

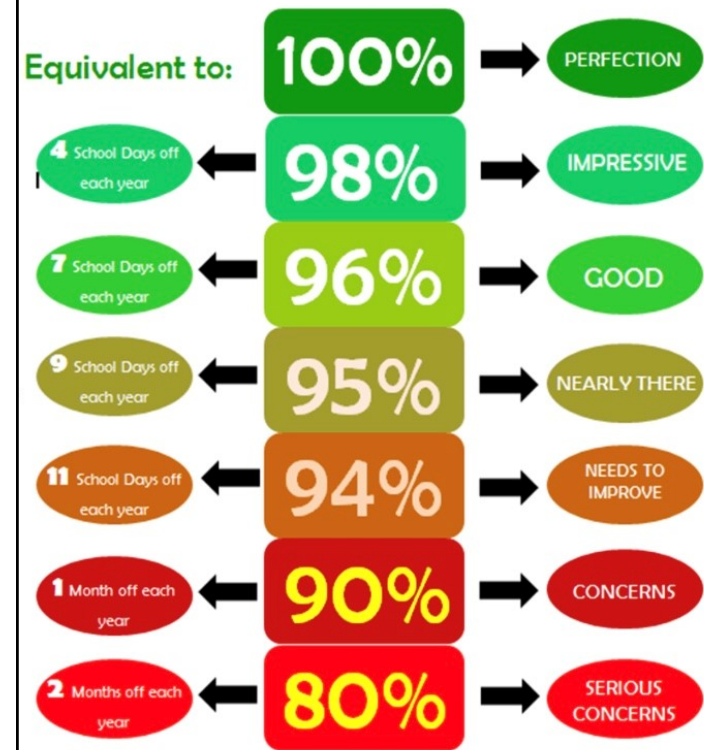


**Kehelland
Village
School**

Parent/Carer Guide to Attendance

Attendance Ladder

How close are you to reaching to the top?



Surely 1 or 2 days absent a week doesn't seem much but this is how it is..

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

If your child is late 10 minutes a day - surely that won't matter or affect my child..

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

Strategies to Promote Good Attendance

Here at Kehelland, we want all children to have the opportunity to be in school to succeed in their learning. Here are some ways in which we promote good attendance:

- ⇒ The Attendance Monkey—Marvin, Marv for short. This cuddly toy is given out in Friday's assembly to the class with the highest attendance. They spend the following week looking after him.
- ⇒ Letters home to all parents half termly whose child has an attendance concern. Regular meetings to overcome any barriers and work in partnership to improve the attendance of all children.
- ⇒ Pupil support plans and parent contracts as needed.
- ⇒ Class attendance figures will be on each weekly newsletter.

Further information

Our attendance policy can be found on our website. If you have any queries please do get in touch with the school office. Ultimately we want to help all families ensure their child/children's attendance is the best it can possibly be and will make all reasonable adjustments for this. However the law and guidance around attendance is clear and not decided by the school. Please do see the **August 2024 guidance from the local authority attached to this guide.**

Arrival at school

The school gates open at 8.30am until 8.45am. Pupils arriving on the school grounds before 8.30am cannot be supervised unless they attend our Breakfast Club. Arrival after 8.45am must be through the front office and the late book must be signed.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence by telephone before 8.30 am with details of why their child is absent. If no contact is made by lunchtime and we cannot get in touch, we may carry out a home visit for safeguarding purposes and contact external agencies for support. **You must phone everyday to update the school on your child's absence.**

Illness

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated or prolonged periods of illness, we will request evidence of illness. Medical appointments should not be made during school time, for them to be authorised during school time evidence of the appointment must be provided to school

What we will do

If a child has more than three broken weeks of attendance in a half term, we will meet with parents to set up a pupil support plan to ensure both school and home are doing everything they can to enable the pupil to attend. If attendance does not improve within 4 weeks, or if attendance continues to be poor (5 broken weeks in one term or 3 broken weeks in a half term) we will refer the matter for further support as per our policy which can be found on our website or at the school office. If after any of these measures, attendance does not improve after a half term parents will be contacted by the Local Authority who monitor and enforce attendance. They have the power to prosecute, involve support organisations and fine families if they do not improve their child's attendance.

If your child is often LATE then this will also be referred to the Local Authority and they may choose to fine or prosecute if punctuality does not improve.

As of August 2024, the school and Headteacher no longer have autonomy over absences. We have both a multi academy and Local Authority attendance officer, who examines absence records and holds school and parents to account. School does not receive the proceeds of any fines issued.

ALL absences without evidence or acceptable authorised circumstances count as an unauthorised absence and 10 sessions (5 school days) in a 10 week period will be considered for fines. This includes if your child has been absent for 5 days on 5 different occasions, and lates are also included in this.

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED LETTER OUTLINING CHANGES TO ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE FROM AUGUST 2024. PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL ABSENCES COUNT AND FINES ARE NOW MORE COSTLY, REMAINING ON FILE FOR THREE YEARS—POTENTIALLY LEADING TO PROSECUTION.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist. A copy of the Parental Request for Leave of Absence form **MUST** be obtained from the office before absences happen this **must be returned to school 3 weeks or 15 working days prior to the absence happening or the absence cannot be authorised.**

Addressing Attendance Concerns

In primary school we rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually, and therefore concerns about attendance are initially raised with parents. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and local authority will monitor and check their attendance. When children have an absence of around 94% or less the EWO may issue fixed penalty fines, or seek to prosecute parents where, despite support being provided, parents fail to ensure that their child attends school regularly. From August 2024, fines **WILL ALSO BE CONSIDERED** if your child has more than 10 sessions, 5 school days, absent for any reason within a ten week rolling period. This goes across terms and school years.

IF YOUR CHILD MISSES SCHOOL ON A REGULAR BASIS IT MAY:

- ⇒ Seriously hinder your child's learning and their ability to do well and achieve their potential.
- ⇒ Affect their confidence to attempt new learning and their ability to work and learn alongside others in general and as a result develop reluctance or indeed refuse to attend school
- ⇒ Disrupt your child's routines and make them feel vulnerable on their return to school
- ⇒ Cause disruption to teaching routines (if teachers need to revisit previous learning) and as a result affect the learning of other children in your child's class.
- ⇒ Affect their ability to make and sustain friendship groups which may lead to your child becoming disillusioned with school and education school as they get older.

Please remember that you have a legal duty to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis.

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law. These new Government regulations will come into effect from 19 August 2024 and will affect when penalty notices are issued in Cornwall.

What are the changes?

1. There will be a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered.
2. The new rules mean you will no longer be able to take your child out of school for one week's holiday without the consideration of a penalty notice being issued.
3. There will be an increase in the penalty fine from £60 to £80 if paid in 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the first 21 days, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.
4. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
5. If a parent then commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority will need to consider other enforcement options available to them. This could include prosecution.

FAQs

If I have been issued with a penalty notice before 19 August 2024, will this be counted if I am issued with another penalty notice from September onwards?

No, the new limits come into effect from 19 August 2024.

If I have already booked a holiday for next year, could I receive a penalty fine at the new higher rate?

Yes, absence from school can only be agreed when the explanation of the leave of absence is considered as exceptional circumstance by the Head Teacher.

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

- Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school.
- In education law, anyone who lives with a child and who has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. This will include step-parents and partners.

Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?

No, it applies to all unauthorised absence from school including holidays. Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed and failing to provide acceptable reasons for absence.

How do I request for my child to have leave granted during term time?

You must submit a Leave of Absence Request form to the Head Teacher before the proposed absence (a minimum of 15 days before the Leave of absence is due to commence). Each request will be considered on its own merit, but where the leave of absence could be taken outside of the school term the absence will not be authorised. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school.

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued?

No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span over two terms (including between academic years).

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under S444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine is an opportunity for you to settle out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?

Please contact us to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can support you to improve