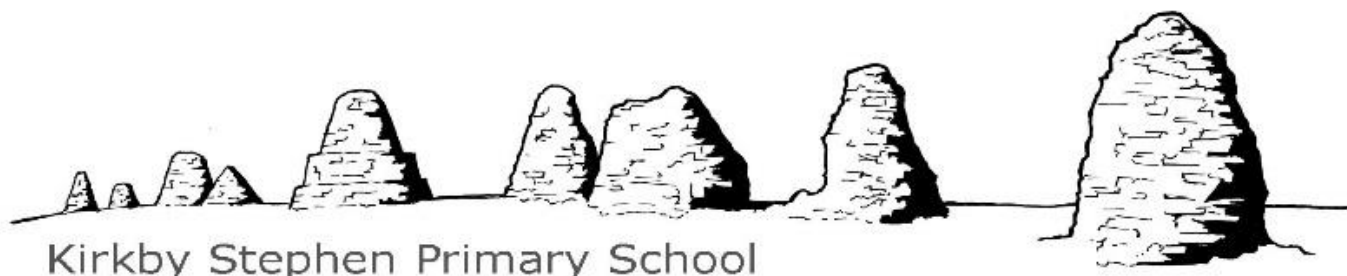


Kirkby Stephen Primary School



Whole School Attendance Policy

Approved by KSPS Governing Body	
Name:	Elizabeth Paisley
Position:	Chair of Governors
Signed:	Mrs E Paisley
Date:	29 th September 2022
Review date:	October 2025

Aim

Our school will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcome. Pupils will know that their presence is important. We understand that successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families.

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and carers:

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in fit condition to learn.

If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is going to be late, parents are requested to notify the school by 9.00 am on the same day - by phone [017683 71387](tel:01768371387) or message to office@ksps.cumbria.sch.uk and, if necessary, followed up in writing on the child's return.

Pupils:

Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level. All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually and to adhere to the school's policies on behaviour and dress. All pupils' attendance will be monitored using individual attendance records on Scholar Pack. Pupils with 100% attendance will be rewarded at the end of the school year.

Governors:

Attendance will be an agenda item at the first Governors' meeting after the completion of the previous term. The Governors will nominate a member to work alongside the Head teacher on attendance issues.

School:

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff), who will respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. All unaccounted-for absences will be promptly investigated, and parents and pupils will be kept informed about any attendance concerns. Pupils and/or parents/carers who experience difficulties with regular attendance will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from the class teacher. Senior members of staff and/or external support services may also offer support should the need arise. Attendance will be given a high profile through Parent/Carer Evenings, Newsletters, reports etc.

Registration:

Registers will be taken punctually each day at 9.05 am and at 1.15 pm. If a pupil arrives after the registers are taken, they should report to the main office. When a pupil misses registration altogether and there has been no advance notification from the parent/carers, then that pupil will be marked as an unauthorised absentee for that session.

Authorised absence:

Absence will be authorised for:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments (wherever possible these should be made outside of school hours). Confirmation of an appointment should be given to the school office
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances

Unauthorised absence:

Absence will not be authorised for:

- shopping trips
- looking after other family members
- domestic chores
- birthdays or similar events
- holidays (unless there are exceptional circumstances)

Approved education activity:

Pupils will not be deemed absent when out of school to take part in:

- sporting activities

- educational visits
- courses/classes in other establishments

Holidays in term time:

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. The head teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Parents/carers can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. If leave is granted, parents/carers must appreciate it is their responsibility to ensure their child catches up with any missed work on their return. Parents/carers should apply to the school on the appropriate form for permission at least 10 school days in advance of any such holiday

Following up lateness and absence:

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact school by 9.00 am on the first day of all absences, and, where possible, to give a return date. Where this is not possible, the parent/carer should keep in regular contact with the school. If a pupil is absent regularly (or apparently unnecessarily) the school will contact parents/carers to notify them of the school's concern and to emphasise the parent/carers' legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance. If a pupil is persistently absent and the school's efforts to affect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the LA. Pupils who are absent through sickness, or any other unavoidable cause for an extended period, will be supported in continuing their education at home where this is possible and will be supported in re-integrating back into school on their return.

PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Within the confines of the National Curriculum, pupils will be offered a varied, flexible and rewarding education matched to their individual needs. They will not be able to take full advantage of this unless they attend regularly. The school will employ a range of strategies, sanctions and rewards to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Attendance data will be collected and analysed regularly and, combined with an annual review of the school Attendance Policy, will inform future practice and school targets.

Support will be put in place by the school and targets will be set for poor attenders in partnership with parents/carers. Other external services will be made known to parents/carers where appropriate. Regular liaison between feeder primary schools and secondary schools will identify pupils who may require extra support during the transition into Year 7.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The school's policy is based on Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act which states,

"The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full-time education suitable

- a) to his/her age, ability, and aptitude, and
- b) to any special needs he/she may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise."

Failure to do so is a strict liability offence (Section 444(1), 1996 Education Act) with a maximum penalty of a £1,000 fine per parent/carer per child.

Where parents/carers are shown to have known that their child was out of school without leave of the

head teacher and that they “without reasonable justification” failed to cause the child to attend, they may be found guilty of a higher offence with a maximum penalty of £2,500 per parent/carer per child, and/or 3 months imprisonment (Section 444(1A), 1996 Education Act). Parenting Orders requiring parents and carers to attend parenting skills sessions can also be applied to both offences.

In addition, Cumbria County Council can also fine parents/carers £60 for unauthorised absence, which rises to £120 if not paid within 21 days. After 28 days parents/carers may be prosecuted as above.

IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Whole school and individual pupil attendance should be kept under regular review. The head teacher and a school governor will have an overall responsibility for school attendance (Social Inclusion: Pupil Support 10/99 and 11/99). Accurate marking of on-line registers, with the appropriate code letters for absences, will enable detailed analysis of the nature of absence as well as the quantity. This information should be compared to national benchmarks and targets, as well as the previous performance of the school and, combined with the school policy, should be formally reviewed with Governors at least once per school year.