

KETTLESHULME ST JAMES
CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE
AND LATENESS
POLICY

AUTUMN 2022

Review Date - Autumn 2024

Non Statutory Policy – Strategy and
Resource Committee

Introduction

Attendance is a key factor in a child's education and we strive to achieve the highest possible rates. Continuity and progression are fundamental factors in our curriculum that support our ability to provide the highest possible standards of education. Failing to attend school regularly impedes progression and can have a major impact on young people's education, their future and their life chances. This policy is to outline our aims and strategies for the encouragement of good attendance. The implementation of the Attendance and Lateness Policy is the responsibility of all staff, however ultimate responsibility is that of the Headteacher.

Aims

We aim to:

- encourage good attendance patterns and punctuality
- monitor the attendance of our children carefully
- monitor holiday absences carefully
- encourage an active dialogue with parents
- maintain our attendance registers carefully in accordance with LA policy
- provide information to support parents by reporting information about unauthorised absences to parents at least twice per year or as necessary.
- report authorised and unauthorised absence in the termly headteacher's report
- discourage late arrival

Safeguarding and Attendance

Attending school every day reduces the chances of children and young people becoming vulnerable to harm. School has a responsibility to ensure a pupil is attending school. If they are not we have a duty to find out why not and where the child is. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility. As a school we safeguard children and promote the welfare and future life opportunities for them by:

- expecting regular attendance to school
- having a clear Positive Behaviour and Exclusion Policy
- ensuring health and safety within the school
- allowing pupils to access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- having a robust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Registration

Both staff and children should see the taking of registers as an integral and key part of the school day. Careful attention should be paid to accurate registration and to the preservation and security of registers. All schools have a legal requirement to keep an attendance register, which must also indicate whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence

We ask parents to notify the school if a child is absent. If a child is absent but the parents have not contacted the school, the administrator must contact the parent to obtain information concerning the absence.

The following procedures are in place for safeguarding:

- A minimum of 3 contacts to be held by school for each child/family whom we would be able to contact either in case of emergency or non-attendance.
- If we have not been notified of your child's absence from school by 9.30am, a phone call will be made to the primary contacts.
- If we can't get through a voicemail will be left asking that you make contact with the school by 10:30am.
- If we have still had no contact by 10:30am the school office will ring the third emergency contact.
- If we are still unable to make contact and have heard nothing by 12:30pm a member of the Senior Leadership Team will visit the family home.
- If there is no answer they will call the police - **this is to make sure that your child is safe.**

Lateness

We actively discourage late arrivals and will regularly add a note in our weekly Newsletter or send out emails to remind parents of this. Children are expected to be in school for registration as learning starts immediately, as well as intervention groups and 1:1 work. Arriving at school after 8:50am has a hugely negative impact on the mental health of the pupil who is late, the rest of the class (as it is disruptive for all) and it also impacts on the effectiveness of the teacher as they have to spend time with the latecomer so that they can catch up on their missed learning.

At Kettleshulme St James Primary School:

- the front doors open at **8:45am** so pupils should be on the playground at this point ready to come into the school building.
- The front doors will then close at **8:50am**
- school starts at **8:50am** prompt. The register is taken at 8:50am.
- a late mark will be recorded after 8:50am (L).
- once the register closes at 9am then late mark (U) will be recorded until 9:30am.
- after 9:30am an unauthorised absence will be registered. See Appendix 1 for a list of all register codes.
- children who are late after 9:00am will require an adult to sign them into school and provide a clear reason for lateness (we need this for our external attendance monitoring data). This process complies with our Safeguarding Policy.

If a child is late on 5 or more occasions during a half-term a letter is sent to parents from the Headteacher, to ensure they are aware of the situation and also to offer support to remedy the situation (see Appendix 2). If a child is late on 5 or more further occasions, another letter is sent to parents from the Governors requesting that they make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss the situation (see Appendix 3). A file is kept in the office for late arrivals.

Early Pick Up From School Before 3.30pm

On the rare occasion when it is essential for you to collect your child before the end of the school day at 3:30pm, you should email the Headteacher for permission.

Categories of Attendance:

Authorised Absence includes:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments
- Special circumstances such as bereavement
- Religious observance
- Residential visit
- Public performance, music exams
- Attendance at another school eg to sit exam
- Traveller family travelling away from home
- Temporary exclusion

Unauthorised Absence includes:

- Lateness i.e. arriving after 9.30am
- Truancy
- Accompanying family members to a medical appointment
- Illness that would not stop them attending school
- Taking a full day for a medical appointment
- Family holidays
- Oversleeping, getting up late
- Staying at home if another sibling is ill

Intervention for Poor Attendance

We monitor children whose attendance is below 90%. This involves checking the register and monitoring reasons for absence. This helps us to understand the barriers to attendance such as illness and family issues, and it also helps us to identify patterns in behaviour. Families can be asked for doctor's notes where poor attendance is an issue.

Attendance Percentage	Day missed over an average school term (approximately)	Days missed over a school year (approximately)
100%	0	0
95%	3.5	10
90%	6.5	20
85%	10	30

Persistent Absence

It is our policy to intervene if a child's attendance is below 90% then this will be classed as persistent absence. The child's attendance will be recorded at half termly intervals. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Initially, parents will be informed by a letter from the Headteacher that attendance is below 90% (Appendix 4).
2. If no improvement is seen during the next half term, parents/carers will receive a letter from the Governors inviting them to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss attendance (Appendix 5).
3. Regular monthly meetings will continue with the Senior Leadership Team until attendance improves.
4. An Early Help Assessment may be discussed with parents. Every effort will be made to address any barriers to attendance. Attendance is expected to improve.
5. If attendance still fails to improve after a further four weeks, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher along with a representative from the Local Authority Attendance Team (Appendix 6).
6. The local authority reserves the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis. If there is no improvement, parents may be issued with a fine / Fixed Penalty Notice

Unauthorised Absence - Fixed Penalty Notices

Parents/carers should be aware that Kettleshulme St James Primary School has a duty to inform the local authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in any one term (5 school days), with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. The Penalty Notice is issued individually to each parent or

carer who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school regardless of whether parents live together.

Application for Exceptional Circumstances

Kettleshulme St James Primary School asks for parents/carers to notify the school of absence in advance via email to the Headteacher. The Headteacher may not grant leave of absence in term time unless they are exceptional circumstances (Appendix 7 and Appendix 8). If you continue with your plans and take your child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The school must then inform the local authority and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. Failure to pay the penalty fine within the required time may result in prosecution.

Exceptional Circumstances

Each request for absence as a result of exceptional circumstances will be assessed on an individual basis. However, examples of exceptional circumstances may be:

- A day set aside for religious observation by the religious group to which the pupil's parents belong.
- Death or critical illness of close relative.
- The funeral of a close relative
- Marriage of close relative.
- Sibling or parental graduation or military passing out parade.
- Major birthday or celebration of close relative some distance away which requires travel.

Unauthorised Absence

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Penalties for unauthorised absence		
Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per Parent
Paid after 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per Parent
After 28 days	Summons to appear before a Magistrates' Court on the grounds of failing to secure a child's regular attendance at school.	Summons to appear before a Magistrates' Court on the grounds of failing to secure a child's regular attendance at school.

Payments will not be accepted after 28 days.
Payments cannot be made in installments.
Conviction attracts a criminal record and a fine of up to £1,000.

Long-term absence

If the absence is a planned one e.g. following an operation, we would be happy to work with parents to ensure that their child is supported upon their return to school. In certain circumstances we can make reasonable adaptations so that their needs can be catered for. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services such as the Early Intervention Team (previously known as 'Educational Welfare Officer'), Medical Needs Team and/ or Hospital Teaching for advice regarding how to support a child. Occasionally school may be able to offer a part time timetable in order to ease a child back into school particularly after an extended absence for ill health. It is important that parents and school work together in these cases so that the child does not develop anxiety around returning to school.

Admittance into School

By law children must attend school from the start of the term following their fifth birthday. However, children reaching the age of five years between September 1st and August 31st are generally admitted into school earlier than the law requires i.e. at the start of September in the Autumn term. At Kettleshulme St James Primary School this is standard practice. All children start together in September as one cohort

Published Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

All schools are obliged to record the number of authorised and unauthorised absences.

Equal Opportunities

Fundamental to the aims of the school being achieved is a belief that all parents and children will receive equal entitlement without prejudice and that individual potential should be developed to the full. We do not discriminate against any child or adult because of gender, age, ethnic origin, social class, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or special needs.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years by the Headteacher in consultation with staff and governors. It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they do request an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Board also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be. The rates of attendance will be reported through relevant Governor's sub-committees and

at the full Governor Board meeting each term. The Headteacher will be responsible for monitoring attendance and attendance patterns and they report attendance and punctuality data to Governors termly.

APPENDIX 1

Codes for marking the class register:

Codes

Code	Description
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site not Dual reg)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual Registration (attending other estab)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
G	Family Holiday (not agreed or days in excess
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental apptment
J	Interview
L	Late (before reg closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence not covered by other code
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
X	Non-compulsory school age or COVID-19 related
-	All should attend / No mark recorded
7	Illness due to Covid 19
8	Self-isolating due to Covid 19
9	Shielding due to Covid 19

APPENDIX 2



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

I am writing to you as we have recorded five occasions when [name of pupil] has arrived late for school this half term. This means that they have arrived after 8:50am when the school day officially begins.

Schools are required to actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns and seek an explanation. Persistent lateness is of serious concern to us as, amongst other things, it:

- Has a negative impact on your child's education
- BEING LATE MEANS A LOSS OF LEARNING
- Is very disruptive to both class teachers and other pupils, and
- Is a consideration in our approach to safeguarding a child's welfare

Consequently, if there continues to be further instances of arriving late (after 8:50am), without a substantive and valid reason, I will invite you into school to meet with myself and we may also need to highlight our concerns to Cheshire East's Early Intervention Team.

Please refer to our school website to view our Attendance and Lateness Policy.

We therefore encourage you to make immediate changes to address this issue and, of course, to contact myself in confidence if you need any help or support.

Yours sincerely,

Alicia Bellshaw
Headteacher

APPENDIX 3



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

I am writing to you on behalf of the Governors of Kettleshulme St James Primary School. The Headteacher has notified us that [name of pupil] has continued to arrive late for school on a further five occasions this half term since the previous correspondence.

Schools are required to actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns and seek an explanation. Persistent lateness is of serious concern to us as, amongst other things, it:

- Has a negative impact on your child's education
- BEING LATE MEANS A LOSS OF LEARNING
- Is very disruptive to both class teachers and other pupils, and
- Is a consideration in our approach to safeguarding a child's welfare

Consequently, as there has continued to be further instances of arriving after the start of the school day (8:50am), without a substantive and valid reason, we would like to invite you into school to meet with the Headteacher on [proposed time and date] to discuss how we can work through this issue. Once the meeting has been held, we will then decide whether or not we need to highlight our concerns to Cheshire East's Early Intervention Team.

Yours sincerely,

Annette Scott
Chair of Governors

APPENDIX 4



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance has dropped below 90% and is currently

_____.

I am sure you know how important it is that all children maintain good attendance in order for them to achieve their full potential in all areas of their learning and I therefore ask for your support to ensure that their attendance improves.

What does your child's percentage attendance mean?

Below is guidance as to how absence impacts upon attendance each term and over the year.

Attendance Percentage	Day missed over an average school term (approximately)	Days missed over a school year (approximately)
100%	0	0
95%	3.5	10
90%	6.5	20
85%	10	30

Please contact me to discuss whether you would like school to support you in any way.

Yours sincerely,

Alicia Bellshaw
Headteacher

APPENDIX 5



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

We have been informed that your child's attendance has continued to be below 90% despite our previous correspondence. It is currently _____ and therefore continues to be a concern. I am sure that you are aware that attendance below 90% is classed as persistent absence and may result in involvement from the local authority.

In order to ensure that we work together to improve your child's attendance I would like you to attend a meeting with the Headteacher at _____ on _____.

At this meeting you will be able to look in detail at your child's attendance pattern and agree on a way forward to ensure that we see this figure improve.

If you are unable to attend the meeting stated above please contact the school office to arrange a more suitable date and time. The Headteacher is happy to accommodate work commitments and can meet outside of the school day if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Annette Scott
Chair of Governors

APPENDIX 6



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance is still below 90% and is now classed as persistent absence. Their current attendance figure is _____.

Local authority guidelines are very clear as to process that needs to be adhered to when attendance falls below this figure.

I would therefore like you to attend a meeting with me and the Local Authority at _____ on _____.

At this meeting we will be able to look in detail at your child's attendance pattern and I will share with you detailed guidance as to what this now means for you and your child. If you are unable to attend the meeting stated above please contact the school office to arrange a more suitable date and time. I am happy to accommodate work commitments and can meet outside of the school day if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Alicia Bellshaw
Headteacher

APPENDIX 7



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

Thank you for your request for permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school Governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application very carefully. Although I understand the reason for your request, I am unable to approve leave of absence in this instance, as I believe the circumstances are not exceptional. Therefore, if your child is away from school during this period it will be recorded as an Unauthorised Absence.

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised and extends more than 10 sessions (5 days in a term).

The Penalty Notice fine would be:

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £2,500 or imprisonment. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, are able to reach his/her full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her educational experience.

I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

Yours sincerely

Alicia Bellshaw
Headteacher

APPENDIX 8



Kettleshulme St James CE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road • Kettleshulme • High Peak • SK23 7QU

Tel: 01663 738020

admin@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk

Dear [Name of Parent/Carer],

Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school Governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

Having looked at your application, I feel that your request can be supported in this instance. Therefore, the absence to include the dates requested will be authorised.

Our key priority is to ensure that your child(ren) are as successful as possible and are able to achieve (his/her) full potential. I would therefore ask that you support your child in catching up on the time they will miss in school.

Yours sincerely

Alicia Bellshaw
Headteacher