

# **LITTLE KINGSHILL COMBINED SCHOOL**

## **Attendance & Holiday Policy**



**Approved: January 2017**

**Next Review: January 2019**

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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Little Kingshill Combined School regards regular attendance at school as essential to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all children and that regular attendance at school is necessary to promote better life chances. The school encourages children to feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

There is a clear link between good attendance and high standards. Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age (i.e. 5-16 year olds) receive a suitable education by attending school. However, schools and local authorities also share legal responsibilities in respect of school attendance. There is now a legal requirement for schools to set targets for improving school attendance and reducing unauthorised absence. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school as follows: "If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent/carer is guilty of an offence."

This policy sets out the principles and guidelines by which we seek to raise attendance, improve punctuality, to raise levels of achievement and to maximise opportunities both in school and in later life.

### **Organisation**

- All schools are required by law to keep an attendance register.
- This school completes an attendance record twice a day; once at 8.50am before the morning session and again at 1.05pm before the afternoon session.
- Each pupil will be marked either as present (denoted by a diagonal line) or absent (denoted by a circle).
- If the pupil is absent, the reason for absence must be entered into the circle. The codes used are as follows:

B	Educated off site
C	Other authorised circumstances (music/ballet exam, funeral etc)
D	Dual Registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before registration is closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code)
P	Approved sporting activity

R	Religious observance
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registration is closed)
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances eg snow
#	Planned closure

- The registers will be sent to the office by 9.00 a.m. If a child is absent and no reason has been given for this absence then the person who has completed the register will leave it blank.
- The class teacher or person taking the register will confirm that the child is not in school. If no notification or reason for absence is received by 9:30am, then a telephone call will be made to the child's home to confirm their absence and ask for the reason for absence in order to complete the register.
- If no contact can be made with the child's parents/carers then the school will use the child's emergency contact numbers to do so.

## Reporting Absences

- Parents/carers should inform school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day of the absence by either a note, personal contact or a telephone call by 9:30am. Any member of staff taking a call should put a note in the relevant register.
- Parents/carers should inform school of the time and date of any medical or dental appointment, prior to the appointment. In the case of local appointments children will be expected to return to school on completion of the appointment.
- Parents/carers should report to the office and sign their child in or out when returning their child or when taking their child from school for an appointment. This information is vital in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building.
- When the pupil returns to school, a letter explaining the absence should be sent to the class teacher for filing in the official school register. If a child has experienced any sickness or diarrhoea they should stay away from school for 48 hours after the last bout.
- If an absence letter is not received by the parents, then the school will send home a proforma for completion to seek clarification for the absence.

## Holidays and other absences

At Little Kingshill School we support the view that every lesson counts and we discourage parents/carers from taking any holidays during term time. Any holiday that has not been authorised by the Headteacher will be classed as an unauthorised absence. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when an absence is unavoidable. Parents must complete

an Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday form which is available from the school office.

## **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is defined as absence without permission from the Headteacher or governors. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences, including holidays taken without permission. Absences without explanations will be followed up by the secretary and may be subject to a financial penalty.

The class teacher or school secretary will monitor and advise the Headteacher of any absence through illness which exceeds a 2 week period. The secretary and Headteacher monitor the termly attendance reports. In the event of ongoing absence issues where the parent has been notified, the school will contact the Educational Welfare Officer as a matter of concern for the child.

## **Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Lateness can be embarrassing for the child, encourage absence and also disrupt lessons.

- If a pupil is late to school, again there must be a valid reason (e.g. doctor's appointment) or a letter of explanation will be required.
- Reasons for lateness will be recorded in the late book by child/parent or member of the office staff. The late book is kept in the main entrance.
- If a child arrives later than 9.15am, parents are responsible for providing a packed lunch unless they have pre booked a hot dinner.
- If a child leaves/returns to the school premises during the school day they must be signed out and in by parents or nominated carer. This situation could arise for example, if a child has a medical appointment, is taking an exam or is taken home because they have become unwell in school.
- The signing in and out books are kept in the main entrance.
- Punctuality is monitored on a termly basis from the late book. Parents of children who are persistently late into school will be informed in writing of the situation and their responsibilities to ensure their child arrives at school on time.
- If the situation does not improve, then the parents will again be contacted by the school and requested to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the matter.
- In the event of ongoing punctuality issues, the school will contact the Educational Welfare Officer as a matter of concern for the child.