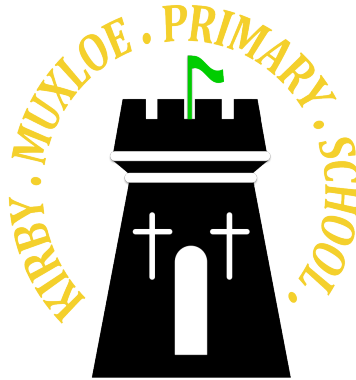


Kirby Muxloe Primary School



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Status: Statutory

Date adopted by Trust Board: February 2025

Date for review: Spring 2027

Introduction:

This policy aims to **support families** to have the highest attendance and punctuality possible by outlining expectations and responsibilities of all, and explaining the procedures related to attendance.

We will follow the Department of Education (DfE) **Statutory Guidance** which includes accurately recording registers and sharing daily data with the DfE, along with using that data to identify where early

support may be required to remove barriers to education by working in partnership with families and collaboratively other agencies, to achieve the best outcomes for children using a 'support first' approach.

We recognise the importance of **every child** accessing their right to education and as research shows pupils who achieve their potential also have higher attendance levels, we want to work with families to achieve good outcomes for their child. Every moment matters!

We also recognise that absence can interrupt and damage a child's learning and wellbeing, as well as disrupting teaching routines which may also affect the learning of others so we will ensure all staff (teaching & support) understand their role and set good examples by modelling behaviours expected of others e.g. communication, compassion and habits like good attendance, and punctuality. We understand that absence can be linked to several factors, including but not limited to, trauma, physical and mental health, socio-economic circumstances and learning needs, therefore we will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils feel safe, are eager to learn and look forward to coming to school every day.

We believe this policy helps us **all** to keep pupils safe, healthy, and able to participate in their education and community, in turn supporting learning, achievement and transition to become successful adults.

NB. Some words and phrases have been made bold to emphasise their importance in driving up attendance.

Legislation and guidance

This policy follows the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold. Our work on attendance is linked closely to our approaches to safeguarding and behaviour. Therefore this policy also meets the requirements of other DfE guidance 'Children Missing in Education' and 'Keeping children safe in education.'

How we promote a culture of high expectations in attendance and punctuality:

Kirby Muxloe Primary School aims to work together with parents and carers to ensure that all children achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. The school's current target for pupil attendance is 96% and reflects the importance of regular attendance. The school day begins at 8:45am and ends at 3:10pm.

Regular attendance is important, not just because the law requires it but because it is the best way of ensuring that children make the most of the educational opportunities which are available to them.

Good

attendance is an essential and crucial prerequisite to effective learning.

We will always seek build strong relationships with families and to work alongside them to overcome any barriers to regular attendance. We will always be understanding of such issues as transport, family issues or other barriers which may impact attendance and work with families to support them to find solutions. This process will be bespoke and tailored to the specific needs of individual families.

Roles and Responsibilities

We all have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this. At Kirby Muxloe we will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Attendance targets are set for individual pupils and the whole school.
- Attendance and punctuality data is regularly and robustly monitored and reviewed.

Pupils:

- Pupils are expected to **aspire** to attend every day on time and ready to learn unless there are exceptional causes/reasons for absence.
- It is expected they will ensure someone (parent or a member of staff) knows they are having difficulties or are worried about school so that conversations can take place to support them.

Parents/carers:

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day.
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day.
- Notify school each day of their child's absence using the school's phone number (0116 2393410), school email (admin@kmprimary.leics.sch.uk) or reporting to the school office.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child (unless only one exists).
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

Class Teachers:

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office no later than 8:50am for the morning session and 1.00 pm for the afternoon session.

The SLT member responsible for Attendance:

At Kirby Muxloe, the SLT member responsible for attendance is Sharon Jackson and can be contacted via the school office (0116 2393410). The attendance lead is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level weekly.
- Providing regular attendance reports to staff and sharing these with the Headteacher and the SLT.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Sending letters to parents/carers regarding attendance.
- Praising pupils who have improved their attendance and pupils with good attendance.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Working with local partners to implement bespoke strategies to improve attendance for those children with persistent absence or severe absence.
- Working with the Local Authority to tackle persistent and severe absence.
- Working with local partners when formal procedures such as parental contracts, supervision orders and penalty notices are required.

The Headteacher:

The Headteacher is responsible for developing and implementing the attendance policy. In addition, the Headteacher will:

- Monitor school-level absence data and report it to the Trust Board..
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Work with the Local Authority to issue fixed-penalty notices and pursue court action where necessary.
- Hold the attendance lead to account.

Trustees:

The trust board are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.

Local Authorities (LA)

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure all children in their area are accessing appropriate education. They will provide our school with support, information, and guidance (processes and Code

of Conduct for Legal Actions) by meeting with the Senior Attendance Lead to support the reduction of persistent absence.

They will support schools to ensure reasonable adjustments are considered for pupil illness or disability and that consideration of penalty notices, prosecutions, or formalised support is consistent and fair. They will process legal action in line with their statutory enforcement duties as required.

Recording Attendance

Under Regulation 8 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 all academies must keep accurate admission and attendance registers electronically and they must be kept for 6 years. A legal registration must also be taken twice during the academy day; morning session and afternoon session (both of which must not be open for longer than 30 minutes); this is for both compulsory and non-compulsory school age pupils.

On admitting a pupil to their roll, in accordance with regulation 13(1) to (3) all schools must make a return to the LA within 5 days of the pupil starting when the start is outside of the normal admission round (e.g. Year-Rec)

The school uses Bromcom MIS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Absence Procedures

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office before 8.45am (or as soon as practically possible) on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or the pupil's attendance percentage is significantly below 96%.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

In the case of Persistent Absence (PA), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85 percent, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Registration

Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session. The class teacher or member of staff taking the class marks the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the beginning of the afternoon session (after lunch). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Late

The office staff will complete the register using the prescribed DfE codes (See appendix 1). A record is kept of all authorised and unauthorised absence. Every entry on the attendance register is kept for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The doors open at 8.30am for the start of the school day. The register will be completed promptly at 8.45am for the morning session and at 1pm for the afternoon session.

If pupils are attending an alternative appropriate provision for education, the school will have daily arrangements with the provision to pass on registration information if the pupil is absent. Parent/ Carers are required to notify the provision of the absence in the first instance however, if absence is reported to the school, this will be passed on.

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days. EYFS staggered start.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

Lateness and punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they miss learning and miss being given vital information for the day. Pupils arriving late disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the child, and this can also further encourage absence.

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed (9:15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)

After the register has closed (9:15am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed, will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure. For the same reason, it is important that parents of pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment) or returning to school later in the day, inform the school office. The school office will record that the child has left the school site and will mark them back in when they return.

Lateness across the school is monitored. Pupils who are regularly marked as late are identified.

Parents

will be contacted by the class teacher or Attendance Lead, who will work with families in partnership to support with barriers to punctual attendance. A range of strategies may be implemented to support families in these cases, tailored to the specific needs of the family.

Types of Absence

Every half-day = one session. One whole day = two sessions. Absence from school must be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about absence is sought from parents/carers.

A). Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where the Headteacher or their designated staff members do not consider it reasonable to be absent due to the reason given, or overall level of concern, and/or for which no "Term Time Absence Request" has been received.

The above includes but is not limited to: parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g., looking after other children, birthdays, shopping trips, truancy before or during the school day, unexplained absences, late arrival at school after registration has closed, holidays, cheaper holidays/ flights, visiting family or friends, unagreed leave, family wedding of more than 1 day, or absence that has no exceptional cause evident, medical treatment overseas (unless it was an emergency treatment whilst abroad as part of a pre-authorised absence).

Unauthorised absence can lead to the school submitting evidence to the LA for financial penalties/ sanctions using The National Framework for Penalty Notices and/or legal proceedings to be investigated/considered using the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE).

B). Authorised absence

Authorised absence will fall under 2 main categories:

- 1) **'Day to Day absence situations'** These may be for illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably fall within the school day), emergencies or other short exceptional cause/ circumstance that is unavoidable and the Headteacher agrees the absence is necessary.
- 2) **'Exceptional circumstances'** 'Exceptional Circumstances' are not specified by the Government therefore Headteachers will decide based on the information and/or evidence provided by parents/ carers, ensuring they consider each individual request and are consistent with their decisions across all applications for leave. At KMPS, we will see the following as generally being or not being exceptional circumstances (this list is not exhaustive):

Potential Exceptional Reasons	Not Exceptional Reasons
A short term absence due to extreme family emergency	Looking after other children
The pupil lives more than three miles and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority.	Birthdays
Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. In line with DfE guidance, for all religious observance, it is expected that only one day is to be authorised for each religious celebration and then only where it falls on a school day. Parents should inform the school of this absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.	Shopping/ day trips
Visit to close relative who is terminally ill and travel cannot take place at another time.	Holidays (cheaper holidays and flights or 'special trips' such as visits to Lapland.)
Due to a family wedding/ funeral in the UK of 1 day or abroad for 2-5 days (dependent on location and upon receipt of wedding invitations)	Visiting family and friends
When a child accompanies a parent on a work trip and there is no alternative care available (this will be dependent on documentary evidence and circumstances being detailed)	Holidays added onto leave granted for exceptional reasons.

	Medical treatment overseas (unless it was an emergency treatment whilst abroad as part of a pre-authorized absence)
--	---

Authorising Parental Absence Requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, requests for absence by parents will always be considered on their merits.

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is extremely unlikely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

The school is very aware that issues of attendance are sometimes due to factors beyond the control of parents or carers, such as long-term illness or hospitalisation and the school is committed to working with parents to limit the impact of these events on the development of individual children. In certain circumstances, other agencies such as the school doctor/nurse may be called on to support the process.

Holidays should not be taken in term time as they damage progress and continuity of learning. We will not authorise any holidays. Leave of absence may be granted in very exceptional circumstances.

Illness and Healthcare Appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Medical and SEND

Medical and SEND barriers to physical attendance in school (e.g. where a pupil has a long-term medical condition, or their SEND support requires more appropriate education) will be explored and supported using the DfE Guidance: Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, Guidance Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance and Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and school policies on Supporting Children with Medical Needs.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.
- Leave during lunchtimes

Child Missing Education (CME)

CME is where a child's whereabouts becomes unknown (address no longer confirmed) and the school do not have reason to believe the child is absent due to illness or unavoidable causes. A CME child is a serious **safeguarding concern** and if there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral to Children's Social Care (or the Police if appropriate) will be considered.

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on LAs and Schools/Academies to follow procedures designed to carry out reasonable enquiries. This will include telephone and email contact to all registered contacts, **home visit/safe and well check**, and if it has not been possible to confirm the family have moved, a letter to last known address (GDPR compliant). Reasonable enquiries may also include gathering information from the child's peers, the family's landlord (private or social housing providers) and other local stakeholders who are involved with the family (observing GDPR but being mindful that safeguarding duties allows the sharing of information when locating a child or keeping them safe is required). All actions/enquiries will be recorded on the school CPOMs database to show completion.

Where a child is absent and no contact has been made, and therefore **CME is suspected**, reasonable enquiries must be carried out within the **first 10 days** of a child being absent from education (as a school we advise between **day 1-5** wherever possible), we must attempt to locate the child using the above suggestions in the first instance. On **day 10** of unauthorised absence where no contact has been established with parent/carer, a child **must** be reported to the Local Authority as a child missing education. Where the child is located and their address is **confirmed** within school's area, the child will remain on roll and attendance procedures will be considered for non-attendance. Where the child is located outside of the school's area, the child must be reported to the LA where they have moved to (the school or their LA can do this, see the LA local agreement) after which, the school will have the right to remove the child under **Ground G** of Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Where the child has not been located, they will be held on roll until their destination school has been confirmed or their **20th day** from the

last day of attendance occurs. If their destination remains unknown prior to deletion, following LA confirmation to do so, the removal from roll will be done under **Ground I** of Regulation 9 of the above legislation. The child's details will be **logged** onto the national School to School (S2S) DfE Portal to enable another school or LA to 'claim' the child once located.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

EHE is a parent's right to choose. This would involve withdrawing their child from school to educate them at home, taking full responsibility for education, including all costs associated with it. There are legal responsibilities that must be fulfilled regarding that education which is monitored by the LA. We are unable to encourage or discourage a decision to EHE but as an educational placement, we would hold the view that school is the best place for most children.

However, we will ensure we give parents/carers the appropriate information to make an informed decision if it is something they wish to explore, and also an opportunity to discuss the decision with the Attendance Lead/Headteacher prior to removing a pupil from roll. We will complete the necessary forms and send to inclusion if a parent chooses this option.

Working with Parents to Improve Attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Lead will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and Inclusion Lead, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent Absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of their education within a specific period (e.g., whole academic year, term, or for a 10-week period) for any reason. A pupil is a 'PA' if they meet the 10% threshold with either authorised or unauthorised absence. The difference will be in how the absence is treated in terms of action required e.g., both will be explored and supported but unauthorised absence can lead to legal action.

Persistent Absence may cause damage to the pupil's educational prospects and parental support and co-operation is essential to ensure the pupil is supported to access their education.

Any pupil that is at risk of moving towards the PA level is monitored carefully and conversations will be held to discuss what interventions (mentoring, reasonable adjustment etc.) are needed to improve the situation

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups

The school will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Severe Absence (SA)

Severe Absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of their education within a specific period (e.g., whole academic year, term, or 10-week period) for any reason.

Absence at 'SA' level is very likely to be detrimental to the pupil's educational prospects and full parental support and co-operation is essential to ensure the pupil and family access a 'whole family plan' to ensure appropriate support and education is accessed.

Persistent and Severe absence from school is considered a safeguarding concern. A pupil may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. The child's welfare is always paramount.

The above is reinforced by the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2024 DfE Guidance) which states that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly, and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation. It may also indicate mental health problems and early intervention is essential.

When a child is absent and no contact has been received from the family or wider concerns exist, a follow up will be made as part of our safeguarding processes. This might include a safe and well home visit. These visits will be risk assessed and can take place any time between day 1 and 5 of absence. Where long term absence occurs, we will keep in touch with the family through phone calls and possible visits. Visits can be face to face at the family home but on occasions can be by virtual means where agreed.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The

school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

We will work with Children's Social Care if required to acquire intense support. All staff have access to a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead to support this process.

The Law and National Framework for Penalty Notices and Legal Interventions:

a) The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable: -

(a) to age, ability, and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

In accordance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, we are **unable to authorise** any period of absence unless it is for **exceptional circumstances**, and in advance, as per the following extract from the above-mentioned regulations:

Leave of Absence 11.—(1) Leave of absence from a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an "authorised person") if—

(a) an appropriate person has asked for the leave in advance; and

(b) the authorised person thinks that leave should be given because of the exceptional circumstances of the request.

In accordance with Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, any deletions from roll will be made using the grounds for removal detailed in the statutory guidance. Specific information about removal from roll is detailed within this policy under procedures.

b) The National Framework for Penalty Notices and Legal Interventions:

We have a duty to prevent absence, work together with parents/carers and offer support to **prevent prosecution** being necessary, however if the level of attendance continues to be unsatisfactory after barriers have been addressed/removed/resolved, we also have a duty to consider whether a Penalty Notice is appropriate, or if more intensive support is required by collating information of non-attendance and reporting to the LA to decide what action is taken.

All planned absence must be **requested in advance** and failing to do so will mean the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** which can lead to legal action being taken.

If absence is due to **emergency** circumstances, it is expected that some form of communication to advise of unplanned absence and its circumstances is done at the earliest point e.g., if an emergency hospital visit is required when the school is closed an email could be sent to advise of the situation.

Penalty Notices are not always an appropriate action. Guidance states that support must be considered first (with exception to unagreed Term Time Absence which doesn't require support) and the **full range of legal interventions** should be used rather than relying on penalty notices. These can include Attendance Contracts, prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or (1a) of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure a child of compulsory school age regularly attends their education, or Parenting or Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court system as an alternative to prosecution.

Where any absence **appears to require support**, we are obliged to explore the absence (we do this via emails, conversations, letters, pupil Discussions and Pupil Support Plan Meetings) and offer support. Where initial support does not improve attendance, we have a duty to offer an **Attendance Contract** prior to considering a Penalty Notice. An Attendance Contract is a nurturing, supportive action to support families to remove barriers to education and attendance over a 3–6-month period. If an Attendance Contract is attempted but fails, a warning letter must be issued to the parents/carers to give a final opportunity to improve the attendance and re-engage with support.

Where a Penalty Notice is being considered, parents/carers must have been warned in writing; this is done by an attendance letter reminding you of our policy and procedures. However, for absence that

does not require support i.e., a single period of 'holiday' absence, this warning will be part of the Headteacher's response following the absence being requested.

Where a Penalty Notice is being considered for absence that appears not to require support, maybe due to offers of support being declined, a **Notice to Improve** must be issued to the Parents/Carers to give a final opportunity improve their child's attendance and/or engage with support before a Penalty Notice is issued. A time frame of 3-6 weeks must be given which is decided on an individual case basis.

Penalty Notice fines are set by the Government; the **school does not receive the fine**. They are used under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 in the use of Penalty Notices as an **alternative to prosecution** where a parent has failed to ensure their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school they are registered at (or at a place where alternative provision is being provided) or they have allowed their child to be present in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term suspension or permanent exclusion, giving the parent opportunity to discharge their liability by paying the penalty. They must be issued in line with The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, amended 2024 and the school's Local Authority's Local **Code of Conduct**.

All state funded schools **must** consider whether a Penalty Notice is appropriate in each individual case where a pupil reaches the **national threshold of absence**. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks (each half day is 1 session e.g., AM and PM session = 2 sessions). The 10 sessions can be made up of any combination of unauthorised absence, examples of this are:

- 4 sessions of 'holiday' taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register has closed (U codes) within a 10-week period.
- 10 sessions of 'holiday' within one week or spanning over the end/start of 2 weeks.
- 6 sessions of 'holiday' in week 1 followed by 4 sessions of absence on subsequent weeks.
- 4 sessions at the end of one half-term or term, followed by 6 sessions at the start of the next half-term or term. Terms can also be in different academic years.
- 10 sessions taken as individual or consecutive days over a number of weeks but within a 10-week period.

When a pupil reaches the national threshold for absence, the school is expected to consider firstly if the pupil requires support and put this into place. If existing support is not working or has been declined, a Notice to Improve should be issued to all parent/carers.

Only 2 Penalty Notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period (the 3-year period starts 19th August 2024). If there is need for further action following 2 Penalty Notices being issued, alternative action should be taken instead e.g. prosecution in the Magistrates' Court or other formalised legal intervention.

Penalty Notices are currently (as @ Sept 2024) £160 per child, per parent, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice but this is reduced to £80 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Following the receipt of all required documentation the Local Authority will decide whether to issue the requested Penalty Notice(s). The Local Authority will liaise directly with the school at each stage of following a penalty notice being issued. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period, the Local Authority must either prosecute or withdraw the notice. Please Note: Only the Local Authority can withdraw a penalty notice and they can only withdraw it if; it ought not to have been issued i.e., no offence was committed; it has been issued to the wrong person; or it contains material errors.

Where a 2nd Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same child the Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days (no reduction for early payment will be allowed). Further offence will be dealt with through alternative action as stated previously.

Monitoring Attendance

Kirby Muxloe will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for

concern.

- If a pupil's absence falls below 96%, the school will follow contact the parent to see how school can support the pupil and family. The school will complete an initial concerns for attendance form. This will be monitored for 4 weeks.
- If no improvement made a follow up meeting will be arranged with the class teacher and the Attendance Lead. The school will then complete a pupil support plan. This will be monitored for six weeks.
- Our school's procedures are based on a rational needs-led approach focused on communication, discussion and support using early help pathways with a stated process to identify concerns and take action to prevent escalation. (Appendix 2)

The Attendance Lead will monitor attendance trends on a regular basis and report to the Headteacher. Weekly reports are run from Bromcom with all pupils and groups of pupils being monitored. Any pupils who fall below 96% attendance are closely monitored for patterns. These patterns are then followed up with children and/or parents.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance lead will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance lead will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance lead will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term by the DfE and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The school will compare attendance data to local, regional and national average.

Training of Staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training. The school will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent .

Appendix 1

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole or partial school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

Summary of Attendance Welfare Procedures (Steps 1-5)

Our schools procedures are based on a relational needs-led approach focused on communication, discussion and support using early help pathways with a 'staged' process to identify concerns and take action to prevent escalation

Attendance % is used as a guide, we will have specific **trigger** to justify an action e.g. frequency or reasons for absence are concerning. We will each action ASAP. We will **monitor** and decide next action weekly/fortnightly.



This policy will be reviewed every two years by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is June 2026

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.