



Kibworth CE Primary School

A place of discovery and friendship

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

GENERAL

The Board of Advisors of Kibworth CE Primary School support the view that regular school attendance is important, believing that only when people regularly attend school can the school be effective.

Under Section 36 of the 1944 Education Act, parents/guardians of all children of compulsory school age must ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education. Usually this is achieved through attendance at school. It is, therefore, the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend, arriving in time for the beginning of the school day.

THE LEGAL POSITION

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly. Failure to do so is an offence punishable by law. The following information states those areas which constitute authorised absences.

An authorised absence is one with a genuine reason and supported by notification from an adult responsible for the child.

An unauthorised absence is where a pupil could be present at school. The cause for absence is deemed as unsatisfactory.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

We will encourage good attendance by:

- accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session within 10 minutes of the start of the session
- following-up absence on the first day

- undertaking attendance checks at appropriate times
- recording attendance on pupils' reports
- collecting data on attendance for the whole school and by year group and making this available to Board of Advisors and to parents
- Award individual pupil certificates termly for full attendance.
- Awarded individual certificates together with a small gift annually to pupils with a full attendance record for that year.

REPORTING ABSENCES

If a child attending Kibworth CE Primary School is absent for any reason, a telephone call will inform the school office of the reason for absence and the anticipated length the pupil is likely to be away from school. The school should be contacted before 10am on each day of absence. The school will make every effort to contact parents after 10 am on each morning of a child's absence if he/she has not arrived at school and no reason for absence has been given. For child protection and safety reasons it is essential that parents notify the school before 10am.

If the reason forwarded is valid then the absence will be authorised. If the reason is not satisfactory in the opinion of the school the absence will be treated as unauthorised. Similarly if no explanation is offered at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

The office staff will notify teaching staff of telephone messages regarding pupil absence. The school office will keep notes and messages for a period of one month.

If a pupil is absent for more than five days without the school having been contacted, the pupil's name and address will be passed onto the Education Welfare Service. The pupil's name and address will also be given to the school's Education Welfare Service if s/he fails to attend regularly. Regular attendance can be defined as above 95%. It is only the school that can authorise absence. If there is doubt about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, either the school or the Education Welfare Service can refer the matter to a doctor working within the School Health Service or make contact with the family GP. Children who are regularly absent due to medical reasons may need appropriate intervention from the school in order that their learning can be best supported.

If your child is frequently absent with the same or similar explanation, we may ask to meet with you to identify any issues that are causing your child to arrive late at school.

ILLNESS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENT

Pupils are occasionally absent through illness. If the validity of the illness is questionable then the Education welfare service may need to be called in to investigate. Leave for dental treatment will be authorised if the school is properly notified. Parents need to use the sign out and sign back in book if they take their children out for an appointment during the school day. This book is in the school office.

LATENESS

The school discourages late arrival at school. Late arrival of a pupil has an impact on all other members of the class and the particular pupil is disadvantaged by having missed the first part of the day. Every school, by law, has to register pupils twice in the day; first thing in the morning at the start of the school day, and again in the afternoon session. To allow our school to take the register, time is allocated as part of the school day and your child must be present at both registration times to be given a present mark.

Your child's education is important and being late will mean:

- Missing the beginning of lessons
- Not hearing important information about school and lessons. And could mean:
- Not being able to complete work because your child was not given vital information
- Your child being embarrassed at having to enter a room where a lesson has already started
 - Being late for the start of important assessment work or exams
- Your child failing to learn an important life skill, employers will expect good time keeping and children need to learn this from an early age.

If your child arrives at school after the start of registration time, but before the end of registration time, they will be given a late mark; the code for this is 'L'. This means the school will accept the explanation given for the late arrival as valid and reasonable e.g. a late bus, a car breakdown, a one-off family difficulty. If your child is late due to exceptional circumstances, no action will be taken.

If your child is frequently late with the same or similar explanation, we may ask to meet with you to identify any issues that are causing your child to arrive late at school.

If your child still arrives late, the school may decide not to authorise the late arrival and enter an unauthorised late mark.

Registers will remain open for the first thirty minutes of the day. The Secretary of State has determined that 30 minutes late will constitute an unauthorised absence if no valid reason has been given. Pupils who are late more than 3 times in any one term period will be issued with a letter for their parents/guardians from the Headteacher. The parents/guardians of pupils who are persistently late will be invited into school to discuss the way forward. The Education Welfare Service regularly monitors lateness and a home visit may ensue.

FAMILY BEREAVEMENT

The death of a member of the close family is a traumatic event in a pupil's life. The school will always respond sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend funerals or associated events and such absences will always be authorised.

HOLIDAYS WITHIN SCHOOL TIME

There is no automatic right for parents/guardians to withdraw their child from school for the purpose of a holiday. In September 2013 the Coalition government changed the regulations on absence for holidays in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013.

The Coalition Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave.

The amendments also make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

Absence for observance of religious festivals is classed as authorised absence.

OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

Approved educational visits are treated as authorised absences e.g. music/dance exams.

EXCLUDED PUPILS

Such absences will be treated as authorised.

SHOPPING DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Shopping during school hours will not be authorised. The school will investigate why this cannot be done after school or at weekends.

MONITORING ABSENCE

Absence and attendance will be monitored by the Foundation Committee of Board of Advisors. Whole school attendance will be reviewed half termly and a report submitted to the Foundation Board of Advisors meeting. A letter will be sent to parents of those children who attendance falls below 90% reminding them of the school attendance policy and the importance of attending school. These parents will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss how their child's attendance can be improved. If attendance for individual children does not rise above 90% this may lead to a meeting or referral to the Education Welfare Service.

G.M. Paterson.

Gilly Paterson
Head of School