Knowsley Junior School

Attendance Policy



2026

Adopted & ratified by full governing body: June 2026

Next review due: June 2027

Dovestone
LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Knowsley Junior School

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Regular school attendance is vital if pupils are to take full advantage of the opportunities that are available to them. For pupils to achieve their full potential, it is imperative that they maintain high levels of attendance.

All pupils should be aiming for 100% attendance (**380 sessions, one session is half a day**) within each academic year. Any pupil with attendance below 97% (missing **10 sessions**/5 days) is cause for concern.

Knowsley Junior School will support every child's regular attendance and take seriously any problems which may lead to a child's absence. In law, a child's parent/carer has a duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly. This responsibility extends beyond making sure that a child attends every day. Parents/carers should make sure that their children arrive at school on time and prepared to learn.

We recognise that there are sometimes external factors which affect a child's attendance and we will work proactively with families in order to promote high levels of attendance. To ensure that attendance is not a barrier to learning, progress and the safeguarding of children, the school will offer support to any family in which attendance is a barrier. This could include phone calls, home visits, text messages, meetings and reasonable adjustments that could be made (looked at on a case-by-case basis).

Informing School of an Absence

You must report your child's absence by 9:00 am on the first morning of absence. Please call school on 0161 633 4433 and use option 1 to leave a message. If a child is ill, parents should provide school with the details and, if possible, when they are likely to return to school. The registers will be checked each morning and if no message has been received regarding a child who is absent, then a text message will be sent. If no response has been received by 11:30 am, an initial phone call to parents/carers is made. If we still are unable to make contact with parents/carers, the absence will be marked as unauthorised; this can be amended if we are subsequently notified of a child's absence. If further phone calls remain unanswered and if a child's attendance is a cause for concern, the pastoral support officer will make a home visit to the address. If contact still cannot be made, the school will make every effort to contact the parent throughout the school day.

If you wish to discuss your child's absence, please speak to Emma Hough (Pastoral Support Officer and School Attendance Lead). In her absence, please speak to Jenny Nicholls (Pastoral Support Officer).

Authorised absences

School will only authorise absences for official appointments, illness, official religious holidays and close family funerals. Authorised absences are granted at the discretion of the headteacher. Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Medical appointments, including the dentist, should ideally be arranged outside of the school day. However, when this is not possible, it is expected that children only miss a small part of that day. Any school time missed due to appointments must be arranged in advance with our office, otherwise the absence may be considered unauthorised.

Holidays

The school supports the view that every lesson counts, and the law states that parents must make sure that their child attends school every day, except in exceptional circumstances. In line with DFE policy, **no holidays will be authorised at any time**. It remains essential that parents/carers discuss with school any requests for their child to have time off, BEFORE making a booking or purchasing tickets.

Parents who take holidays of 5 days (10 sessions) or more will receive a Penalty Notice on their return. If occasional days are taken, these are cumulative over a 10 week period .

Penalty Notices can only be issued twice within a three-year rolling period.

- The first time a Penalty Notice is issued, the amount will be £80 per parent, per child, to be paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21 until day 28. Any non-payment may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- The second time a Penalty Notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, to be paid within 28 days. Any non-payment may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- For the third or any further offences (within 3 years), a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case may be presented straight to the Magistrates Court under s.444 of the Education Act (1996) or other legal interventions considered. The Magistrates Court can order fines up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Religious Festival Days

The law allows a child to be absent to share in major religious festivals with their family, for example, Ascension Day, Eid and Diwali. A child's absence on major festival days in the parent's faith will be authorised for up to 3 days in any one school year, e.g. 1 day for Eid al-Fitr and 2 days for Eid al-Adha.

Trips and Visits

When a child is taking part in a trip (e.g. to Castleshaw) or an educational visit (e.g. to a museum), their absence will be marked as an approved educational activity (V).

Excluded Pupils/Pupils Educated Off-site

If a child is temporarily excluded from school (E code) or is on a part-time timetable (C code), the absence will be treated as authorised.

If a child is in alternative provision, they are dual registered and not considered absent from school.

Other Requests for Absences

Requests for absence for engagements resulting from personal sporting or other commitments/interests should be submitted in writing to the headteacher and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The headteacher will take into account the following factors when making a decision:

- The nature of the activity and how it contributes to the pupil's personal development.
- The pupil's attendance record.
- The pupil's current academic progress.
- The potential impact that the absence may have on academic progress.
- The potential impact that the absence could have on student wellbeing/welfare.

Lateness

Poor punctuality will affect pupil's attendance and have a significant impact on their learning throughout the year. It may also impact their self-esteem, confidence and mental health.

If pupils fail to attend school on time:

8.55 am to 9:05 am: the register is open. If a student arrives after registration, they will receive a late mark (L).

9:25 am onwards: if a student arrives after 9.25 am, it will be recorded as unauthorised (U). **10 unauthorised marks in a twelve-week period are subject to a penalty notice.**

If lateness causes concern, a phone call may be made home to discuss this. School will offer support, where appropriate, to resolve the issue.

Closure of School at Short Notice

In the event of an emergency (inclement weather, no heating, electricity or water etc), the headteacher (or SLT) will liaise with the site manager, carry out a fluid risk assessment, and make a decision as to whether the school is to close. The decision will be communicated to colleagues, pupils and parents via the school website, Oldham Council School Closures website and by text message. Our aim is to make a decision as early as possible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance figures are analysed weekly by the school attendance lead. Children whose attendance drops below 90% (persistent absence), will be placed on weekly internal attendance monitoring. If an improvement is seen, the child will be taken off internal monitoring. If no improvement is made, letters may be sent home and/or parents may be asked to come into school for a meeting to attempt to remove barriers to attendance and to put supportive procedures in place. These could include reasonable adjustments in school, extra support in lessons, meet and greet check-ins, conversations with parents and/or children, Early Help referrals and other measures that would be determined on a case-by case-basis.

If still no improvement is made, the matter may be passed on to the Local Authority. This can lead to a Notice to Improve, which may result in a Penalty Notice being issued. A Notice to Improve is issued by the Local Authority. They will monitor attendance for 15 days and if improvement is not made, a Penalty Notice will be issued.

When a child falls below 50% attendance, this is considered as severely absent. If these are unauthorised absences, then we may follow the educational neglect policy and advice from social care may be sought.

If there are concerns about pupil welfare or contact cannot be made at this stage, the police will be contacted and a request for a welfare check will be made.

Please read this policy in conjunction with Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK. Here, you will find details about the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy.

All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

What ?	Probable Content	Why ?	Who ?	Where ?	When ?
Pupil names Parent/carer details including names, addresses and contact information numbers	Names Parent/carer details Attendance figures Pupil attendance data	Communication Tracking and monitoring attendance Referrals to Local Authority	All Staff (where necessary)	Google drive Emails Letters sent to parents/carers	As required. Anything significant is passed onto new school when moving.

As such, our assessment is that this policy :

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
	✓	