

Attendance Policy

At Knelston Primary School we recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of each child through a programme of learning that promotes challenge and personalised education at all levels. Through this, we encourage creative and critical thinking alongside stimulating and meaningful experiences. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of our school's ethos and practice. As a rights respecting school we teach about children's rights and model rights and respect in our relationships and practice. We continually aim to provide an inclusive, enabling environment which gives all children a voice and empowers them to achieve. Our curriculum celebrates the diversity within our school and equips our children with the skills and attributes required to fulfil the four core purposes of the Curriculum for Wales. Our school strives to create a nurturing environment with strong, open and positive partnerships between adults, children and the wider community, that ensures the well-being of all.

Rationale

In law every parent of every child of compulsory school age has a duty to ensure that he or she receives efficient fulltime education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise (s.7 of the Education Act 1996). Full-time education means attendance for the period prescribed by the school authorities and a pupil may be marked absent if he or she arrives after the time when the school closes its register.

At Knelston Primary School we recognise the importance of regular school attendance as a key factor in promoting the welfare, social inclusion and achievement of pupils. A high priority is given to ensuring that parents and pupils are supported to achieve regular attendance of pupils registered in our school.

Purposes

- To support the school vision, mission and aims
- To ensure all pupils achieve their full potential
- To support all pupils to achieve their maximum possible attendance
- To ensure the safety of all pupils by recording attendance and lateness

Guidelines

- An electronic register of attendance will be kept at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Parents should contact the school and give a reason for absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence. A note, verbal message or telephone call is required. A letter of explanation should accompany the child on their return to school.
- Absences are recorded and will be monitored. When attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern, the Headteacher will make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer for intervention and support.
- Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday and a formal application should be made to the school by letter to the Headteacher giving specific reasons for requesting holiday absence during term time.
- The Headteacher will always raise concerns with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Parents will be contacted and supported to improve the attendance of pupils whose percentage attendance is a cause for concern.
- The school will follow the procedures agreed and outlined in the Bishopston Cluster Attendance Policy.
- Excellent and improving attendance will be rewarded with certificates given by the Headteacher during Celebration Assemblies

- Attendance will be regularly reported to governors
- The attendance of all pupils will be monitored.

Parental request for term-time absence for holidays.

The Local Authority is fully supportive of the national drive to raise school attendance, recognising the crucial link between attendance and attainment. Great strides have been made in Swansea and across Wales to ensure that excellent attendance is a priority.

Whilst considering each request on its merits, head teachers do play an important role in scrutinising term time absence and should properly apply any discretion based upon their knowledge of the pupil and their family. Where possible and in appropriate circumstances the taking of an absence during term time should be actively discouraged.

Parents should be advised to avoid term time disruption and reminded of the link between attainment and attendance.

Head teachers should carefully consider before granting a leave of absence:-

• Age of the child • Time of year of the proposed trip • Length and purpose of the holiday • Impact on continuity of learning • Circumstances of the family	• Wishes of the parents • Overall attendance pattern • The stage of education • The child's progress • Any cultural issues
• Benefits to the child	• Any guidance or clarifications issued by Welsh Government or Ministers

For term time holidays approval must be sought in advance with a request submitted ideally two school weeks in advance to enable sufficient time for consideration. Head teachers cannot by law authorise a term time holiday after the event and in such cases the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LA's) are required by law to adhere to the Education Act 1996 section 444 to include penalty notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance.

Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 provide that certain cases of unauthorised absences can be dealt with by way of a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine of up to £120 and may be issued to a parent / carer as a result of a child's regular non-attendance at school / educational provision.

The school adheres to the code of conduct for penalty notices as issued by ERW and agreed by the Local Authority, and therefore may request the local authority to issue a penalty notice in certain cases.

This Policy will be reviewed regularly.

Date: October 2024

Signed Headteacher



Signed Chair of Governors

