



Attendance Policy

Consultation that has taken place: This policy has been developed by the Headteacher, teaching and support staff and with consultation with the Governing Body

How the policy will be disseminated to the school's community: This policy is available on the school's website. Copies are available from the office.

Date Policy Formally Approved By Governors: 5 October 2016

Date Policy Becomes Effective: 1 September 2016

Review Date(s): Autumn 2019

Person(s) responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Headteacher.

This policy reflects the DfE regulations which came into force in September 2013 which state:

'Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'

Kea School is committed to providing a full and enjoyable educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of the school to celebrate achievement and attendance. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify, and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality
- To monitor attendance and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils

- To work effectively with other services and agencies to support these objectives

The following will be considered when dealing with attendance and punctuality.

- Start and finishing times of registration: A child arriving after 8.55 am will be marked as late.
- Guidance for staff on the accurate completion of registers
- The importance of punctuality and the response to lateness. If a child arrives at school after 8.55 am they will be marked as late. (less than 90% punctuality will be followed up.)
- Daily contact between parents and school when a child is absent
- In line with the Health Protection Agency guidelines, a period of 48 hours absence is required for any pupil with vomiting or diarrhoea. Such absence due to illness is authorised.
- Clear guidance to parents that headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.
- Referral routes with roles and responsibilities for pupils with emerging attendance problems.
- The threshold used to determine persistent absence (PA) was lowered in September 2015. A pupil is now persistently absent if he or she does not attend for 10% of sessions or more. Previously, this figure was 15%. All parents will receive a termly letter regarding their child's overall attendance (Appendix 1).

Attendance Thresholds:

	15%	10%
Half Term 1	10 or more sessions	7 or more sessions
Half Term 1-2 Autumn Term	22 or more sessions	14 or more sessions
Half Term 1-3	30 or more sessions	20 or more session
Half Term 1-4 (Autumn and Spring Terms)	38 or more sessions	25 or more sessions
Half Term 1-5	46 or more sessions	31 or more sessions
Half Term 1-6 (Full Academic Year)	56 or more sessions	38 or more sessions

- This will be in the form of a traffic light coloured letter (Appendix 1).
Gold – 97%-100%
Green – 95% - 97%
Amber – 90% - 95%
Red – Below 90%
- The inclusion of attendance information in school documentation, e.g the website, reports, newsletters, home-school agreements.
- Annual reports to parents include a record of their child's attendance.
- The Headteacher's termly report to Governors records the attendance figures for the academic year to date.

Good Attendance

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics prove a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.

- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school.

Children will be happier, healthier and achieve more in school if they attend regularly.

Parents are asked to help support their child's learning by:

- Ringing school on the first morning of all absences with the reason and date for return.
- Arranging routine medical appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.
- Keeping us updated if their child has an extended absence due to illness.
- Ensuring that family holidays are taken during school holidays.

School Roles and Responsibilities

- Acknowledge and reward good attendance.
- Follow up unexplained absences by phone on the first day, and any further subsequent days if necessary.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters and Home-School Agreement.
- Publish the attendance of each class in the weekly newsletter
- Send home termly letters letting you know if your child's attendance is becoming a concern.
- Supporting learning (95% and above Green and Gold)
- Becoming a concern (90%-95% Amber)
- Detrimental to your child's learning (below 90% Red)
- Take the registers each session.
- The Headteacher and Governing Body monitor patterns and trends over time.
- The Headteacher is responsible for decisions about any leave of absence requested for exceptional circumstances during the term time.

Good Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance through a letter (appendix 2) home and certificates given out in assembly
- Parents of children with low attendance will be invited to attendance clinics with the Education Welfare Officer.
- The Education Welfare Officer will work closely with the school to support families with low attendance.

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole school.

Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child's education as well as reflecting badly on the school. It also gives children the wrong messages about the importance

of education which may lead to problems later in schooling. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later in life.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as 'Authorised absences'. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance, music exams. We understand that there are occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. In these cases, please complete a leave of absence request form (appendix 3).

Please note that authorisation for any absence not detailed in the examples above will only be granted if:

Your child has had **NO UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as 'Unauthorised Absences'. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Parents being ill
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it's the child's birthday
- Unapproved holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

The School will contact you and the Local Authority may consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Leave of Absence During Term Time (Exceptional Circumstances)

Schools are no longer allowed to authorise holidays during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Before deciding whether to authorise leave of absence the headteachers will consider:

- The impact for the student's academic progress of any absence
- The pupils attendance over the academic year
- Whether it falls within any key stage national tests or exams

Examples of exceptional circumstances

Below are examples of exceptional circumstances, however this is not an exhaustive list:

- Where it is company policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time – proof would be needed.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark on a tour of duty.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a child or parent's recovery from a medical or emotional issue – evidence must be provided.

- Funeral of close relative or family friend – the headteacher will use their discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence – up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the LA.
- Time off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by the Local Authority
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 s444(3) (c), states ‘on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by religious body to which his/her parent belongs’ . This would include the Islamic Eids, as well as religious observance days of the orthodox Christian, Jewish and other religions. Headteachers may specify that only one day will be authorised at a time.
- Weddings of parents and siblings - weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when the headteacher is satisfied that there is a familial reason for attending the wedding during term time.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Availability of cheaper holidays during term time.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department of Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to set realistic targets; these targets may be set in consultation with the Local Authority or with the Governing Body. The School will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

School Target

Our school target for attendance is set at 95%

Persistent Absence Definition

Attendance below 90% is defined by the DFE as persistent absence (Sept 2015).

Definition of ‘Parent’

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines ‘parent’ to include:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Patterns and trends in the school's attendance and pupils' punctuality are improved.
- Parental response to absence has improved.
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance by celebrating good attendance within the school, governing body and the local community.
- Pupils and parents are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and aware of the attendance procedure operating within school.
- Parents and governors are made aware of the current law on attendance.
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies or PHSE lessons.

Attendance is monitored half termly for any emerging patterns below 95%. Parents will be routinely contacted if attendance falls below 90%.

Appendix 1

To the Parent/Carer of: (insert name)

Date

Dear (insert name)

Attendance (insert term)

Every term the school monitors the percentage attendance of all our pupils. The target set by the Government and the County Council is 95%.

(insert name) attendance for the (insert term) was (insert figure)%. Your child's overall attendance for this academic year is (insert figure)%.

GOLD	GREEN	AMBER	RED
Attendance between 97% - 100%	Attendance between 95% - 97%	Attendance between 90% - 95%	Attendance between 80% - 90%
Up to 2 days absence	Up to 3 days absence	Up to 1½ weeks absence	Up to 2 weeks absence
(If this level of attendance continues for the whole school year, your child will have fewer than 6 days absence in total)	(If this level of attendance continues for the whole school year, your child will have up to two weeks absence in total)	(If this level of attendance continues for the whole school year, your child will have over four weeks absence in total)	(If this level of attendance continues for the whole school year, your child will have up to 8 weeks absence in total)
Your child has excellent attendance and has the best possible chance of achieving their full potential.	Your child has good attendance and is likely to be able to achieve the grade they are capable of.	Your child's attendance needs to improve. These absences make it difficult for your child to achieve their target grades. It is also difficult for children to maintain friendships and stay in touch with work and lessons.	Your child's attendance is a serious concern. Missing so much time makes it very hard for your child to stay in touch with lessons, work and friendships. They will find it almost impossible to learn effectively. Attendance of 85% or less is described as persistently absent by the Government

Yours sincerely

Katherine Warren

Miss K Warren
Headteacher

Date

Dear

Attendance Rate Below 90%

I am writing to you concerning (insert name) school attendance. The school has a policy, agreed with the Education Welfare Service, of informing parents if their child's attendance rate falls below 90%. Whilst we recognise that children should not be in school when they are ill, we must stress the importance of regular attendance and the effect absence has on academic and social progress.

(Insert name) attendance rate so far this academic year is (insert figure). The school will be monitoring this over the next few weeks. If there is no significant sign of improvement in that time a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer.

Please contact the school if you feel we can help and support your child in increasing their level of school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Warren

Miss K Warren
Headteacher

(Appendix 3) KEA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Request for a child to be absent during term time

(please read the notes on the back of this form before you fill it in,)

Section A:

Child's name:	Class:
First day of absence:	
Last day of absence:	
Total number of days absent from school:	
Why are you requesting taking your child out of school during term time? Please include any information you would like us to consider.	

Section B:

I have read the attached notes. The information I have given on this form is correct:

Signature of parent or carer: _____ Date: _____

Section C: *(for school use only)*

☐ Request not approved for the following reason:

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☐ Request approved due to the following exceptional circumstances:

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Headteacher's signature: _____ Date: _____

