



**Kehelland
Village
School**



**Truro and Penwith
Academy Trust**

Attendance Policy 2023-24

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Headteacher – Mrs Ellie Watkins 6/6/22	Chair of Governors – Dr Ruth Greenaway

Introduction

At Kehelland Village School we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

Although it may not seem like it, attendance and punctuality has a massive impact on your child's education –

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

Only missing just..	That equals..	Which is...	Over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ a year
20 minutes per day	1hour 40minutes per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

Improving attendance at Kehelland Village School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community -pupils, parents and staff.

The government and school expectation is that ALL children will have an attendance of **AT LEAST** 96% across the year. Less than this is considered cause for improvement. Less than 90% is significant cause for concern and below 85% would be a significant and urgent safeguarding concern. If you are unsure of your child's attendance percentage the school office can provide you with this information however we will report it to you each year in annual reports.

The Law

Statutory Framework Under section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, states that all children of compulsory school age must receive suitable education whether by regular school attendance or otherwise.

The Law relating to attendance Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to safeguarding Section 175 of the Education Act 2011 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence.

A letter or telephone message from a parent **does not** in itself authorise absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter / message will the absence be authorised.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: -

- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. This includes lateness and leaving school early, before the end of the day.
- Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.
- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: -

- Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.
- Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (Updated September 22): Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Expectations

Pupils

✓ All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support.

Parents

✓ Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.

✓Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours, or taking holidays during term time.

✓ All absences, authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

✓Parents MUST follow the absence procedures below -

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by phone ideally or email to the secretary. We may ring you to confirm email details.
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you and will continue to attempt to make contact. This includes **visiting the home address of the pupil in person if no contact is forthcoming from the parent, to fulfil our safeguarding duty.**

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. We need to always have your contact numbers. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have two up to date phone numbers– if we don't then something important may be missed. You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.

What we will do to ensure every child has good attendance:

We will contact parents by letter if:

✓ Attendance falls below 95% - Parents are required to return the attached slip to indicate that they have received this letter.

✓ Attendance falls below 90% - Parents are required to return the attached slip to indicate that they have received this letter and contact the school to arrange a meeting.

✓ A second letter will be sent to parents if their child's attendance has not improved after half a term and parents will be invited to the school's attendance clinic, chaired by the Educational Welfare Officer from Cornwall Local Authority.

✓ We will send a letter when attendance falls below 85% to notify parents that all time off due to illness has to be verified with a doctor's note for the absence to be authorized.

✓ Their child has 4 or more broken weeks (incomplete weeks with one or more absence) in a half term. (e.g. Sept – Oct half term) or if there is a regular pattern of absence.

✓ Their child is late on a regular basis

If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to affect an improvement have been unsuccessful, a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer. *Broken weeks

The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Registration Procedures -

Registration Registers will be called promptly at 8.45 a.m. and at 1.00 p.m. and will be taken electronically with the list of codes set out in the electronic register.

Registers will close at 8.55 a.m. and at 1.10 p.m. If a pupil arrives after registers close, but within a reasonable (as determined by the Headteacher depending on circumstances) amount of time of them closing then he/she will be marked as late and an explanation will be sought. If a pupil arrives late but before registers close they will receive an authorised late mark. Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have been closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' for that session.

Class teachers will take registers electronically in their class and will inform office staff if a child is not in school. Office Staff will check for any absentees. The Headteacher will inspect all registers each term in order to ensure that correct procedures are being followed.

Family Holidays and Authorised / Unauthorised Absence

Absence will only be authorised for:

- ✓ Illness
- ✓ Bereavement
- ✓ Medical appointments
- ✓ Observance of religious festivals
- ✓ Bad weather (where it would be a safety risk to attempt to come to school)

It should be noted that this list **does not include annual family holidays**. The headteacher on behalf of the Governors will consider requests for absence, outside the above categories, only in exceptional circumstances. Examples might be once in a lifetime events or restrictions put in place by an employer about when holidays can be taken (evidence may be requested). The child's attendance will need to be over 95% for any authorization.

Parents should make requests in writing using the form available from the School Office. A discussion with the headteacher would be helpful before a request for absence in exceptional circumstances is made. If absence is requested outside these exceptional criteria it would not be authorised. Both authorized and unauthorized holidays will be recorded as non-attendance and will, therefore, affect the child's attendance percentage.

✓ If a pupil is absent due to taking holiday in term time, and that holiday is not authorised under the exceptional circumstances guideline, then the parent may be liable for a Fixed Penalty at the rate recommended at the time by the Government.

✓ Children who have not attended school for 10 consecutive days, without any contact from parents, will be marked as a Child Missing Education and will be referred to the Educational Welfare Office/Local Authority and Safeguarding/Social Care agencies may be consulted.

✓ A child's attendance that regularly falls below 85% and shows no signs of improving, after all interventions by the school, will be referred to the Educational Welfare Office and possible arrangements will be made for a home visit.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
 - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
 - Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Promoting Good Attendance

✓ Certificates and prizes will be presented to children with 100% attendance for each term and an extra prize for pupil's attendance is 100% throughout the year.

✓ Classes with the highest overall attendance for the previous week will be celebrated in assemblies, on newsletters and in the school noticeboard.

✓ During the school year we wish to encourage the highest possible individual attendance rate and view this procedure as a necessary and important objective in order to ensure highest level of achievement for all our children.