



Kemble Primary School attendance Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is excellent. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- 3.2 The school should be notified in advance if a child is to be absent and/or the school should be notified on the first morning if a child is sick.
- 3.3 A note must be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

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4 Requests for leave of absence

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are rare circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a special event. We expect parents and carers to contact the school and complete the request form at least 2 weeks in advance. This request will be granted if the circumstance is exceptional.

4.2 Time off school for family holidays is not a right. Schools have a discretion in 'exceptional circumstances' to authorise a holiday if they believe it is a genuine reason. Parents can be given a Penalty Notice or prosecuted for periods of unauthorised holidays.

For all holiday absences during term time, a formal written request must be made from a person with Parental Responsibility. Each request should be considered individually taking account of factors such as:

Personal circumstances for the request

Age of pupil

Overall attendance of pupil

The time of year holiday is proposed and whether it impacts on specific curricular issues e.g. tests/exams

The child's stage of education and their progress

Approval for such holiday can be given by the head teacher of the school and is discretionary. Holidays in term time are not an automatic right. Authorisation will only be used in exceptional cases such as bereavement and when term time is the only option for a family holiday such as in the case of armed forces children.

At Kemble Primary we have a panel of three governors who consider requests for holiday in term time and who feedback to the headteacher for final ratification. Our absence request forms have a tick box which indicates whether the request has been considered by the governing body.

5 Long-term absence

5.1 When children have an injury e.g. a broken bone, that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

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6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve 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.

7 Punctuality

7.1 Arriving to school on time is crucial to a child's education. When they arrive late to a lesson it not only makes it more difficult for the teacher and other children in the class to learn/ teach but it also makes the late child feel self-conscious and can lead to a significant loss of productivity in the lesson.

7.2 If a child is late to school for more than 10 sessions in a term the school can apply to the local authority for a fixed penalty notice to be served to the parent.

8 Rewards for good attendance

8.1 All the children who have excellent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special gold certificates for any child who has excellent attendance for a whole year.

9 Attendance targets

9.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body 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.

10.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

10.3 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

10.4 This policy will be reviewed regularly by the governing body.

Signed:

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