Lower Kersal Primary School

Attendance Policy

Written by	A Reynolds
Approving Committee	Curriculum and Standards
Intended Audience	Staff, Parents, Pupils
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Version	Reviewed by	Date Approved	Changes made
1.2	AR	28.11.19	Pupils with medical needs
1.3	AR	15.07.20	Addition of appendix 2- coronavirus
1.4	DR	24.06.21	Edit to appendix 1 – E Barnett changed to M Rogers Edits to appendix 2 in line with new guidance Edit to attendance rewards
1.5	DR	08.07.22	Edit to staffing responsibilities Edit to escalation process

Vision

At Lower Kersal School we aim to educate the whole child and to ensure children are happy, healthy and fulfil their potential in terms of the development of skills for life, social and moral values and academic success.

RATIONALE

- Poor attendance disadvantages children.
- We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
- Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils.
- Children whose attendance is good will be rewarded regularly.
- Improved attendance and time keeping will be recognised.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (section 444) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the education authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Attendance is a key whole-school improvement issue: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of students and the standards thereby achieved by the school.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

AIMS

- To maintain and improve the overall attendance of children at school.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers, and governors.

Who is responsible for attendance issues in school?

- The School has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues, who should work closely with the designated safeguarding lead where there are attendance concerns.

Staff Member	Role
Mr D Rutter	Assistant Headteacher Attendance Lead
Mrs M Rogers	Designated Safeguarding Lead Attendance Team

- Members of school staff both teaching and non-teaching have responsibility for attendance issues in school. See Appendix 1 for a detailed breakdown of these roles and responsibilities

- Attendance matters are reviewed by the head and members of the senior leadership team.

- Attendance issues are reported at least termly to the Governing body.

School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

- A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

- Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12.

- The Local Authority provides further information and guidance on children missing from education, emphasising the link between poor school attendance and safeguarding concerns. This can be found in the CME Guidance for schools.

- The attendance lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead work closely to manage risks, ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

PROCEDURES

Registers

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately.

Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulation

Lower Kersal School's procedures for maintaining registers including the procedures for marking registers:

Procedure	Person responsible
1. Registers **must** be taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session	**Teacher**
2. On each occasion a school must record whether a child was present, absent or present at approved educational activity.	**Teacher**
3. Pupils should only be marked present if they are in the room when the register is called.	**Teacher**
4. Spaces must not be left in the register	**B Barnett M Rogers**
5. Additional requirements about times, school procedures etc.	**9:00am registration - teachers** **Registers close 9.30am** **First Day calling- M Rogers**
6. Ensuring pupils do not go missing from school during the school day and what to do if this happens	**Supervision – teachers** **If child goes missing, call police, then parents.**

Every half a day of absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the head teacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the head teacher. [see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No. 2006/1751) – Reg 7(1)].

School has procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks.

Attendance registers are kept electronically.

School complies with and uses the DFE compulsory national attendance codes.

Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of Absence granted by school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence. Only to be used for short period. For example- if a child is having staggered start in nursery.	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Working in partnership with parents

Absence:

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence and maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

Illness:

It is the school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. If a child has historic poor attendance, then further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

Schools can challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

It is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness

You will be asked for medical evidence when:

- Attendance is less than 90%.
- There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness.
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.
- Where there is a particular medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.

Requests for leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except in exceptional circumstances and where an application has been made prior.

Procedure for requesting a planned absence

If a parent/carer considers they require their child to have a leave of absences for exceptional circumstances, they should complete the absence request form which can be obtained from the school office. There is a requirement that parent/carers provide evidence of the exceptional circumstance and may be required to meet with the Head Teacher.

If the Head teacher deems that the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absences a reply confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent/carer.

If the Head teacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional and the leave of absence will not be authorised, a reply informing the parents of this decision and warning of the legal implications of the absence been taken will be sent to each parent.

If once notified in writing of the decision to unauthorise the leave of absence, the absence is taken it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's register. If the trigger of 10 unauthorised absences (sessions) is met, then the absences should be referred immediately to the Education Welfare Officer at the Local Authority for consideration and could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Other reasons for absences:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time, notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons.

The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays, or child minding.

Examples of authorised absence may include days of religious observance, illness, and medical appointments.

Parents are advised to make appointments for dentist/doctor or optician outside of school hours where possible.

If a child is absent from school for 15 days or more due to health needs (whether cumulative or consecutive over the school year) then the local authority will be informed so that arrangements can be made for the child to receive a suitable education (Section 26 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

Parents can support regular school attendance by:

- Making sure their child leaves for school with plenty of time to arrive on time.
- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parents evenings and other events.
- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.

Lateness

Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session.

Where a pupil arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code U as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

If a child arrives at school late and is not accompanied by an adult, then a phone call will be made to the parent/carer that morning.

Poor attendance

Those children whose attendance falls below national average will be closely monitored and further action considered. School will challenge the attitude of those pupils and parents who give a low priority to attendance

All registers will be checked, and absences monitored on a regular basis.

Schools will analyse individual pupil data to identify quickly patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed by the school where their child's attendance causes concern.

School has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding school attendance.

After school has attempted to address attendance issues with parents, and if there is no improvement the case will be escalated to the Educational Welfare Officer and ultimately Salford City Council, which may result in a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

Persistent Absences

Pupils with persistent absenteeism will be identified (pupils with more than 10% absence rate) and the parents/carers will be asked to come into school for attendance meetings. If actions do not lead to improved attendance, a meeting will be arranged with the school leadership and Educational Welfare, which may result in escalation to Salford City Council.

Good and excellent attendance

The school will reward good attendance and improved regularly through reward schemes and incentives. This includes attendance being recognised weekly in the school celebration assembly and in-class initiatives to reward children who have good and excellent attendance. Additionally, attendance is celebrated in termly badge awards (bronze, silver and gold) for attendance over a specified percentage.

ATTENDANCE PANELS

Parents of pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern may be invited to attend an attendance panel. An attendance panel is a formal meeting to discuss the child's school attendance, identify barriers to regular school attendance and agree a target and action plan to improve school attendance.

An attendance panel is chaired by the EWO and a senior member of school staff. School representatives will be present this may include anyone in school who is involved with your child for an example a learning mentor.

Data Analysis

Attendance data is submitted to the DFE, most schools use the management information systems via the school census. This data is published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics. Analysis of data helps to identify the main causes of absence within the school and plan appropriate action to ensure all pupils attend school regularly.

- Attendance data is analysed to identify particular groups of children whose absences cause concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils.

- Attendance data is analysed attendance by year group, classes, groups of pupils for example ethnicity or gender to help identify areas of concern and attendance patterns.

Lower Kersal Community Primary School
Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Governing Board	School Governance	• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (e.g. pupil registration, attendance registers) • Setting Attendance targets • Reviewing school attendance • Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy • Chairing attendance panels
D Rutter	Assistant Headteacher	• Compliance with relevant legislation • Putting into practice school policy • Authorising/unauthorising absences • Leave of absence request • Line management • Contact with parents • Overview of clear and escalating interventions • Responsibility for links with EWO • Attendance at attendance panels • Data analysis • Promoting School Attendance • Management of reward schemes • Planning attendance panels
M Rogers	Designated Safeguarding Lead	• First day calling • Inserting required accurate codes • Attendance targeting • Process for clearing registers • Day to day responsibility for escalating approach • Make necessary referrals • Work with AHT on escalation processes
B Barnett	School Office	• Maintaining registers • Late arrivals
All teachers	Class teachers	• Marking registers • Promoting importance of regular school's attendance • Providing early warning of attendance concerns • Positive role modelling • Following policy and procedures • Rewarding good attendance