Kaleidoscope: Pupil Attendance Policy

WE BELIEVE YOU CAN

1. **Aims**

Kaleidoscope School are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- ✓ Promoting good attendance

- ✓ Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

- ✓ Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

- ✓ Acting early to address patterns of absence

- ✓ Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- ❯ Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

- ❯ Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

- ❯ Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

- ❯ [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)](#)

- ❯ [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Managing Directors

The managing directors are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The managing directors alongside the headteacher and designated senior leader responsible for attendance have overall responsibility for the termly monitoring of pupil attendance and have a duty to act promptly if an issue with attendance arises.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the managing directors/governors

- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Policy date: April 2023

Policy review date: April 2024

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- Having an oversight of data analysis

- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data, this will be done in conjunction with the headteacher, family support officer and managing directors if required.

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families will be a team approach, dependent on the attendance issue reasons it might be the class leads, family support officer, headteacher or the school manager.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **Amy Sadler-Rhodes** and can be contacted via the telephone on 01782 624689/07990 034517 and/or email on schoolmanager@kaleidoscopeschool.co.uk

3.4 The Attendance officer

- The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Francesca Guest and can be contacted via the telephone on 01782 624689/07990034303 and/or email on Office@beechfield-education.com

3.5 Classroom leads

Classroom leads are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school manager by 10am and 12.30pm.

3.6 School Staff

School staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers/guardians about absences on a day-to-day basis and will pass the information onto the school manager who will record it on the school system

- Transfer calls from parents/carers/guardians to the school manager or the attendance officer so they can provide more detailed support on attendance if required.

3.7 Parents/carers/guardians

Parents/carers/guardians are expected to:

- ➢ Do all that they can to facilitate their child attending every day and on time.

- ➢ Call the school to report their child's absence before 10am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence after) and advise when they are expected to return. The school requires this to be over the phone, and will not accept emails, text messages or messages over SeeSaw for reporting a child's absence.

- ➢ Provide the school with more than 2 emergency contact numbers for their child

- ➢ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Policy date: April 2023

Policy review date: April 2024

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Kaleidoscope School will keep an attendance register and will place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register by 10am and 12.30pm on each school day this is to mark the attendance for the morning and afternoon sessions. It will mark whether every pupil is:

➢ Present

➢ Attending an approved off-site educational activity

➢ Absent

➢ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

➢ The original entry

➢ The amended entry

➢ The reason for the amendment

➢ The date on which the amendment was made

➢ The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

➢ Whether the absence is authorised or not

➢ The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

➢ The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.30 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.45am and will be kept open until 10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30. A pupil who arrives after the register is closed is coded U. That is a statistical unauthorised absence.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer/guardian must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 10am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 01782 624689 (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer/guardian to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers/guardians will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer/guardian notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

In this instance, parents/carers/guardians would be required to show evidence of the appointment to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance. The school would retain a copy for their records and the original would be returned. If parents/carers/guardians did not have an appointment letter they would be asked by the school to request a letter for the appointment before the leave could be authorised.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

➢   Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

➢   After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Parents will be contacted if an ongoing punctuality issues is identified to discuss the reasons for this. Consideration will be taken as to whether more support at home is needed around morning routines and strategies for managing anxiety around the transition into school. School will liaise with parents/carers/guardians to discuss if/what extra support would be helpful and how the home, school or external agencies can support with the implementation of relevant strategies.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

➢ Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will conduct a safe-and-welfare check through a home visit on the same day. The school's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed.

➢ Identify whether the absence is approved or not.

➢ Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 2 working days after the first day of unexplained absence. Initially this would be an 'N'.

➢ Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer and the local safeguarding teams.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via an end of term report

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

• An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
• Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave. Medical appointment letters should be shared with school where possible.
• Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
• An absence due to a family emergency.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks prior to the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or on request via telephone/email/SeeSaw. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

➢ Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- The school is fully or partially closed.

- Transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.

- There has been widespread disruption to travel services, which has prevented the pupil from attending.

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.

- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave. Medical appointment letters should be shared with school where possible.

- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.

- An absence due to a family emergency.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority has the power to issue fines to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can only be issued by the team within the Local Authority that the school is situated in.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance will be promoted at Kaleidoscope school through our school's values and ethos, this will be embedded into our curriculum and communication with pupils and their families. Individual strategies will be used if required to promote good attendance but this will be individual to each child, their circumstances and their development and SEN needs.

We ensure:

> ➤ Equality and fairness
> ➤ Offering early help and support to families and working with other agencies to find solutions.
> ➤ The safety and welfare of pupils is at the heart of all plans relating to attendance
> ➤ Individualised plans, such as incentives and rewards to be introduced if required.

If a pupil does not arrive a Kaleidoscope 30 minutes after the school start time and no contact has been made by parents, carers. The school manager/headteacher will contact the parents to ascertain the reason for non-attendance. If the reason is not medical, parents will be encouraged to bring the child into school day at any point on the day, staff will also offer a visit to the child at home on that day and support with transport to bring them into school. Our priority will be to see the child in person, ensure they are safe and well, and break the cycle on non-attendance.

7. Attendance monitoring

Attendance data is monitored every term with the managing directors and the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, induvial plans and escalation routes will happen when:

- Attendance falls below 95%.

Policy date: April 2023

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- Attendance falls again to below 90%
- If non-authorised absences rise above 5%
- Patterns in attendance such as persistent lateness, intermittent days off school, leaving school during the school day without written consent from parents/carers (for example, a planned appointment).
- Patterns of absences will be monitored closely, (for example, if a child is regularly off school on a Monday or arrives late on a Thursday). The appropriate checks and discussions with parents/carers will take place, referrals will be completed, and any required multi-agency work will be conducted in relation to this, such as a referral to early help, the education welfare team, discussion with the social work team, and child's safeguarding file will be updated.

Beechfield Education Ltd will always strive to support families and pupils, please see the flowchart in appendix 2 outlining our procedure for responding to attendance issues.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

➢ Monitor attendance and absence data termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

➢ Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

From September 2024, pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

➢ Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

➢ Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

Kaleidoscope will:

➢ Provide regular attendance reports to classroom leads and other members of school staff, including school leaders, this will be to facilitate discussions with pupils and their families.

➢ Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions that have been put in place to support a pupil with their attendance. This will help the school to evaluate current strategies/interventions and inform and revise future strategies/interventions.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

➢ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

➢ Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who attend the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

➢ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated every year by the headteacher and the designated senior leader responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the managing directors.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

➢ Child protection and safeguarding policy

➤   Behaviour policy

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip

		organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Flowchart of attendance support procedure