised
- Not following part-time timetable arrangements as agreed by the school.

It is our policy to issue penalty notices for term time holidays. Unauthorised absences may result in the use of penalty notices or prosecution. It is within the Trust Attendance policy to issue penalty notices for term time holidays. Appendix 2 details further information about penalty notices.

## Support for school attendance

Sometimes your child may not want to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reasons for absence. If your child does not want to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to let your child stay at home. This can give the impression to your child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why your child may not want to attend school so we can support you and your child in the best way possible.

It is important that school and parents work together to support and improve attendance. You can do this by contacting the class teacher and/or the Head of School. Please book appointments with the school office or message the class teacher on Dojo.

For pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance we will fully support each pupil to be able to attend as much as possible. If needed, our school will use a healthcare plan and will work alongside other relevant professionals such as health colleagues, and yourselves, to best support this. If this is something that may be helpful, please contact the Head of School for further support and information.

If the school is unable to work in partnership with you as parents, we may refer to the Local Authority. We will only ever do this if everything else has failed. We hope as parents you will work with us to best support your child, so this does not need to happen.

If the school has any safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary to ensure a child's safety and well-being. It is important that school are informed of the whereabouts of children, and we expect parents to contact the school and report absence.

At Kedington Primary Academy we want your child to thrive, be able to achieve their potential and be happy. School attendance is foundational for academic success, personal development, and



for future opportunities and at Kedington Primary Academy we want to support all our families to ensure that every pupil can make the most of their time at our school.

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# APPENDIX 1

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## Key Attendance Contacts – Full List

Below is a list of our key contacts for Attendance Support at our school. We will keep this document up-to-date and it will reflect staff changes when they happen. If you have printed this document, please see our school website for the most up-to-date version of this document.

**School Attendance Lead Name:** Mrs Vicky Doherty (Executive Head)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787      **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

**School Attendance Champion Name:** Mrs Hayley Ahlquist (Head of School)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787      **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

**School Attendance Officer Name:** Mrs Keely Foyster (Attendance Office Manager)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787      **Email:** [absences@kedingtonprimary.co.uk](mailto:absences@kedingtonprimary.co.uk)

**Pastoral Support Lead:** Laura Wreathall (SENCO)  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787      **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

**Governor for Attendance:** Carlo Marrone  
**Telephone number:** 01440 702787      **Email:** admin@kedingtonprimary.co.uk

## APPENDIX 2

