thrive

co-operative learning trust

Attendance Policy
Kelvin Hall School

Policy reviewed and adopted by the Board of Trustees	**Autumn Term 2 2023**
Version	**V2**
Date of next review:	**Spring Term 2024**
Responsible Committee:	**Local Governing Body**
Monitoring:	**Trust Board**
Related Policies	**Behaviour Policy Safeguarding Policy**
Where is this policy published?	**School Websites**

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1 Thrive Charter

Thrive Mission Statement
Inspiring pupils to thrive in life

Thrive Values[1]

Thrive Co-operative Learning Trust **understands** *thriving* **to mean learning**, and *learning* to mean **growing in knowledge, self-reliance and in** *responsibility towards others*. Achieving this will allow pupils and staff to **develop a sense of** *agency* **and** *co-agency*, which is the awareness that we are powerful and can affect change, that life is something to be grasped rather than something that happens, and that we have maximum impact when *we work together for the common good*. This sense of agency plays out at three scales as it affects the future of *the individual, their community (local and national), and their planet*.

To thrive, pupils and staff need **environments that are safe**, for **equality to be promoted and diversity to be celebrated**, and for **wellbeing to be valued, nurtured and supported**.

- Because the service we provide is crucial to each pupil's future life chances, we ensure that **we give all pupils the opportunity to thrive**, whatever their background or perceived abilities.

- Because our task is challenging **we all strive to grow and develop**, and we support each other in this and in developing a good work-life balance.

- Because thriving happens best where adults provide pupils with a consistency of approach, **we need people who will play their part for the greater good of the team**.

- Because we serve our local communities **we act as partners in the process of assisting our children to thrive** and will work cooperatively to see this happen.

- Because leadership is a privilege **we exercise leadership in an ethical manner** and commit ourselves to upholding The Seven Principles of Public Life.

- Because we are facing a climate crisis **we will work towards being an environmentally sustainable organisation** and will develop pupil and staff participation in achieving this.

- Because we are funded with public money we will ensure that **we focus our resources on pupils and enable them to thrive**.

2 Introduction

Prior to final approval by the LGB, this policy has been the subject of review and suggested amendments have been taken into consideration and changes made where they can be agreed.

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[1] Thrive's values are directly descended from the Co-operative Values

3 Statement of Intent

3.1   Kelvin Hall School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities in school. We actively promote 100% attendance for all pupils and we use a variety of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality. There is a direct link between regular attendance at school and making progress, with every day missed lowering the chance of any pupil making the progress that they should and achieving their best outcomes possible.

3.2   The school fully understands that securing regular attendance can sometimes be challenging for parents/carers and we realise that working in partnership with parents/carers will ensure that school days are not missed.

3.3   At times, it may be that the school will seek the support of specialists and agencies to help overcome any barriers preventing regular attendance to school.

3.4   Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation as it runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Behaviour and SEND as well as our work to support disadvantaged pupils. We are committed to school attendance by:
●   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;
●   Intervening early to address patterns of absence;
●   Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school;
●   We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

3.5   We actively support all parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly and will promote and support punctuality. We aim to work with parents and carers to find sensible solutions to any problem that may prevent regular attendance to school.

4 Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements as set out by the Department for Education (DfE)

4.1   This policy meets the requirements of 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

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

5 Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance

5.1   Definitions

Definition	Primary School	Secondary School
'Good' Attendance	96% and above	95% and above
Attendance Concern	Between 90%-96%	Between 90%-95%
Serious Concern/'Persistent Absence'	Below 90%	Below 90%

5.2   Celebrating good and improved attendance

In our aim to celebrate and reward good and improved attendance, we use a number of initiatives, including:

- Regular rewards for 100% weekly attendance
- Half-termly rewards for Focus Groups with highest attendance
- "Well Done" SMS messages for students with notable attendance improvements
- "Well Done" SMS messages for students with sustained high attendance
- Lucky draw spot prizes for students with 100% attendance for the year to date
- Termly Attendance draws for prizes such as Family Goody Bags and Vouchers
- End of Year Award for students with consistently high and improved attendance

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Trust Development Team and Trust Board

The Trust is responsible for:

- Liaising with the Local Authority, gaining guidance and support for any new initiatives and legal sanctions;
- Support, guide and challenge the school;
- Quality assuring processes for improving attendance across schools.

6.2 The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB is responsible for:

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data;
- Monitoring attendance for the whole school;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Link Governor for Inclusion, incorporating attendance, is Julie Lynch

6.3 The Headteacher / Head of School / School Development Lead

The Headteacher / Head of School / School Development Lead is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school;
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the LGB;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- Monitoring the impact of any attendance strategies;
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

6.4 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;
- Having an oversight of data;
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- Arranging for calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues;
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The school's designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lauren Piercy and can be contacted via the School Office.

6.5 Attendance Staff

The school has dedicated attendance staff responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data;
- Identifying areas of focus for improvement;
- Providing regular attendance reports and reporting concerns to the designated senior leader and/or the Headteacher;
- Working with the LA to tackle persistent absence - less than 90% attendance;
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices;
- Deal with calls from parents/carers each day regarding absence and record it on the school system;
- Make calls and contact parents/carers to ensure attendance to school and support.

At this school, the staff member(s) is/are Mrs Allen (Attendance Welfare Officer) and can be contacted on 01482 496730 or by email at attendance@kelvinhall.net.

6.6 Subject Teachers

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance correctly each day via the attendance register. The marking of registers is a legal requirement.

6.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day, on time;
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:40am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, advising when a return to school is expected;
- Provide more than one emergency contact number;
- Ensure that, wherever possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

6.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time.

7 Recording Attendance

7.1 Attendance register

7.1.1   The school maintains an attendance register of all pupils.

7.1.2   We take our register at the start of the first lesson and at each lesson thereafter.

7.1.3   The register will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present;
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- Absent;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

7.1.4   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.

7.1.5   We will also record:
- Whether the absence is authorised or not;
- The nature of the activity should a pupil be attending an approved educational activity;
- The detail where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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

7.1.7   Pupils must arrive in school by 08:40 am on each school day.

7.1.8   Registration time for the first session will be between 8:45am and 8:55am with minutes late being recorded from 8:45am.   The register will officially close at 11:10am after which children will be marked as U (Unauthorised absence)

7.2 Unplanned Absence

7.2.1   We aim for every pupil to attend school for every session. 100% attendance is the aim for every pupil. The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:40 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school.

7.2.2   Parents will be contacted via phone, text and email should a valid reason for absence not be received in advance.

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

7.2.4 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription or appointment card. We will never ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

7.3 Planned Absence

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

7.3.2 The absence request should be made in writing to the Headteacher/Head of School;

7.3.3 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;

7.3.4 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.

7.4 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;
- Ongoing punctuality issues are dealt with by Late Detentions, punctuality report and meetings with parents/carers.

7.5 Following Up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason being provided, the school will:
- Call the 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 make a visit to the home;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not;
- Use the correct attendance code and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained - this will be no later than 5 working days after the session;
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

7.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence via a written report every year.

8 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

8.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

8.1.1 The school does not authorise holidays during term time**.**

8.1.2 The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

8.1.3 A leave of absence is granted at the Head of School's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

8.1.5 Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated. The Headteacher may require evidence to support the request.

8.1.6 Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:
- Illness and medical/dental appointments;
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong;
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - ie Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen and circus people and new travellers.

8.2 Legal Sanctions

8.2 Parents/carers can be fined for the unauthorised absence of their child of compulsory school age.

8.2.2 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. The school is not the prosecuting authority and does not retain any of the penalty amount paid.

8.2.3 The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring in a rolling academic year;
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as a holiday taken in term time without permission;
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

9 Attendance Monitoring - Procedure

We monitor and analyse attendance and absence data, this helps identify pupils that require support with their attendance. We always aim to work with and include parents/carers in all supportive processes.

9.1 Monitoring Attendance

9.1.1 The school will:
- Monitor attendance and absence data 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;
- Identify whether attendance patterns may occur in a student's weekly attendance.

9.1.2 Pupil-level absence data is collected and published through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the LGB and the Trust Board.

9.2 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.

9.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance
The school will:
- Provide regular attendance reports to school leaders, used to facilitate discussions with pupils and families;
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

9.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence
9.4.1 Persistent Absence (PA) is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

9.4.2 The school will:
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school and/or the local authority considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school;
- Signpost/provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

9.4.3 The school follows a number of regular steps as part of its work regarding attendance. These include:
- Meetings between parents/carers and the Attendance Team to identify strategies to increase/improve attendance
- Compulsory provision of Medical evidence for absence to be authorised
- Signposting to support services for parents/carers
- Referral to support services
- Referral to Local Authority for prosecution

10 Monitoring Arrangements
This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or from the DfE is issued/updated,. At every review, the policy will be approved by the LGB.

11 Links with Other Policies
This policy links to the following policies:
- Safeguarding;

- Behaviour.

12 Public Sector Equality Duty

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. When carrying out its work, the school has regard to the following:
- Eliminating discrimination;
- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Fostering good relations across all characteristics.

12.2 We do not discriminate against pupils due to their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Protection is extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment.

12.3 This policy was reviewed and updated with reference to this duty. The author/s of this document considered this policy in the light of these requirements to ensure adherence to these statutory regulations.

13 Person Responsible

Updated Autumn 2 - 2023
Head of School
To be reviewed Spring Term 2024