



Attendance Policy

Policy review dates and changes

Review date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date ratified by governors/trustees	Date implemented
May 2024	Sandra Dingle			

Parkview and Redwood Primary School Federation

Attendance Policy

Scope of the Policy

This policy is complementary to other Federation policies particularly those relating to Child Protection & Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour and The Home – School Agreement.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. This document takes account of the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Working together to improve school attendance (Jul 2022) – due to be updated August 2024
- The Education Act 1996 (Part 6)
- The Education Act 2002 (Part 3)
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Part 7)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Aim and Purpose

To promote high levels of attendance and punctuality in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Specifically:

1. To promote full attendance to the schools.
2. To reduce both persistent absence (classed as less than 90% attendance) and severe absence (less than 50% attendance).
3. To ensure students arrive punctually to school each day.
4. To engage with parents, students and, where required, external agencies, to positively impact where attendance is a serious cause for concern and falls below 90%.
5. To support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.
6. To ensure that every student has access to the full time education they are entitled to.
7. Build strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Our Federation believes that attendance is **everybody's responsibility**.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- promoting the importance of school attendance across the schools' policies and ethos
- making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- holding the Heads of School to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteachers are responsible for:

- implementing this policy at the schools
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- ensuring fixed-penalty notices are issued, where necessary

The Attendance Leads are responsible for:

- monitoring attendance
- producing attendance reports for the heads of schools and governors
- liaising with the Education Welfare Service and other outside agencies
- supporting the learning mentors/attendance officers/office staff with their roles and responsibilities

The Learning Mentors and The Attendance Officers are responsible for:

- monitoring attendance
- first day calling and investigating why a child is absent if no reason is given in the first instance, including making home visits
- liaising with, and offering support to, families with attendance and punctuality issues
- liaising with the Education Welfare Officer and outside agencies

The Attendance Officers are responsible for:

- taking calls/messages from parents/carers about absence and recording it on the schools' systems
- reporting concerns about attendance to the Attendance Lead of their school
- working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent and severe absence
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- issuing letters to parents and preparing attendance contracts
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- recording details of latecomers
- ensuring that latecomers are entered on the register
- passing messages from parents to learning mentors, class teachers and/or teaching assistants
- providing paper copies of the register for supply teachers when needed

The class teachers are responsible for:

- marking the register accurately and clearly, both before the morning **and** afternoon teaching and learning sessions begin
- identifying problem areas in a child's attendance
- liaising with the Learning Mentors and Attendance Officers over any concerns

HLTAs are responsible for:

- marking the register accurately and clearly, both before the morning **and** afternoon teaching and learning sessions begin, when they are covering teachers

Teaching Assistants are responsible for:

- supporting supply teachers to complete the register accurately and clearly, both before the morning **and** afternoon teaching and learning sessions begin, whether this is electronically or by using a paper copy of the register

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive punctually at the start of the school day
- informing the school on the first and each subsequent day of absence, the reason for the absence and advise when their child is expected to return
- Ensuring, where possible, that any appointments are made outside of the school day
- Complete a leave of absence form for any planned absences of their children

Encouraging Good Attendance

The schools will encourage good attendance by:

- making school a lively and interesting place to be
- creating a positive environment where children feel safe and secure
- supporting pupils who experience problems in school
- monitoring attendance data in a systematic manner
- reminding parents on a regular basis of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality
- offering help and advice to resolve any difficulties the pupil or parent/carer may have in fulfilling these responsibilities

Registration

- A computer data-base of registration information is kept to enable the school to collate statistics and monitor attendance.
- Registration takes place at the start of each morning and afternoon session. Registers officially close 20 minutes after the start of each session; if a child arrives 20 minutes after the start of a session, they will be considered absent for the **whole** session unless a good reason is given for their late arrival.
- The registers are legal documents which can be used in court as evidence.

Lateness

- The morning session at Parkview begins at 8.50am. The afternoon session begins at 1pm
- The morning session at Redwood begins at 8.55am with gates opening from 8:45am for Start of the Day activities (SODA). The afternoon session begins at 12.45 (FS2, Y3 and Y4), 13.00 (Y1, Y2 and Y5) and 13.15 (Y6).
- Details of pupils who arrive after the start of a session are recorded on late sheets by office staff or on the EntrySign system at Redwood. Depending on the time of arrival and the reason given, pupils will be recorded as late before or after the register closed.
- A list of registration codes can be found on the electronic system the schools use for the registers.
- Regular lateness will result in a letter/phone call from the Attendance Officer and a meeting held where appropriate.
- Persistent lateness will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

- Absences for a valid reason will be deemed 'authorised'. Examples of valid reasons would include the following: illness, urgent medical or dental appointments, days of religious observance, family bereavement, and special occasions such as a degree ceremony of a sibling or parent.
- Absence for an invalid reason will be deemed 'unauthorised'. Examples of invalid reasons would include the following: unpermitted term time holidays (more information below), shopping, birthday treats, non-urgent medical or dental appointments, looking after others at home.
- If the authenticity of any illness or is in doubt, the attendance officers may ask for medical evidence such as a doctor's note, appointment card/text message or other appropriate form of evidence.
- If a child has persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) due to illness, the schools will request that medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card/text message or other appropriate form of evidence is provided for any absences due to illness before authorising the absence.
- Parents must notify the schools of any planned medical appointments in advance and an appointment card, notification of prescription, doctors note or other appropriate evidence may be asked for by the Attendance Officers as evidence of the absence.
- Attending a medical or dental appointment will normally be authorised as long as the parent/carer notifies the schools in advance. However, we encourage parents to make medical or dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, students should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Any other planned *unavoidable* absence should be negotiated with the Headteachers and will require approval. Parents /carers must complete a Leave of Absence form available from the school offices (more information below).
- Where no reason is given for an absence, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Where a false reason is given for an absence, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Unauthorised absences can result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Term Time Absence

- Parents may ask for permission for a term time absence. Forms for this purpose are available from the school office.
- Granting leave is at the discretion of the Headteachers. Leave will only be granted as authorised in **exceptional** circumstances (we **do not** class availability of cheap holidays, poor weather experienced in school holiday periods or holidays overlapping with the beginning or end of a half term as exceptional circumstances).
- Applications for term time holidays do not count as exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised.
- The taking of unauthorised term time holidays will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.
- **Parents/Carers may receive a Penalty Notice payable up to £120 per parent per child for any unauthorised leave of absence.**
- **If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent.**
- **Please note: the figure of £120 is expected to increase when the DfE document “Working together to improve school attendance” is updated in August 2024.**

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school; severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- use a clear escalation protocol to formally identify students whose level of attendance requires specific intervention
- send out letters and use attendance contracts (more information given below) with parents where their children’s attendance is a cause of concern.
- hold regular meetings with the parents of children whom the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- provide access to wider support services to remove/reduce any barriers to attendance.

Attendance contracts

An attendance contract will be issued when there are ongoing serious concerns over a child’s attendance. Parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance Officer and/or the Attendance Lead to discuss what measures can be done to improve attendance.

At the initial contract meeting, a supportive discussion will take place with specific targets and interventions set. The contract will then be reviewed approximately every 5 weeks to update any targets or intervention and evaluate any impact on attendance.

If there is no significant improvement, then the schools will escalate further. Escalation is likely to result in:

- referral to Educational Welfare Service at the Local Authority
- issue of fixed penalty notices

- court proceeding

Dual Registration/Mainstream and Special School

The law allows for dual registration of pupils who attend mainstream school and special placement. Where pupils are dually registered, they are marked as 'dual registered' on the days when they are attending their other placement.

Removal from Roll and Register

Where a pupil has been absent from school for 4 weeks or more and is thought to have left the area, his or her name will be removed from the roll and register. In such cases, every attempt will have been made to locate the child. In circumstances where enquiries have failed to elicit the whereabouts of the child, details will be circulated to other Local Education Authorities. **The Local Authority protocol for Children Missing in Education (please also see the Safeguarding Policy) will be followed when we have concerns regarding the whereabouts of a child who is not attending school.**