

Kincraig Primary School and Nursery



Attendance Policy – School Children



Kinraig Primary School and Nursery **Attendance Policy**

At Kinraig Primary School and Nursery we are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all our pupils. Regular attendance and punctuality will ensure maximum benefit is derived from the school and nursery's curriculum both in academic and personal development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Kinraig Primary School and Nursery Pastoral Care Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
- PREVENT duty guidance (2015)

We aim:

- To create a calm, positive and welcoming environment where pupils feel happy and secure, and where the whole school community feels valued whatever their gender, race or ability so that we all develop a sense of pride in both ourselves and the school.
- To enable each child to achieve their full potential through a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which motivates and stimulates them and allows pupils to become effective and independent learners.
- To ensure that parents and children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

We will avoid unauthorised absences by:

- Developing a close liaison with parents
- Providing effective pastoral care
- Showing staff commitment to full attendance
- Monitoring attendance
- Working closely with the Pupil Welfare Officer and relevant agencies.
- Praising good attendance and punctuality.

Expectations of Pupils

- They attend school regularly
- They arrive on time and are appropriately prepared for the day

Expectations from parents

- They ensure their children attend regularly and punctually.
- They ensure they contact school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever a child is unable to attend.
- They contact school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

Parents and Pupils can expect from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us.
- Recognition and reward for good attendance

Recording Attendance

The registers are taken at 8:55am for the morning session, and 1:15pm for the afternoon session using SIMS.

Any child who arrives after these times will be recorded as late up to 10am or 1:30pm. After these times they will be recorded as arriving late after the register has closed (unauthorised absence).

The school administrators transfer and monitor all attendance data on the school's electronic system.

Authorised Absences

All parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible explaining the reason for their child's absence. If a child is absent from school after the register has closed and the school has not been informed of the reason for the absence then every attempt will be made to contact the child's family and ascertain the reason for the absence.

Attendance Regulations 2014, state that head teachers should only authorise leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances.

If a Head teacher grants leave request, it will be for the Head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. The decision to authorise absence is based on their assessment of the situation. Circumstances vary from school to school and so there can be no absolute rules on this subject.

Points the Head Teacher will consider:

- Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Heads will rightly prioritise attendance. The school policy should be that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise absence.
- Absence during term time for holidays/vacations is not considered exceptional circumstance.
- Absences to visit family members are also not normally granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Absence for bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absences for important religious observances are often taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.

- Schools may wish to take the needs of families of service personnel into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Families may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis.
- It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when making decisions.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Procedures for following up absences

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted if possible on the first day of absence.
- Where there is no response, a text message will be sent later that day and another the following day. Pastoral care soft intelligence noted and/or there may be a visit from the Pupil Welfare Officer where the service is already involved.
- If we are still unable to contact the family on the 5th day the Pupil Welfare Officer will be informed and an external line of enquiry initiated to identify the reason for absence.
- If no contact is made after 10 days the PWO will follow a higher level of enquiry checklist and where this does not result in contact being made the PWO will inform the Police and Children's Social Care and the child/children will be placed on the Children Missing for Education School Register paying due regard to the Local Authority's PREVENT STRATEGY to 'safeguard young people'.
- Where we have a reason for non-attendance but this continues beyond a reasonable timescale, the parents will be contacted to discuss the situation. Depending on the outcome of this conversation the case may be discussed with the Pupil Welfare Officer for the school and further action planned. This might, in appropriate cases, result in a referral to the PWO.

Reintegration

- The return to school for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning. For example a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) may be appropriate.
- Designated staff (the teacher for that class, the learning mentor and/or the SENDCo) will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- Staff are aware that this could be a difficult process that may require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part time re-entry with support in class as appropriate.

The success of the reintegration will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the young person and parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

Monitoring Attendance Data

We analyse attendance data regularly and will inform parents if a child's attendance is of concern. Mrs Jayne Caldwell (administrator) is responsible for monitoring this data and liaising with the Senior Leadership Team – Mr Richard Aspden, in school and the Pupil Welfare Officer.

Average attendance nationally is 95% hence we will inform parents if their child's attendance falls below that level in any term. If attendance falls below 90% we will refer the case to the Pupil Welfare Officer, who visits school regularly. We will also analyse our data for number of broken weeks, as this can indicate a concern even if attendance is above the 95%. When an attendance issue is identified we will investigate further in looking for patterns behind the absences.

The Pupil Welfare Officer, working alongside Mrs Caldwell, highlights a target group and monitors their attendance more closely.

Monitoring and Evaluating

It is important to monitor the impact of the action taken to ensure that progress is being made towards improving attendance across the school. An annual target is agreed with the Local Authority, this is made known to staff and governors along with a brief action plan. Both targets and action plans are reviewed annually. The SIP process also monitors the school's progress towards its agreed attendance targets.

The impact of this policy is monitored in discussion with staff, governors, families and external services such as Pupil Welfare Service and in examination of attendance data produced termly as required by DfE.

This policy was last updated in September 2021. The Attendance Policy at Kincaig Primary School and Nursery will be reviewed and modified on a regular basis at least every two years. It is possible to add amendments to this document prior to a review and these will be incorporated into the next issue. To add comments please complete the information on the following sheet adding the date and signing where indicated.

Name of teacher responsible – Mrs Karen Appleby

Policy approved by Governors: _____ Date: _____

Date	Proposed Amendment	<i>Signed</i>

Appendix 1

4 Stages in managing absences from schools and lateness

Kincraig Primary School and Children's Centre has a 4 stage approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all of these stages or even carry them out in the order listed. Parents are informed about school session times in the school prospectus and through regular newsletters.

Stage 1

- Issuing and checking registers on a daily basis, ensuring parental letters informing about absence and lateness are brought in.
- Lateness is entered into a book kept in the main school office.
- Involvement of the Ms Senior to monitor and discuss absence or lateness with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Initial contact with the family about absence and lateness, made by Ms Senior eg first day phone calls.

Stage 2

- Ms Senior will make further contact with the parent through a phone call or a meeting arranged at the school to discuss the absence or lateness. Notes of the meeting/conversation to be kept.
- If lateness or absence continues (attendance falls below 94% in a term), Ms Senior will issue a reminder letter to the parents on behalf of the Head Teacher.
- A second letter will be sent for further absences or lateness (attendance does not improve or falls below 90%). This will warn the parents that the school is concerned and will be referring to the Pupil Welfare Officer.

Stage 3

- The Pupil Welfare Officer will contact the parents and arrange a meeting to discuss the absence and attempt to mediate between school and the parents to encourage the parents to send the child to school.
- The Pupil Welfare Officer will issue warning letters if the absence has approached the critical stage, ie. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a term.

Stage 4

- The Pupil Welfare Officer will assume responsibility for the case and will move this towards court action.