



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Committee ownership for this policy:	FGB
Must be approved by FGB:	Y
Required by: 1 / 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where 1 is indicated, the requirement is statutory Where 2 is indicated, the requirement is recommended 	1
Frequency of review:	Annual
Date last reviewed:	June 2022
Date of next review:	June 2023
Display on website:	Y
Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to clarify the processes and procedures used to ensure good punctuality and attendance. It clarifies the responsibilities of the parents, the school and the Local Authority
Consultation:	All staff and governors
Links with other policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole school vision statement Equalities Policy Behaviour Policy Exclusion Policy Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Kew Riverside Primary School aims to work together with parents in order to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality for all children. Regular attendance is crucial to children achieving their full potential in learning, in making friends and feeling more settled and happier in school. We closely follow the Local authority guidelines on attendance.

Regular school attendance is essential for children to make the most of the educational opportunities that are available to them. Good attendance ensures better progress both academically and socially, improves children's future life chances and establishes a positive work ethic early in life. Punctuality also impacts the progress of children within school. When children miss school, teachers need to break from their plans and re-teach certain aspects, which can hold up the learning of all the children in the class. If a child has a special educational need, the effects can be even greater. Lateness and poor attendance may also be potential indicators of a safeguarding concern.

There is a statutory requirement for schools to maintain attendance registers showing the attendance of pupils at each session (ie morning or afternoon) when the school is open to pupils and to show a distinction between 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absence (see below for details).

The attendance target for each child at Kew Riverside Primary School is at least 96%. If a child's authorised or unauthorised absences cause their attendance to fall below 90%, this will be identified as 'persistent absenteeism'. The school has a legal obligation to inform the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) of any persistent absenteeism on a termly basis and, where necessary, a child will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service and monitored by the EWO on an individual basis.

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a child's individual needs, for example where a medical condition prevents a child from attending fulltime.

School Day Timings

School gates open:	8.30am
Classroom doors open:	8.50am
Classroom doors close:	8.55am
Morning registers taken:	9.00am
Afternoon registers taken:	1.00pm
School day ends:	3.15pm (Reception, Year 1, Year 2) 3.20pm (Years 3-6)

Procedures

Absence If a child is absent, the parent/carer must contact the office by phoning the school office on 0208 487 8437 or by emailing info@kewriverside.richmond.sch.uk **on the first day of absence and then updating the school as necessary.** If parents do not contact the school with a reason, the school will call home after 09:00 on each day of absence. If the school is unable to reach the parent/carer they will attempt to contact the child's emergency contact(s). If by midday, there is still no contact, the Headteacher or school representative may undertake a home visit to check on the well-being of the child. All reasons for absence will be recorded and monitored by the school. A letter and medical evidence, if requested, must be sent in when the child returns to school to authorise the absence.

Registration

Children's attendance is noted in the school's electronic registers. Registers are taken at the start of each morning and afternoon sessions (see above). The registers are closed at **09.30am** in the morning and **1.15pm** in the afternoon.

Lateness

If a child enters class after 9.00 am they are officially marked as late. If a child enters the classroom after 9.30 am when registers close they are officially marked as absent for the morning session.

Monitoring Lateness

The school will closely monitor the lateness recorded for individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular lateness will prompt the following stages:

Stage 1 Two lates or more over a week will prompt the action of an **initial letter** from the school requesting parents' co-operation for improvement.

Stage 2 If there is no improvement or over half a term a pupil has accrued **5 or more lates**, then parents will be invited in to discuss the issues causing the lateness and be offered support to improve punctuality.

Stage 3 From the date of initial punctuality meeting (stage 2), lateness will be monitored for a further 4 weeks. If lateness is still causing an issue, a letter will be sent to parents stating that due to lack of improvement, the **Education Welfare Officer (EWO)** will need to be involved. Parents will be invited in for a meeting with the school and EWO and at this meeting an Attendance Agreement Improvement plan may be written. The monitoring of lateness will then be the shared responsibility of the EWO and the school.

Monitoring Absence

The school will closely monitor the attendance of individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular absence will prompt the following stages:

Stage 1 If attendance dips below 92% this will prompt the action of an **initial letter** from the school informing parents of their child's attendance and number of sessions missed and reminding parents of the Government's baseline of 90%. If attendance has dipped below 90%, medical evidence will need to be submitted to authorise the absence.

Stage 2 The Attendance Officer notifies the Attendance Lead of any issues and trends on a half-termly basis during an Attendance meeting. During this meeting questions regarding attendance of children who have dipped below the 90% threshold will be discussed. If a pupil's attendance has not shown signs of improving, or has dipped below 90% another letter will be sent inviting parents in for a **meeting with the school's Attendance Lead**.

Stage 3

A formal meeting between the parents and Attendance Lead. During this meeting an Attendance contract may be completed.

Stage 4 After a formal meeting with the school, the child's attendance will be monitored for a further 4 weeks.

Stage 5

If there is still no improvement during the monitoring period, the school will formally **refer to the**

Education Welfare Service (EWO), who will invite the parents in for a meeting with them and the school. During this meeting the Education Welfare Service's Attendance Agreement Improvement plan will be completed.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is when we have accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance of such an absence. Other than illness or medical appointments, an **'absence request' form must be completed prior to the absence**. This is available from the school office or school website (in the Attendance section).

The following are the occasions when an absence may be authorised:

- When a child is ill
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be made during the holidays or after school
- Family bereavements/funerals
- Days of religious observance
- Offsite educational activities which occur on an occasional basis, i.e. school trips, sporting events, music examinations or public performances in which children are participating
- Attendance at other educational establishments
- Other circumstances that the Headteacher deems to be 'exceptional'. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is when we have not received a reason for the absence, or we have not approved a child's leave from school after a parent's request, or if attendance is a concern.

The following are occasions when an absence will not be authorised:

- No reason is given
- When there is reason to doubt the reason given
- Term-time holidays
- Family events or celebrations
- Any circumstance that is not deemed 'exceptional' by the Headteacher

If your child has 5 or more consecutive days absent, in order to authorise this, we will require a medical note (this may be in the form of a GP appointment card/text). If medical evidence is not submitted, your child's absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Three day absence:

If your child has not been seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers or emergency contacts after three days of absence, the school will send a letter to the last known address or email the parents or carer.

Between five and ten days absence:

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent and missing from education (Child Missing in Education) without an explanation after 5 consecutive days. If we have exhausted all our efforts and contact has not been established with a named parent or carer then the school is obliged to make a referral to Richmond and Kingston's Children's Services Team – the Single Point of Access (SPA) – as a potential case of a child missing education. The Education Welfare Officer will then carry out further investigations.

Continued or ongoing absence:

If your child missed 39 or more sessions (2 sessions equates to 1 day) across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as a **persistent absentee**. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in their learning. Research has shown that these gaps at whatever level affects attainment. It can also impact on social relationships within school.

Fixed Penalty Notice:

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised. If the number of sessions of absences reaches the thresholds in accordance with Achieving for Children (AfC), which is 10 sessions, or 5 days unauthorised absence off school, over a 5-week period, parents or careers may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and this rises to £120 per parent, per child for the offence period if paid after 21 days, but before 28 days.

Holidays During Term Time

Leave of absence during term time will only be granted under exceptional circumstances as stated in the 2013 Education Regulations act (see above). The school cannot condone holidays taken during term time and request that parents do not arrange holiday absences that result in children missing learning opportunities. Taking holiday during term time may result in a referral being made to the Educational Welfare service.

Referral to the Education Welfare Officer

- Unexplained absences may be referred
- All pupils who fail to attend regularly with unauthorised absences
- Any absence where the school experiences difficulty in determining whether or not the absence is authorised or unauthorised
- Repeated unauthorised lateness will be referred.

Children removed from school during the day

Entries need to be made for every child that leaves/returns to school during the school day.

Moving schools

If a child moves schools, the Headteacher will request a meeting with parents to discuss the reasons for leaving. A primary transfer form will need to be completed by parents and the school. The child will not be taken off roll until there is confirmation in writing from the new school that the child has started there. NB this includes confirmation from schools abroad. Without this confirmation, the school will make a referral to Richmond and Kingston's Children's Services team - the Single Point of Access (SPA) as a potential case of Child Missing Education (CME).

Elective home education

If parent(s) take their children out of school because they wish to pursue Elective Home Education (EHE), the school will request that parents put this in writing to the Headteacher and the school will then make a referral to the Education Welfare Service (EWS), who will contact parents.

School Organisation

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

Head / Deputy Headteacher and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance (the Attendance Lead) to:

- endeavour to maintain close, effective and positive links with parents and will always try to offer support when there are difficulties with a child's attendance or punctuality
- adopt the whole policy
- ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
- initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence
- consult and liaise closely with the EWO on a half termly basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- set whole school attendance targets
- monitor and evaluate attendance with the EWO on a termly basis
- reward classes with 'best class attendance/punctuality' certificates on a weekly basis in a celebration assembly.
- Celebrate those children who have achieved 100% attendance at the end of each term
- Inform parents/carers regularly about whole school attendance through the school newsletter

Attendance Officer:

- to oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
- to provide weekly attendance and punctuality data to the Attendance Lead
- to record all reasons for absences in the registers
- to identify on a weekly basis any child who has more than 2 lates per week and communicate this to the Attendance Lead
- to liaise with the Attendance Lead if any child is absent with no contact from parents/carers or emergency contacts
- to provide half-termly attendance returns to the EWS
- to reinforce good practice

Class Teachers:

- to follow the school day timings consistently with regard to classroom door opening/closing times
- to complete registers accurately and punctually at the required times
- to contact parents/carers to discuss concerns about attendance
- to inform the Headteacher of concerns
- to be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

Parents and Carers:

- By law, parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive full time education.
- Ensure their child is on time for school everyday and collected on time

- Communicate with the school the reasons for any lateness or absence
- Provide the school with two emergency contact details
- Inform the school office of medical/dental or other appointments in advance
- Requests for any absence other than illness or medical appointments must be made by completing the school's 'request for absence' form available from the school website (under Attendance) or office.
- Holidays should not be taken during term time. These absences will always be unauthorised.

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing and approving this attendance policy in conjunction with the Headteacher and to monitor the policy's effectiveness.

Responsibility of Local Authority

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) provides every school with a named education welfare officer (EWO) who is locality based. The EWO will help the school improve its attendance rates and reduce unauthorised absence and truancy. Each EWO acts as the link between a number of schools and the EWS. The EWO is able to advise and help schools with attendance policies, procedures and initiatives, dealing with attendance and welfare issues and dealing with individual school attendance cases.

Statutory duties

- Instigating legal proceedings and issuing cautions against parents who have failed in their duty to ensure their children's regular school attendance
- Issuing school attendance orders
- Applications to the Family Court for Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)
- Tracking children missing education
- Licensing of children in employment and performances
- Issuing matron or chaperones licences

The Education Welfare Officer for Kew Riverside Primary School is **Julie Miller**.