

# **Attendance Policy: Coronavirus Addendum**

**Knowsley Village Primary School**



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## **“Attendance matters”**

### **Introduction**

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance is directly related to a child’s enjoyment and achievement at school and is vital to promote successful learning. At Knowsley Village Primary School, we strive for good attendance from all pupils.

Persistent or long-term absence has a negative impact in all areas of school life, not just on academic achievement but also on the development of key skills and friendships. Irregular attendance makes teaching and learning difficult and undermines the educational process, leading to educational disadvantage.

School, parents and the Local Authority each have a role to play in promoting good attendance. We expect all children to be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. We will challenge the behaviour of children and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

We understand that children are sometimes reluctant to attend school and that the reasons for this are varied and may be complex. We aim to resolve any problems with regular attendance by making early contact with parents and offering support.

### **Aims**

- Maintain an attendance rate of 97% weekly in each class and across the whole school
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for the whole school community, including parents, staff and children
- To maintain robust attendance systems in order to monitor and manage attendance and punctuality throughout the school
- To develop and maintain positive communication between home and school
- To work together with the School Attendance Service and other services or agencies
- To recognise individual needs of children who have been absent for prolonged periods and who are returning to school

### **Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between under achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and schoolwork easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

## **Expectations of pupils:**

- Attend school regularly unless absence is genuinely unavoidable
- Arrive on time and be prepared for the school day

## **Expectations of parents:**

- Ensuring your child attends school regularly and on time
- Contacting school on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return
- Ensuring all of your contact details are up to date
- Arranging dental and doctor appointments out of school hours or during school breaks if possible
- Taking holidays during set school holidays
- Providing school with medical appointment cards or letters so that absence can be authorised
- Keeping school updated if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

## **Punctuality (at the start and at the end of the day)**

- Breakfast club is from 7.45am for Reception to Year 6 and for eligible 3-year olds  
There is a charge for this facility
- Nursery open at 8.30am for extended provision and 8.45am for universal provision
- Classroom doors are open from 8.30am for years Reception to Year 6
- Morning registration closes at 9.00am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom, so you need to ensure your child is coming through the gate by 8.55am
- At 9.00am the school gates are shut, and the children enter school through the front door. For safeguarding reasons, they are entered into the late book. Appropriate marks are entered into the register
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality
- Parents should promptly collect children at the end of the day
- Parents should inform school if another person is collecting their child
- Children in Year 5 and Year 6 will only be allowed to walk home with permission from the parent
- Children who remain uncollected by 3.45pm will go to After School Club and full charges will apply
- Children in after school activities run by teachers should be picked up promptly when the club finishes
- Children in After School Club run by Miss Cutthell should be picked up by 5.30pm at the latest

## Responsibilities of school:

- Complete a daily attendance walk from Nursery to Year 6
- Operate a first day response system for any unexplained absences. Reasons need to be from the parent or carer of the absent child and not a message via another child or parent.
- Inform our link attendance officer from School Attendance Service if contact cannot be made as a child is technically 'missing from education'
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, website, meetings and in the Home-School Agreement
- Publish our weekly attendance percentages on the website
- Report attendance during meetings with parents and inform parents if attendance falls below 90%
- Involve the School Attendance Service if attendance falls below 90% or is unauthorised
- Report termly to the Governing Body
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance daily, weekly, termly and yearly
- Inform parents of their child's attendance rate on their annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance

## Authorised Absences

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as authorised absences. For example, if a child is ill, has a medical appointment, there is a family bereavement or for religious observance.

### Covid 19

'Public Health Supplementary Guidance for Schools during the Covid-19 Pandemic' will be followed by school.

School will complete DFE returns and returns to LA as required.

### Home School Learning for pupil's isolating -

Seesaw for on line Learning

BBC Bitesize

Website with links

Paper packs delivered to homes weekly and half termly

Phone calls

Newsletters

## Unauthorised Absences

There are times when children are absent for reasons that are **not** permitted by law. These are known as unauthorised absences. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Holidays in term time
- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out

- Staying off because of a birthday
- Parental Appointments
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

### **Holidays in Term Time**

- Holidays will not be authorised by the Headteacher
- The Governing Body support the School Attendance Service in issuing penalty fines for taking children on holiday during term time

### **Persistent Absence**

- Persistent absence is when attendance falls below 90%
- The school attendance service will be informed
- The Headteacher will meet with parents to try to improve the attendance
- The Attendance Governor will be informed

### **Areas of Vulnerability and Support**

We aim to support parents to help to remove any barriers which prevent a child from attending school. These could be barriers which the child has, or the parent has. We approach all difficulties from a position of support. In return, we ask parents to contact us as early as possible in order to work with us in resolving any problems together.

Possible problems which may lead to non-attendance are:

- Parentally condoned unjustified absence
- Bullying
- Unrecognised SEN difficulties
- Abuse or neglect
- Pupil disaffection
- Inappropriate curriculum for a child
- Burdens of domestic responsibilities
- **COVID 19 pupils needing to self isolate.**

### **Vulnerable Children**

Children who are Looked After (LAC), Early Help (EHA) or EHCP, subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with the highest priority and will be known to the school. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home. Any outside professionals who are also working with the children and family will also be notified of the absence. Children with special educational needs will also be treated with similar priority in order that their time can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible. **During COVID 19 returns to LA will happen weekly re Vulnerable children. Fre updates to social workers. Weekly calls to parents.**

## **Anti-bullying**

The school has a clear zero tolerance with respect to bullying or similar behaviour. Please see the anti-bullying policy for more information regarding this issue.

## **School refusal**

Parents should do everything they can to encourage their child to attend school. However, if the reason for their reluctance seems to be school based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, the parents should discuss this with school at the earliest opportunity and the school will do everything possible to resolve the issue.

## **Communication with parents**

We will take every opportunity to ensure that this policy is relayed to parents via the school website, Parent App and through paper copies where requested. Regular items in the newsletter, parent's evenings (to be held remotely during COVID '19) and both formal and informal meetings with individual parents will be used to communicate. The school will set out in the home school agreement expectations and requirements with regards to attendance and punctuality.

## **Board of Governors commitment to attendance**

### **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 for 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.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

*"Every day counts...and every moment matters"*