



# Attendance Policy

## Knaphill Schools

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Policy:</b> Attendance Policy                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Policy originator:</b><br><br>At KLS Vicky Harbridge (Attendance Champion) & Lisa Turner (Attendance Officer)<br><br>At KS Debbie Harrison (Attendance Champion) & Lucy Chilufya (Attendance Officer) | <b>Review Period:</b> Two years<br><br><b>Last Reviewed:</b> September 2025 to reflect Surrey County Council changes |
| <b>Status:</b> Statutory                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Review Date:</b> September 2026                                                                                   |

**This document is a statement of the philosophy and strategies for attendance at Knaphill Schools. It was reviewed through consultation with teaching staff and approved by the Local Governing Committee.**

## **1. Objectives**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To promote good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.
- To reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- To ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- To build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- To act promptly to address patterns of absence and work with external agencies, to overcome them.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To promote and support punctuality in attending school.

## **2. Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of the Knaphill Schools are committed, in partnership with the parents, guardians, pupils, the Swan Trust, Local Advisory Committee and the Local Education Authority (LEA), to building a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud. We expect that pupils attend 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Regular attendance is key to achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters: staying healthy, enjoying and achieving, keeping safe, contributing to the community, and social and economic well-being.

## **3. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on and aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance including those set out in Working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) published with effect from 19 August 2024.

It 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
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment)

Regulations 2024.

- The Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

It also covers responsibilities referred to in:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

#### **4. Parent Responsibility and The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable -

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) To any special needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (Ss 434 and 458) and The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

## **5. Recording attendance**

### **5.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (See Appendix) 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

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **5.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/guardian must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental 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/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/guardians will be notified of this in advance.

### **5.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/guardian notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/guardians 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/guardian must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence by completing a leave of absence application form.

## **6. Categorisation of Absence**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

### **6.1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/guardians keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Holidays

### **6.2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

### **6.3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

## **7. Registration & Lateness**

### **Knaphill Lower School:**

The school day begins at 8.35am with the opening of the school entrance doors. Morning registration will take place at 8.45am and the registers will remain open in the office until 9.15am. Any pupil who arrives after the doors are shut at 8.45am will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late. Any pupil arriving after 9.15 am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an **unauthorised absence** unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration is taken at 12:30 (Reception) and 1.00pm (Year 1 and 2).

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before 9.15am will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

### **Knaphill Junior School:**

The school day begins at 8.30am with the opening of the school gates. Morning registration will take place at 8.50am and the registers will remain open in the office until 9.20am. Any pupil who arrives after the gates are shut at 8.45am will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late. Any pupil arriving after 9.20 am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an **unauthorised absence** unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before 9.20am will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

## **8. Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Send an email asking for the reason for absence.
- Call the pupil's parent/guardian 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 may carry out a home visit and/or call the police.
- 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 5 working days after the session for which the pupil was absent.
- Call the parent/guardian 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 the Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer (formerly Inclusion Officers).
- Where the absence may continue for a longer period of time, the school will arrange a video call to ensure that the pupil is safe and well.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate.

## 9. Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL") will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day, in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' (2016).

Staff are alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

## 10. Persistent and severe absence

**10.1 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. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' and guardians' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

### 10.2 The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence

- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Support families with attendance issues via the Inclusion team.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Notify parents by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary,

### **10.3 Severe absence**

Particular focus will be given by all staff to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (**those missing 50% or more of school**). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

The school will monitor and target these children and work with these families. The school may also look at the needs of the children for example if they have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

## **11. Approval for term-time absence**

**11.1** The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- 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.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat

dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller 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.

- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and to ensure child/ren do not miss out on their education during term. We ask parents to take due consideration of these prior to booking a holiday. We expect that pupils attend 100% of the time as per Surrey CC's guidelines, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

## **11.2 Grant for Exceptional Leave of Absence**

Parents are not entitled to leave of absence for their child/ren as a right and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, e.g. for compassionate reasons, and once the **Headteacher has considered:**

- The child's record of attendance.
- *If leave of Absence is granted it shall not exceed five school days* in any one year, as agreed by the school's governing body.
- The time of the leave, ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important examinations/assessments/school events.

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

**Leave of absence, for exceptional circumstances, will not be granted if additional leave is taken either side of this time without previous approval. Proof of flights or other documentation supporting the request must be produced if asked for. If there is a period of illness before or after the approved absence then medical evidence will be sought.**

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. It is widely known that the link between a pupil's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.

Where a parent wishes to request a leave of absence, a formal request must be made as far in advance as possible, in writing by completing a leave of absence application form, to the Headteacher who will consider the application on behalf of the Local Advisory Committee.

If a leave of absence is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Absences during mock SATS and SATS examinations *will not be authorised*.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

## **12. Sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions - including, but not limited to, those listed below - to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### **12.1 Penalty Notices:**

The Surrey Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/guardian for their child's unauthorised absence from school and this requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

## **12.2 Circumstances when Penalty Notices may be issued**

For pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice & Intervention Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

**The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks (which may span different terms or school years). The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (Paragraph 2 above) parents will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

### **12.3 Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024**

If a parent/guardian has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/guardian per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If a parent/guardian has incurred a penalty notice relating to the same child/children since 19 August 2024, a rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/guardian per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If two penalty notices relating to the same child/children have been incurred in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then the parent/guardian will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/guardian per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

### **12.4. Notice to improve**

**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time parents will be sent a ‘Notice To Improve’ their child’s attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

The Notice will include:

- Details of the pupil’s attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn’t improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

In the case of unauthorised leave of absence during term time, a specific Penalty Notice warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents/guardians have previously been warned through school newsletters; parent mail; or booklets, policies etc. available on the school website, that such absences would not be authorised, and that they would be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if they persisted with any such unauthorised leave of absence.

### **13. Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer**

The Inclusion Service monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The Surrey County Council Attendance Advice Officer will work with school staff and parents/guardians to promote good attendance.

The Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer may contact parents if children are consistently late or there are concerns about attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could, following prosecution, result in a community order, a fine not exceeding £2500 per parent/carer and/or imprisonment for up to three months.

### **14. Monthly Attendance Letters**

Monthly letters are automatically produced and sent to all parents whose children are late 4 times or more in a month. Monthly letters will also be sent to all parents whose children have an attendance below 90%.

### **15. Rewards**

#### **Knaphill Lower School:**

Tarquin the Attendance Turtle is awarded to the class with the best attendance on a weekly basis and the class receives an additional playtime.

100% attendance certificates are awarded at the end of every term.

#### **Knaphill Junior School:**

An attendance trophy is awarded to the class with the best attendance on a weekly basis and the class receives an additional playtime.

### **16. Roles and responsibilities, our expectations**

#### **16.1 We expect that all pupils will attend school:**

- 100% of the time.
- Punctually.
- Prepared for the day.

**16.2 We expect that all parents/guardians/persons who have parental responsibility for or day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child/ren in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/ren are unable to attend school.
- **Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, before 9am, and on each subsequent day of absence,** and advise when they are expected to return.
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem that may keep the child away from school occurs.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Headteacher, Mrs Debbie Harrison, who can be contacted via the school office.
- In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of our school community must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/guardians need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

**16.3 Headteacher will:**

- Adopt the whole policy.
- Implement this policy at school.
- Monitor school-level absence data and report it to the Local Advisory Committee.
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents/guardians on the first day of absence.
- Appoint Key staff to liaise and follow-up with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer to:
  - Provide appropriate access to attendance data.
  - Consult and liaise closely with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay.
  - Work in close collaboration with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis.

- Set whole school attendance targets.
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with Surrey County Council Attendance Advice & Intervention Officer.
- Have a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes.
- Have an oversight of data analysis.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

**16.4 The designated Senior Attendance Champion with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is the Headteacher who can be contacted via the school office.**

**The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:**

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/guardians and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/guardians
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Work with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicate with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicate the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### **16.5 Office Staff/Attendance Officer will:**

- Oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually.
- Record all reasons for absences in the register.
- Liaise with the Surrey Attendance Service as require to reinforce good practice.
- Share the class teacher's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Senior Attendance Champion
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Headteacher or DSL in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Monitor and analyse attendance data.
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff.

The attendance officer can be contacted via the school office.

### **16.6 We expect that school staff will:**

- Complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- Provide a caring and welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment, and provide a sympathetic response to any pupil concerns.
- Monitor every pupil's attendance.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Leader.
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Inclusion Leader.
- Encourage good attendance.
- Make initial enquiries of parents/guardians of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school and LA expectations with regard to regular school attendance.

### **16.7 The Local Advisory Committee will be responsible for:**

Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

## **16.8 Pupils are expected to attend school every day.**

## **17. Encouraging and promoting Attendance**

### **Knaphill Schools encourage regular attendance in the following ways:**

- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at the school office after doors are closed, a late 'mark' will be recorded. If a child arrives late it will be recorded as late 'absence' and counted as an unauthorised absence, without a verbal or written explanation from the parent/guardian. Late pupils are recorded in the office inventory system in case of a fire drill.
- By publishing attendance statistics and celebrating good attendance in newsletters.
- By celebrating good and improved attendance through weekly class 'Tarquin the Attendance Turtle' (Knaphill Lower School) and trophy (Knaphill Junior School) presentation for the best attending class.
- By monitoring pupils, informing parents/guardians, in writing, of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary.

## **18. Responding to Non-Attendance**

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

### **18.1 Unexplained absences**

- On the first day of absence, if no message or telephone call is received from the parent/guardian by 9.00am, the school will contact them that day by telephone or email.
- If there is no response from any of the contacts held for the family, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/guardian plus any additional contacts the school has been given. If there has still been no contact made, the school will make a welfare check or request that the Police or Childrens' Services conduct a welfare check.
- Six Days Absence: The school will continue to try to contact the parent/guardian and any other relevant contacts and on the sixth day of unexplained absence the school will usually make a further welfare check) or may request the Police or Childrens' Services to conduct a welfare check. Procedures in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will then be followed and a DSL will call the C-SPA consultation line for advice and proceed in accordance with advice received. The Local Authority Inclusion Service will also be notified if appropriate.

### **18.2 Attendance between 90% and 94% and Late arrivals**

The Attendance Officer will analyse data on a monthly basis and send out letters to the parents/guardians of children who have been late four or more times over the past month; to the parents/guardian of children whose attendance is between 90% and 94%; and to parents/guardians of children whose attendance is less than 90%. The letters will both inform and offer support to parent/guardian.

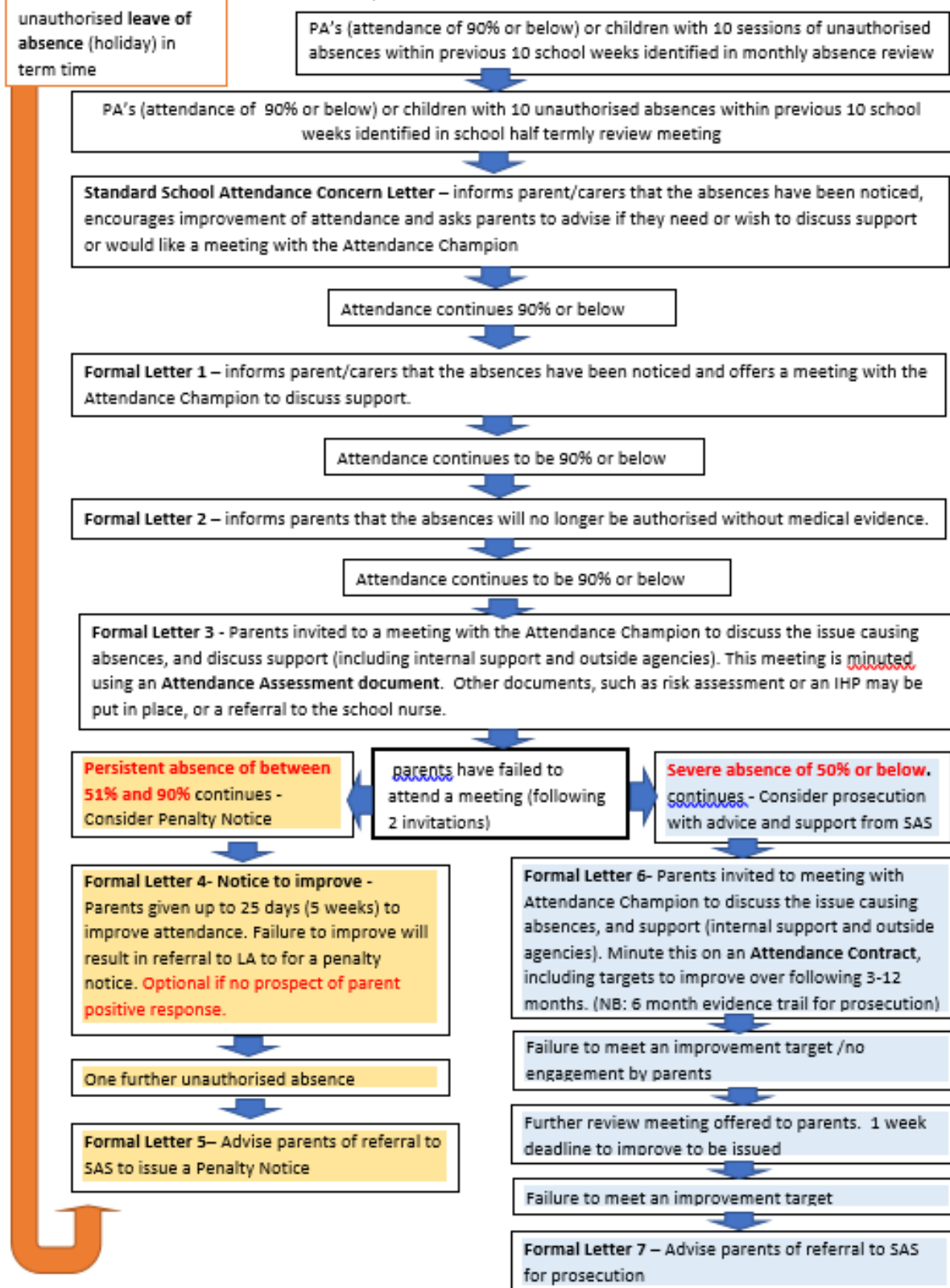
Children who arrive late after registers have closed will be coded as unauthorised absence.

### **18.3 Persistent Absentees (under 90%)**

Attendance Champion and the Attendance Officer will meet each half term and analyse the previous half term's attendance data. Children whose attendance is less than 90% or/and have had ten unauthorised absences in ten school weeks will be identified during this meeting and the steps below followed.

10 sessions of unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) in term time

## Persistent Absentees Response Flowchart



## **19. Changing Schools**

It is important that, if families decide to send the child/ren in their care to a different school, that they inform Knaphill Schools office staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received in writing and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Inclusion Service.

## **20. Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, 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
- The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.
- 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.
- The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare/bench mark attendance data to local, regional and national levels, to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the Local Advisory Committee.

## **21. Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- 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.

## **22. Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families .
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers using Arbor, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families and to the Local Advisory committee and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

## **23. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

We are aware that some pupils may be absent due to complex barriers to attendance, or due to mental or physical health or SEND. We are also aware that some pupils may have lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence.

**23.1** We work hard with our parent / guardian community to put in place strategies and support in place to ensure good attendance, including the following:

- ✓ If the school have not been informed of a child's absence via the school office
- ✓ parents will receive a phone call before 10am
- ✓ The school may carry out home door stop visits, make a C-SPA referral and/ or Police Welfare checks if parent uncontactable
- ✓ Attendance letters are generated automatically and sent monthly for:
  - a. Persistent Absentees – PAs- (below 90%) regardless of reasons behind absenteeism,
  - b. 91-94% attendance warning letter
  - c. If there are more than 4 "lates" in a month.
- ✓ The school liaises with other services for support such as Traveller Services/ Refuge / Social Care/ Family Support to provide Early Help.
- ✓ We track where pupils go who leave us (We know where pupils go onto before taking them off role.)
- ✓ We offer support to parents to discuss any concerns, supporting them through signposting and referrals. Members of the Inclusion Team are on gate the in the morning for parents to arrange a convenient time to talk.

- ✓ Parenting courses are offered to support specific “blockers” for children’s attendance e.g. managing your child’s anxiety; 4-week parenting course, ASD/ ADHD courses & Emotional Coaching for parents; cooking on- a budget (parent/ parent and child).
- ✓ Bespoke activities for reluctant children are provided with the Inclusion Team / an allocated LSA on entry to school
- ✓ Alternative access arrangements
- ✓ Breakfast provided for those who need it
- ✓ Inclusion Leader can offer specific family support
- ✓ Our newsletter highlights online safety considerations for parents and parenting courses (school based and local community)
- ✓ Signage around school
- ✓ Weekly celebration in assembly of class attendance
- ✓ Attendance award
- ✓ Children with SEMH anxieties receive targeted support at lunch/ break times/ transition times

**23.2** We have thorough systems in place to ensure high attendance is encouraged and we have procedures and policies in place to manage the absence of children. Off-rolling of children does not take place at our school. Any child that leaves the school outside the normal times is reviewed by the inclusion team and with the local authority, if required.

**23.3** Where a pupil has an education health and care plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil’s needs, the school will inform the local authority.

## **24. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. The policy will be approved by the Local Governing Committee.

## **Appendix – Attendance Codes**

All pupils must be given a registration mark each day. There are two sessions that require a registration mark. Registration will be taken by class teacher during (am registration) and (pm registration).

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

| <b>Code</b>                                    | <b>Definition</b>                                             | <b>Scenario</b>                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>/</b>                                       | Present (am)                                                  | Pupil is present at morning registration                                                                                               |
| <b>\</b>                                       | Present (pm)                                                  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                                                                             |
| <b>L</b>                                       | Late arrival                                                  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                                                                          |
| <b>Attending a place other than the school</b> |                                                               |                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>K</b>                                       | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority |
| <b>V</b>                                       | Attending an educational visit or trip                        | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school                                                              |
| <b>P</b>                                       | Participating in a sporting activity                          | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school                                                        |
| <b>W</b>                                       | Attending work experience                                     | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement                                                                                      |
| <b>B</b>                                       | Attending any other approved educational activity             | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience                     |
| <b>D</b>                                       | Dual registered                                               | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered                                                         |
| <b>Absent – leave of absence</b>               |                                                               |                                                                                                                                        |

|                                                                      |                                                                                     |                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C1</b>                                                            | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school                  |
| <b>M</b>                                                             | Medical/dental appointment                                                          | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment                                                                   |
| <b>J1</b>                                                            | Interview                                                                           | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment                                  |
| <b>S</b>                                                             | Study leave                                                                         | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination                                     |
| <b>X</b>                                                             | Not required to be in school                                                        | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend                                                  |
| <b>C2</b>                                                            | Part-time timetable                                                                 | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable                                                    |
| <b>C</b>                                                             | Exceptional circumstances                                                           | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances                                    |
| <b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>                             |                                                                                     |                                                                                                               |
| <b>T</b>                                                             | Parent travelling for occupational purposes                                         | Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes |
| <b>R</b>                                                             | Religious observance                                                                | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance                                                         |
| <b>I</b>                                                             | Illness (not medical or dental appointment)                                         | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)                        |
| <b>E</b>                                                             | Suspended or excluded                                                               | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made                   |
| <b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b> |                                                                                     |                                                                                                               |
| <b>Q</b>                                                             | Lack of access arrangements                                                         | Pupil is unable to attend school because the                                                                  |

|                                      |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                      |                                       | local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Y1</b>                            | Transport not available               | Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available                                                                                                       |
| <b>Y2</b>                            | Widespread disruption to travel       | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Y3</b>                            | Part of school premises closed        | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Y4</b>                            | Whole school site unexpectedly closed | Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Y5</b>                            | Criminal justice detention            | <p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul> |
| <b>Y6</b>                            | Public health guidance or law         | Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Y7</b>                            | Any other unavoidable cause           | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b> |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>G</b>                             | Holiday not granted by the school     | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                             |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>N</b>                    | Reason for absence not yet established      | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes                                                                                          |
| <b>O</b>                    | Absent in other or unknown circumstances    | No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence |
| <b>U</b>                    | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session                                                                             |
| <b>Administrative codes</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Z</b>                    | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered                                                                                                         |
| <b>#</b>                    | Planned whole-school closure                | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays                                                                          |

If you would like an application for leave of absence, please contact the office or download the form from the website.