

# Kettlebrook Short Stay School

# Attendance Policy

If adopted - adopted from:

Initially ratified by MC:

01/01/26

REVIEW DATE BY SLT:

14/09/2026

REVIEW DATE BY MC:

01/12/2026

AUTHOR (S) OF POLICY:

Federation

PERSON(S) REVIEWING:

SB

Date of change	Author of change	Description of changes	Page number of changes	New review date*
9.12.2025	SB	Updated policy format		
		Addition of sentence around aims for students to improve on previous attendance	2	14/9/2026
		Updated roles and responsibilities section to include management committee	4	14/9/2026
		Changed time of notification of late texts home from 9am until 9.15 in line with late mark.	5	14/9/2026

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY AT KSSS**

**This policy is compliant with SCC policy and based on the guidance issued by the DFE on school attendance.**

***“Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community”***

### **PRINCIPLES**

The Management Committee at Kettlebrook Short Stay School (KSSS) recognise that children must attend school regularly if they are to make the best of the opportunities they have to learn and make best progress.

Prolonged and consistent absence, in any year group, results in limited progress and low levels of achievement. Children quickly begin to fall behind their peers and often never fully catch up with gaps in their skills and knowledge.

In addition, repeated and consistent lateness is an unsettling start to the school day for both the child and school. Children will miss out on important learning opportunities at the start of the day and may also result in a penalty warning being issued.

As a school we follow the **Department for Education** guidelines and expect children to maintain an attendance figure above **95%** throughout the academic year. **We recognise that oftens students will arrive at the PRU with low attendance and as such, our aim for all students is to improve their school attendance.**

### **Our Expectations at KSSS**

**We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Arrive at school by 8.45am and 12:15pm for the afternoon session.
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day.

**We expect that parents/carers will:**

- Ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and ready to learn.

### **Regular attendance is a legal requirement**

- Notify the school of a pupil absence by 8.30am.
- Not take their children out of school during term time for the purpose of family holidays,
- Provide the school with up-to-date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility.
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep a child away from school

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Those children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Executive Headteacher and Management Committee**

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DFE
- Support the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set expectations
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensuring school staff receive training on school attendance.
- Use data to identifying areas of success and development

#### **Head of School and Attendance Officer**

- Inform parents/carers of school policy and procedures with regards to attendance.
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice
- Intervene early when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern
- Develop a multi-agency response to attendance meeting regularly with the Local Authority EWW
- Monitor the impact of whole school attendance schemes and rewards
- Work with keyworkers to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern; all unexplained absences to be followed up
- Ensure all absent students' parents/carers are contacted wherever possible through first day calling.
- Work with keyworkers to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern; all unexplained absences to be followed up
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns
- Utilise the support of available specialists in relation to the attendance.
- Report termly to the Management Committee.

### **Teaching staff**

- Praise pupils for punctuality and good attendance.
- Monitor pupil absence and inform the Head of School / Attendance Officer when absence is impacting upon achievement.
- As keyworkers, raise attendance with parents/carers on a regular basis to ensure that there is effective support in place

### **Recognising student's attendance**

Positive and improved attendance will be rewarded in line with the school's Relational and Restorative Practice policy.

### **PROCEDURES**

We expect children to arrive at school at 8:45am. On entry the paper register will be taken and pupils will be expected to hand in their valuables / phones and any medication to staff.

The school uses an electronic register. When students are on Alternative Provision / Work Experience the school will monitor their attendance by requesting registers from the Alternative provider and contacting their AP / Work Experience Placement by phone.

**Morning Registration** is 8.45am

**Afternoon Registration** 12:15pm

*Please refer to Appendix 2 for Attendance Codes*

### **PENALTY NOTICES: NEW SCC GUIDANCE IN FORCE FROM 19.08.2024**

A Penalty Notice is a fine to a parent who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance/punctuality at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. First penalty notice will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days; or £80 if paid within 21 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions. *Please refer to Appendix 1 Letter sent out in July 2024 and Appendix 1a for Absence Flowchart*

### **ARRIVING LATE**

**Students should arrive at school to start at 8:45 am; if they have not arrived by 9:15 am, a text will be sent to the parent/guardian to advise them that their child is not in school. Arriving after 9:15 am will be marked with a 'L' code for being late. If lateness persists – it could result in a fixed penalty warning being issued. [Afternoon registration is at 12:15 pm.] Unlike mainstream school, we do not close the register and therefore Code U is not used, due to pupils' having timetable to suit their learning.**

The school office is responsible for maintaining the Sign In App. This must be used to log times and names of anyone entering or leaving the school. Any further details required are logged on Arbor in the attendance logs.

### **If a child is regularly late**

1. The Head of School will write to parents/carers to inform them of the number of times the child has been late, how much time that they have been late for and to remind them of the school policy and expectations.
2. If lateness persists the Head of School will invite parents/carers to a meeting with the Keyworker to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child to school on time.

### **Persistent Late**

Persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed, may result in the involvement of the Education Welfare Service. They will investigate why the child has been late on the dates given. ***This investigation could result in parents/carers receiving a Penalty Notice.***

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

**We have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)**

Minutes late per day during the school year	<b>Equals days' worth of teaching lost in a year</b>
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

### **Attendance and Illness**

If a child is ill the parent/carer's first point of action is to call the school **01827 312840** before 9.00am and notify the Attendance Officer of the absence and the reason for the absence.

This needs to be done every day of absence (unless the child is admitted to hospital, or has a long-term illness-related absence for a period of time - in this instance parents/carers do not need to ring every day).

If a child is not in school and there is no reason for the absence, a text will be sent to parents/carers by **9.15 am** to ensure that parents are aware that their child has not arrived at school. This will be followed up with a phone call from our Attendance Officer to find out why a child is not in school.

***Parents permitting absence from school without a good reason is considered an offence.***

### **Home Visits**

Any student absent from school for 5 consecutive days will be visited for a safe and well check by a member of school staff – this may be completed after 3 days dependent on individual circumstances. If the student is not seen, another visit will be conducted by welfare Staff/Senior Leadership outside school hours. If the student has not been seen after this visit, the school may refer the case to the following agencies, as appropriate, to provide further support and guidance: Education Welfare Worker, SCASS - Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service and the Police.

### **Medical Appointments**

Doctors/dentist/optician appointments etc. must be made out of school hours where possible. If the appointment is in the morning, we expect the student to return to school afterwards and vice versa, if it is an afternoon appointment, the student is expected to attend morning lessons first. A whole day for an appointment is not acceptable and will not be authorised unless it is a hospital appointment. For any hospital appointment, a copy of the letter should be provided to the school.

### **Leave of Absence**

The Head of School / Executive Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances".

**Holidays are generally not considered as "exceptional circumstances". It is expected that families will take holiday in the school holiday periods.**

Any request for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Head of School on the 'Request for Leave' proforma available from the school office (**Appendix 3**). **The Head of School or Executive Headteacher are the only people able to authorise leave of absence.**

The Head of School **or Executive Headteacher** may grant compassionate leave as authorised absence.

Any leave of absence taken without permission will result in an Unauthorised Absence (G) being recorded on the child's attendance record. This will be investigated as to why the child has been absent on the dates given. ***This investigation could result in parents/carers receiving a Penalty Notice.***

### **Persistent Absence**

#### **When attendance becomes a concern**

1. If a child is absent on a regular basis without adequate explanation, or is absent regularly on specific days, e.g. Monday or children are absent for prolonged periods of time, the school will contact parents/carers to discuss the problems and to seek a solution.

2. **If a child's attendance falls below 85%** at any time within the school year, the Head of School will write to parents/carers to inform them that their child's attendance has fallen below the expectation. Parents/carers will be reminded of their legal duty and of the school's policy and expectations.
3. If attendance does not improve the Head of School will invite parents/carers to a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can support the family to improve the child's attendance.
4. **When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 85%** in any term without good reason, school will not be able to authorise any further absence for illness without medical evidence to confirm the illness. In order to authorise continued illness related non-attendance, parents/carers will need to provide the school with, for example:
  - a. A doctor's note or medical certificate
  - b. An appointment card date stamped to say you have visited your GP, hospital or dentist.
  - c. A copy of the dated prescription
  - d. Copy of labels from medicine bottles

Otherwise, the absences will be recorded as unauthorised (O).

***Please note we are able to administer prescribed medicines if required.***

**If the child's attendance does not improve the Education Welfare Service may become involved and this may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.**

A Penalty Notice may be issued in cases of persistent absence. A notice to improve letter will be sent and a 20-day period of improvement will commence, if there is an unauthorised absence in this 20-day period the penalty notice may be issued. Only one penalty warning notice will be issued per academic year, if attendance does not improve, statutory action will be looked at.

### **Enforcement of School Attendance**

Where children are not receiving a full-time education and unless there is a valid reason, parents **or whomever the child lives with** may have to pay a fine, these are called a Penalty Notice.

- Parents or people with responsibility may also have to attend court where they could receive both a fine and a criminal record.
- Both parent(s) are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly.
- Penalty Notices are issued to parents/guardian separately for each child.
- If issued with fines, both parents are required to make payment for their own Penalty Notice.

For example, if there are two parents and two children, four Penalty Notices will be issued.

**If child is not living with a parent, but with extended family or friends, the adults responsible for the child can be fined as well as the parents. School will send all correspondence to the adults responsible for the child as well as parents/carers.**

### **Penalty Notices for Excluded Children**

A penalty notice may be issued to any parent who allows their excluded child to be seen in a public place at any time during school hours in their child's first 5 days of exclusion. An 'excluded child' is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

### **People responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

- The Executive Headteacher and the Head of School have overall responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate and efficient systems in place to promote and support the school attendance policy, that these are adhered to and training is given where appropriate.
- First Day Contact: **The Attendance Officer** will record the reason for absence or ring home if no reason for the absence has been received.
- All staff can be contacted if you wish to discuss your child's attendance.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **After an exclusion**

After an exclusion, a reintegration meeting (with the child, their parent/carer and member of SLT), is required before the student is reintegrated back into their education. If this meeting does not actually take place, it is the policy of KSSS (having had direction from the Local Authority) that an O mark will be entered until the meeting takes place and the child will not be admitted which may result in penalty notice being issued.

KSSS full-time offer is from 8:45am to 2:00\* Monday to Thursday and 8.45am to 12:30pm on Fridays. Students are with staff at all times, undertaking social and academic learning. This placement is 25 hours and 45 mins per week. (\* Some students will start later and finish later – depending on their Individual Learning Plan)

**Points considered if a child requires a reduced timetable as part of their Individual Learning Plan (ILP):**

The Head of School at KSSS sets a clear ILP which is shared with the student and their family, it is reviewed formally at each half termly Performance Review Day (with as many external agencies that the family are working with, if not on a weekly basis as new opportunities are planned for).

**Annual Register Inspections**

KSSS is subject to annual Register Inspections by Staffordshire County Council. All reports are shared with the Management Committee & the Chair of Management Committee has a copy sent direct.

**Termly management committee (mc) meetings**

The Executive Head of School and Head of School report and discuss the Attendance in the termly report to Governors which includes the weekly overall; half termly overall; termly overall; annual overall KPI data and examples of the individual tracking of attendance per half term/termly with attendance targets reviewed.

Due to induction periods and planned Alternative Provision, attendance by provision is also calculated and tracked.

**Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote good attendance.

Parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

Staff and the Management Committee at Kettlebrook Short Stay School are committed to working with parents/carers to ensure that children attend school regularly.

**Other related documents:**

KSSS: Student Admission Handbook

KSSS: Website for other policies

DFE Children Missing in Education

SCC WEBSITE <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Attendance.aspx>

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025-2026

## Appendix 1

1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer

### Changes to issuing penalty notices for leave/absence during term time

#### **This letter has been directed by SCC to be sent out to all children receiving education in SCC**

In February 2024, the Department for Education published *Working together to improve School Attendance*. Within this document, in Chapter 6, it lays out the changes to issuing penalty notices.

The changes to the law are introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and will come into effect from 19 August 2024. This means that any unauthorised leave taken after this date will be dealt with under the new Regulations.

The changes to the regulations are significant so it is important to ensure that parents understand them, so you can consider the consequences before taking leave in term time.

#### **New two penalty notice limit in a three-year period**

The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 19th August 2024.

- The first Penalty Notices for leave in term time will increase to £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.
- If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.
- A third penalty notice **cannot** be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000.

Please note:

If a parent books a holiday now to take place after the 19th August 2024, they will be dealt with in line with when the actual unauthorised leave from school occurs, not the date of the booking. If the penalty notice is not paid within the given period, the county council will prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies.

To clarify in terms of the three-year period, Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised absences taken before the 19th August 2024 will not be included in the three-year period. However, all penalty notices issued for any reason connected to unauthorised absences after the 19th August 2024 will be counted in the three-year period, even if they are not paid by the parents. The only penalty notices not counted in the three-year period will be those withdrawn by the county council due to an error related to them being issued.

### **National threshold for issuing penalty notices**

You may have heard about the new national threshold for issuing penalty notices which has been set at 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

However, if in an individual case the Local Authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. For example - where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

It is important for parent/guardian/carer to be aware of the new regulations for when the school becomes aware that the threshold has been met as the school is expected in every case to consider whether to request the County Council to issue a penalty notice.

The Local Authority will ask the school to continue to report all unauthorised leave in term time that meets the threshold of 5 school days, and any below this threshold that the school would like the Local Authority to consider if they fall within their discretionary powers to issue one.

Please contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

**Kerry Jefferson**  
**Head of School**

**Appendix 2**

## ATTENDANCE CODES from 19 AUGUST 2024

<b>Code</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Rational</b>
/	Present AM	The session is a morning session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.
\	Present PM	The session is an afternoon session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.
L	Late in registration time	The pupil is absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended.
K	Local Authority alternative provision	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the 1996 Act(12) or section 42(2) or 61(1) of the 2014 Act.
V	Educational Visit	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the proprietor and supervised by a member of school staff.
P	Approved sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity.
w	Work Experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the proprietor as part of the pupil's education.
B	School alternative provision	The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity within paragraph (11) of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
M	Medical Appointment	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.
J1	Interview	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.
S	Study Leave	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Study Leave
X	Not required to attend	The pupil is not of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend
D	Dual Registered	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending another school at which they are a registered pupil. Dual Registered.
C	Exceptional circumstances	The pupil is absent with leave for any other purpose
C1	Regulated performance	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Part-time timetable	The pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because, in accordance with an agreement between a parent who they normally live with and the proprietor that the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis, their timetable does not require them to attend.
T	Traveller	The pupil is a mobile (i.e. Gypsy, Roma, Travelling) child, their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent.
R	Religious observance	The day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs.
I	Sickness	The pupil is unable to attend because of sickness.

Q	Local Authority failed to make access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements for them within paragraph (12) or (13). Local authority failed to make access arrangements.
Y1	Normal Transport failed	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from school that is normally provided for the pupil by the proprietor or a local authority is not available.
Y2	Travel disruption due to emergency	The pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.
Y3	Partial school closure	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those who the proprietor thinks cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Whole school closure	Whole school site unexpectedly closed.
Y5	Child in custody	The pupil is unable to attend because they are in criminal justice detention.
Y6	Public health guidance	Unable to attend in accordance with Public Health guidance or Law
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	The pupil is unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
E	Excluded or suspended	The pupil is excluded or suspended from the school for any other reason.
G	Family Holiday	The pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.
N	Not yet known	The circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established.
O	No reason or unsatisfactory reason	No reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes classified as authorised.
U	Late after registration close	Arrived in school after the registration closed
Z	Not on admission register	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned school closure	Planned whole school closure

**Request for leave during term time (TEMPLATE LETTER) 4**

To: The Head of School: of: ..... Date.....

I request consideration for of leave of absence from school during term time for:

My child .....

for the period from (date) ..... to (date) .....

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are:

.....

I have another child(ren) in another school(s) as follows:

Child full name(s) ..... School  
attended.....

Child full name(s) ..... School attended  
.....

Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> parent/carer(s)..... Print  
Name.....

Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> parent/carer(s)..... Print  
Name.....

**Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.**

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**Office Use Only**

Current Attendance: .....%      Last Year's Attendance: .....%

Number of school sessions taken as leave this academic year .....

**Agreed/Not Agreed**

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request:.....

Signed: ..... Head of School Date: .....

Notification of decision letter sent to parent/carer.....(date)

**School Letter Leave Agreed (TEMPLATE LETTER)**

(Parent/carer(s) name and address)

Date

Dear (Parent/carer(s) name)

(Child's name and date of birth)

Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from ..... to .....

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

Having looked at your application, I feel that your request can be supported in this instance. **Therefore, the absence to include the dates requested will be authorised.**

Our key priority is to ensure that your child(ren) are as successful as possible and are able to achieve (his/her) full potential. I would therefore ask that you support your child in catching up on the time they will miss in school.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Jefferson  
**Head of School**

**School Letter Leave Not Agreed (TEMPLATE LETTER)**

Dear (Both parents should receive individually named letters)

**CHILDS NAME / DOB**

Thank you for your leave of absence request informing us that **CHILD** will be absent from school from **ABSENCE DATES**.

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application very carefully. Although I understand the reason for your request, I am unable to approve leave of absence in this instance, as I believe the circumstances are not exceptional or in line with school policy. **Therefore, your child's absence from school during this period has been recorded as Unauthorised Absence and will be recorded in the attendance register with the "G" code.**

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct and the "Working Together to Improve School attendance" statutory guidance (effective 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024). The penalties for unauthorised leave of absence in term time will be:

For a **First** offence the Penalty Notice fine would be: -

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.

For a **Second** offence within 3-years of the first penalty notice being issued, the penalty notice fine would be:

- £160 per parent, per child if paid between 28 days.

Following the second offence **every new offence within the 3-year period, will be prosecuted** under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is **£1,000 per parent, per child**. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Our key priority is to ensure that your child is as successful as possible and can achieve their full potential.

I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be planned for the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Jefferson  
**Head of School**