

Park Brow Primary School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy



This policy was adopted on	Date: January 2020
By Name:	V Roberts
Position:	Head Teacher
Signature:	 on behalf of Park Brow Primary School

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Attendance & Punctuality Policy

- *Throughout this policy the term **parent** is used to refer to an individual who falls within the definition of section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This includes all biological parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children's Act 1989); and any person who although not a biological parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and looks after, irrespective of what that relationship is with that child.*
- *The Education Act 2005 inserted s444Za into the Education Act 1996, defining the term '**school**' to include alternative provision that has been made for the child.*

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 97% (In the Green Zone)
 - 100%-97% - Green Zone
 - 96%-93% - Amber Zone
 - 92% and below - Red Zone
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendees find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attendees find learning more satisfying
- Regular attendees have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences before 10.00am with the reason and saying when the child will return 0151 477 8540
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness
- Providing medical evidence for absences of 5 days or more

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls, home visits and letters on the first day of absence
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, school website, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement
- Publish our attendance rate weekly in the school newsletter.
- Give parents/carers letters relating to the impact of poor attendance/punctuality on their educational progress.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his school report
- Let you know promptly if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance and/or punctuality
- Work hard to develop relationships with pupils and parents to overcome any barriers that may hinder regular attendance and/or punctuality. We will offer Early Help and develop pastoral support plans as needed.
- If we continue to have concerns we will work in a staged approach offering meetings with the head teacher and school governors. If no progress is made or there is lack of engagement the school will make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, who visits the school and pupils homes regularly to review and support attendance matters

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement or religious observance.

We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Shopping for new school clothes
- Unapproved Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8:55am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom, so you need to ensure your child is coming through the school gate by 8:50am

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that if their child arrives late to school then they MUST come to the office and be accompanied by a responsible adult and marked into the late register.

- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents. We may request that children who are late to school give up some of their lunch time to catch up missed work.

- Arrival after the close of registration at 9:25 am may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance. A penalty notice may be appropriate if a pupil persistently arrives at school after the register has closed and has accumulated 14 unauthorised late marks within a period of no more than 10 weeks.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- We expect all children to be picked up from school promptly. If there is an emergency and you cannot collect your child at the correct time please contact the school office before the end of the school day. Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if not collected or the school contacted by school closing time. If a child is left in school at the end of the school day without the school being informed we will inform Children's Services (formally know as Social Services).

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of teaching time pupils miss as a result of absences. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. School is also an essential component of safeguarding children. **There is no entitlement to time off in term time.** Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the head teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governors

It is our policy:

- That only in very extreme, exceptional circumstances will leave of absence be granted.
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence in term time need to fill in an application form well in advance of the date and clearly state the reason for the absence. Please ask the school office for a form; the Schools attendance lead / Head Teacher will consider your request and advise you of his/her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) further time than allowed will be unauthorised and you risk your child being taken off the school roll.

If a Term Time Leave of Absence form is not completed and no contact can be made with the parents/carers regarding the child's whereabouts and/or safety, on the 10th day the pupil will be referred to the Authority as a Missing Pupil (See Children Missing Education).

- If the school does not agree and you take your child out of school, the absence will be unauthorised.

- Before a Penalty Notice is issued school will issue parents/carers a warning letter highlighting the recent/current unauthorised absence and warn of the likelihood of an Education Penalty Notice if the threshold is met.
- A Penalty Notice can be issued in cases of unauthorised absence and in respect of a child who is a registered pupil at our school. Should a notice be unpaid and withdrawn, all those with parental responsibility may be liable for prosecution.
- The issuing of a Penalty Notice may be appropriate when there are at least 14 sessions (7 school days) lost to unauthorised absence in a period of no more than 10 weeks.
- Failure to ask the school for a Leave of absence, prior to a child being off (unless medical proof is shown) may also lead to a Penalty Notice being issued, by the Knowsley School Attendance Service, and this could later lead to prosecution
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A good understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom

Looked after Children and Voluntarily Accommodated Pupils.

- In respect of Looked after Children, the local authority will not make a request for a child/young person to take leave of absence during term time. Where a child or young person is voluntarily accommodated those persons holding Parental Responsibility will be advised of the likelihood of an Education Penalty Notice being issued should a leave of absence be requested.

Excluded Pupils

- Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a legal duty on a parent in relation to excluded pupils. A parent is guilty of an offence under this Act where a child has been excluded from school (fixed term or permanent) and is found in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification within the first 5 days of the exclusion period. In some circumstances it may be necessary for a child to be in a public place during school hours on a school day e.g. pre-arranged medical appointment or emergency. Also a parent may need medical help and it is inappropriate for a child to be left at home if they are unable to make alternative arrangements.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, A new school and start date must be stated, and reasons for moving.
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

Remember: We cannot take your child off our school roll until your child starts in the next school. Both **you** and the next school must inform us of the start date. Failure for you to inform us of a forwarding school will result in your child being classed as missing and we have to inform the local Authority and Police of their missing status.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations under Safeguarding Procedures, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Legal Note

There is a legal duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 for a parent to ensure that their child receives full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude. The offence under section 444 relates to a child who is a registered pupil at our school and fails to attend regularly. In law a parent is guilty of an offence if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at the school that they are registered. Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 Education Act 1996 or Section 36 Children's Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school.

This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Penalty Notice (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

Child Protection Statement

At Park Brow Primary School, we believe that every child has the right to be safe and therefore to be cared for in a way that ensures her/his safety and meets her/his individual needs. We recognise that all children need protection at all times from anything or anyone that may cause them harm and work together following the schools Safeguarding Policy to ensure this. We respect all members of the school's community and treat information with confidentiality. The above attendance policy is served in conjunction with our role to Safeguard All our Pupils.