

Long Sutton Primary School KEYSTONE ACADEMY



A WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



An Academy within Keystone Academy Trust

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1. MISSION STATEMENT:

Keystone Academy Trust and Long Sutton Primary School is committed to providing full and rewarding education for all pupils. The Trust believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end, each academy within the Trust will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems affecting attendance are dealt with as quickly as possible and where appropriate support will be given to improve attendance.

The Government states that an attendance rate of less than 95% will have a detrimental effect on a child's education. It is therefore the Academy's aim that each of our pupils should have an attendance rate as high as possible with our target for attendance being at least 97% each academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances, out of the child's control, that affect their attendance at school. If this is the case, the Academy will support that child and their family to ensure that their attendance rate is as high as it can possibly be.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy received the full agreement of the Keystone Academy Trust and was agreed at their meeting on 03 December 2019.

3. AIMS:

It is recognised that:

- As a school, we aim to ensure that all children achieve excellent attendance.
- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Excellent attendance will be recognised and rewarded with a comprehensive award programme throughout the school year.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

4. EXPECTATIONS:

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school regularly – our target is at least 97% attendance.

- That they will arrive on time ready for registration at 8:50am and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually (8.50am).
- Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason, such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible, preferably before 8.50 am on the first morning of absence, providing a reason for absence. This may be done by phone, letter or in person. If illness continues for longer than five days, medical evidence will be required, e.g. Doctor's appointment card. Failure to contact school during the absence may result in a Safe and Well visit or referral to Children's Services
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's attendance or performance.
- To attempt to make all medical and dental appointments during school holidays or after school hours where possible. Medical appointments during school hours will not be authorised unless an appointment card, hospital letter or text from the GP/hospital/Dentist is forwarded to school. Providing these retrospectively is acceptable. Absence will only be authorised for the duration of the appointment plus any reasonable travel time.
- To understand that holidays in term time have a detrimental effect on a child's education and will avoid arranging family holidays in term time.
- A complete a Request for Absence letter for any planned absence accompanied by a letter or medical appointment form to the Headteacher at least 2 weeks prior to the planned absence and before holidays are booked.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from our school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Registers will close at 8.50am
- Children arriving at school between 8.50am and 9.20am will be marked as late.
- Children arriving after 9.20am with no specific reason will receive an unauthorised absence mark.
- Failure to improve punctuality could lead to further action being taken.
- After ten days of lateness, a letter will be issued.
- After ten further days, a School Attendance Panel meeting will be held with the parents and Attendance Lead.
- First day absence contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will treat the disclosure of information sensitively and only inform the necessary staff).
- Recognition and reward for good attendance
- Regular reports on their child's attendance and punctuality in end of year reports and at parents' evenings.
- A quality education
- It is government policy not to authorise holidays during term time; holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- A telephone call and Stage Two letter sent to inform you if your child's attendance has dropped below 92% or is in danger of dropping below this. Attendance will then be monitored for ten

days. If attendance does not improve a School Attendance Panel meeting will be held with the Attendance Lead.

Termly reports will be made by the Head Teacher to the school's governing body on the issues of attendance and punctuality.

Term Time Holidays

- Any requests for holiday in term time must be made in advance in writing and in line with GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES and will only be agreed in **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**.
- Taking a holiday in term time simply to save money does not constitute an exceptional circumstance and could result in a fine.
- All parents/carers should apply for leave no less than 14 days prior to the period of absence.
- If the absence is not agreed and the pupil goes on the holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may then be referred to Lincolnshire County Council and could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine under Section 444(b) of the Education Act 1996.
- Where a pupil was removed from school for a holiday during the previous academic year, and then is absent due to a holiday in the current year, the case will automatically be referred to Lincolnshire County Council for a Fixed Penalty fine.
- Where a pupil fails to return within 10 school days of a previously notified date schools have the power to remove the child from the school roll and report them to Children Missing Education at Lincolnshire County Council.
- Since 31st October 2017, schools are expected to notify the Local Authority of all children missing education (CME) and pupils not attending regularly (PNAR).
- CME relates to pupils who are on the school roll but have not been attending and the school does not know the reason why. In Lincolnshire, all state schools must do a home visit to establish if the family are living at the known address within 5 working days. Once a visit has been undertaken:
 - ✓ If the family is living at the address, then it is not a case of a child missing education but a pupil not attending school. Please follow the school's policy on attendance.
 - ✓ If the family is not living at the address, please follow the procedure for Reporting a Child Missing Education.

5. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH GOOD PRACTICE AND REWARDS

Attendance will be encouraged in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the **BEGINNING** of each session
- Attendance checks will be completed at appropriate times (weekly for targeted pupils) ½ termly for all pupils.
- All pupils with less than 92% attendance will become targeted pupils.
- An 'end of year' Attendance Award, for 97%+ attendance achieved throughout the year.
- A trophy to be presented to the class with the best attendance each week in KS2.
- All awards to be awarded by the Headteacher and/or a school Governor as appropriate.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This should include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.

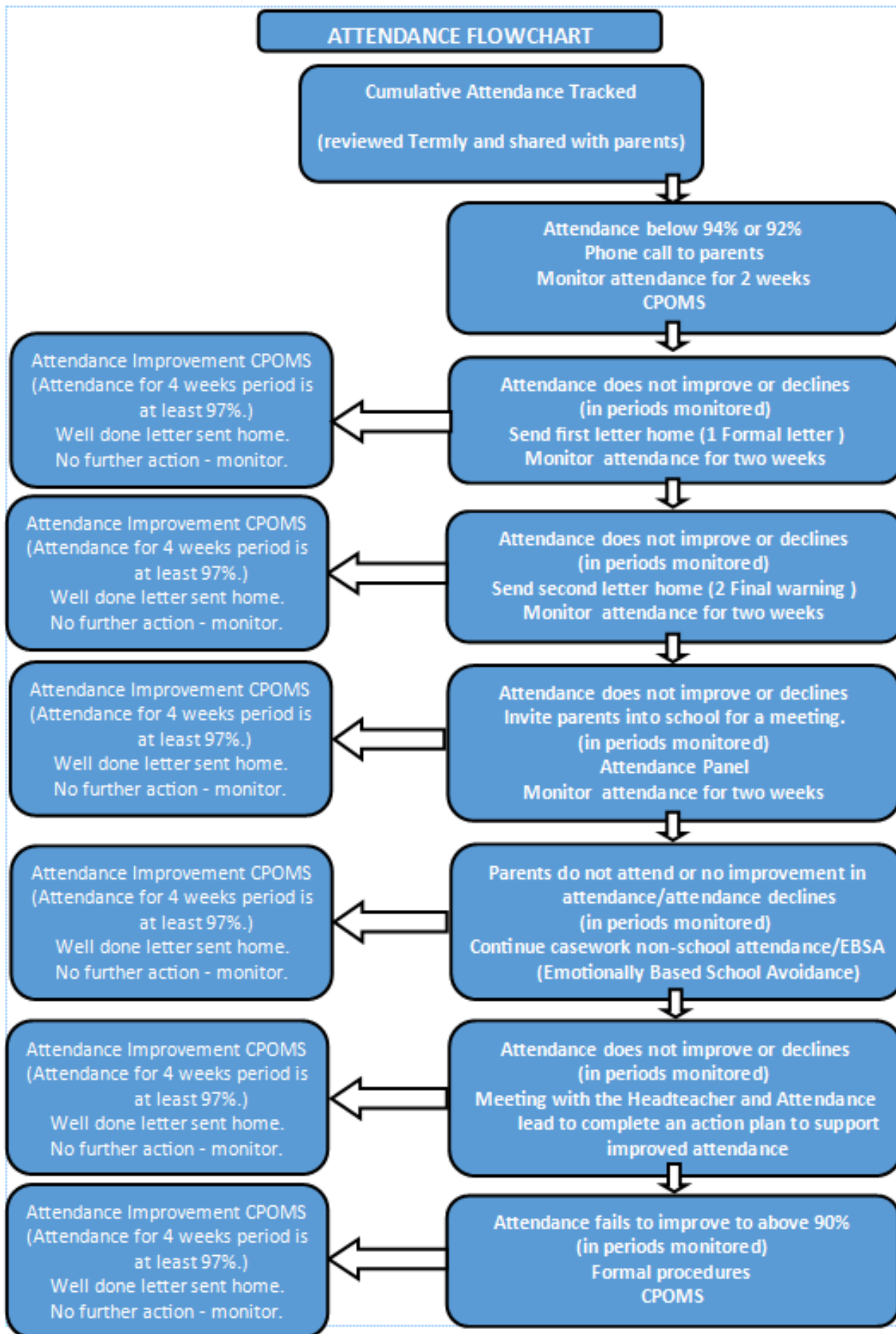
- Pastoral Team, Assistant Headteacher and SENCo working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.
- Sending parents termly absence reports, together with targets for improvement as appropriate.
- Attendance and absence figures will be written on each external classroom window weekly.
- In the Summer, the class, in KS2 and in EYFS or KS1, with the best overall attendance will win a fun day on the field with bouncy castles.

6. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE:

When a pupil does not attend, the school will respond as follows:

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. First day absence phone calls will be made if no notification of absence has been received by 9:30am.
- Where there is no response by 10:30am, there may be a visit from a member of the school staff. If the school are unable to raise any response at the home, they will request the police carry out a 'safe and well check' to the property.
- If any pupil is absent for a period of 10 days (particularly when we have had no contact from parents/carers) the absence will be unauthorised and notified to Lincolnshire County Council's Pupils Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) service.
- For pupils where non-attendance continues or irregular patterns of attendance are causing concern, and attendance falls below 93% the case will be discussed with the SLT team and the Attendance Flowchart will be followed. A Stage One (Initial concern) letter will be sent to parents.
- Attendance will be monitored by the school. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% for any reason (including illness or holidays), they will be classed as Persistent Absentees (PA). A Stage Two (Ongoing concern) letter will be sent to parents to make them aware of this. If attendance does not improve within two weeks of a school notifying parents of poor attendance, a Stage Three (Serious concern) letter will be sent asking parents to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting. This meeting will include the appropriate staff, parent/carer and student and will aim to identify and solve any problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school. Parent/carers are obliged to attend.
- The case will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement, a Stage Four (Referral) penalty warning letter will be issued. Failure to improve attendance will result in a Penalty Fine from the Local Authority under Section 444(b) of the education act 1996. If it felt that the pupil's attendance is not improving due to lack of support or engagement with either the parent/carer or the pupil, consideration will be taken as to submitting a file to the Local Authority to initiate proceedings before a Magistrates Court.
- Staff are to raise any concerns they have in relation to a child's attendance with the Attendance leader in the first instance. The Attendance Leader is to be informed of any absence which: -
 - a) appears irregular;
 - b) shows regular patterns e.g. repeated absence on the same day/s of each week;
 - c) is unexplained or unauthorised.

This may be referred to the Headteacher, Family Liaison Officer/Designated Safeguarding Officer where necessary.



Reintegration:

- The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires special planning. For example, it may be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme.
- Designated staff should be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and for the management of that programme.
- All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, parttime re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Support from the SENDCo may be required
- Staff will be notified of the return of the long-term absentees.

The success of the Pastoral Support Programme will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the young person and parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

7. SCHOOL ORGANISATION:

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

In addition, the following specific responsibilities are allocated to individual staff:

Headteacher – Sarah Gray:

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, pupils and parents.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence
- To liaise with the Family Liaison Lead/EWO
- To oversee the work of administrative staff
- To award excellent attendance.

Assistant Headteacher - Nikki Dowding

- To oversee the efficient operation of the attendance system and the collation and analysis of attendance data.
- To report to the Head Teacher on attendance issues.
- To liaise, when necessary, with the Lincolnshire Inclusion and Attendance Service.
- To work with families to improve attendance and punctuality.
- To track whole school attendance and absence data, comparison and summary reports.
- To track the attendance of pupils who fall below 90% and 95%.
- To inform the Headteacher of any concerning cases regarding absence/poor attendance.
- To organise/complete home visits where necessary.
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- **Family Liaison Officer – Lisa Cross**
- To work with families to improve attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with other agencies to improve attendance.
- To devise action plans and work with families to improve attendance.

- To organise/ complete home visits where necessary.

Class Teacher:

- To complete registers accurately and promptly at the start of each session
- To notify the AHT of suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
- To inform AHT staff of concerns in a timely manner.
- To discuss attendance issues at parent's consultations.
- To inform Safeguarding Lead of any situation causing concern above and beyond normal expectations.

Attendance officer – Annie Thorley

- To follow-up immediately any unexplained absence by contacting parents
- To inform SLT and Family Liaison Officer of unexplained absences of those children at risk.
- To write detailed notes on Integris for lateness and absences.
- To collate weekly attendance of targeted pupils.
- To collate termly attendance of all pupils.
- Maintain the central reporting of attendance on Integris.
- To identify persistently absence or late children and track them.
- To send letters (set out in flowchart) to persistently absent and late children.
- To keep a record of the steps carried out regarding persistently absent children.
- To maintain a late book.
- To identify children and classes for good attendance awards and certificates.
- To ensure SLT have the names of the KS1 and KS2 classes who have won the class teddy or trophy for the week – best attendance before 9am on Monday morning.
- To print out class weekly attendance percentage and stick-on class windows by Monday lunchtime.

Governors:

- Governors identified to monitor attendance and implementation of this policy.
- Attendance Governor to represent governors at school attendance panels.
- Present regular attendance progress reports to Governors' Meetings.

Parent:

- Contact with school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.

8. LIAISING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed. We have a commitment to work with all necessary agencies to support all children in receiving an appropriate and high quality education.



Long Sutton County Primary School

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

(Parents are advised to apply for leave of absence before they confirm their arrangements)

Applications should be made using this form **at least 2 weeks** in advance of the proposed leave date/s.

Please read the following guidance carefully:

As parents/carers, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school. During the academic year, pupils are at **school for 190 days and at home for 175 days**. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday period so that your child's education is not disrupted. In line with Government policy, we will **not** authorise leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays of any length will not be authorised. Children with attendance of 90% or below are classed as persistent absentees.

Please complete and submit this form if you want the school to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to back up your request. We will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. For further information, please refer to our Attendance Policy.

Where parents take a child out of school without permission, or fail to apply for permission in advance, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may be investigated by our attendance officer.

Name of child/ren:		Class/es:	
Reason for leave of absence:			
A letter must accompany this form for all holiday requests to fully explain the exceptional circumstances which mean that you can only take your holiday during term time.			
from:	to:	Number of school days:	
For <u>non-holiday</u> requests, please give reasons as to why the leave cannot be taken in school holidays or outside school hours			
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO			
Signed: (Parent/Carer)		Date:	

To be completed by the School			
Child's current attendance:	%	Number of previous applications:	
Our overall school target for attendance this year is			97%
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:			
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.	
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.	
Signed:		Date:	