



Parkfield Community School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our aim at Parkfield Community School is to provide the greatest opportunity for children's learning. We endeavour to provide all our pupils with an equal chance to make the most of the education that school offers, by providing a positive and encouraging atmosphere. For this to be achieved, it is vital that every child attends school regularly and punctually.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. However the school recognises that problems may occasionally occur which affect this. Through working in partnership with parents, we can find solutions to problems together and ensure children's right to a full education.

Aims

At Parkfield Community School we aim to:

- Develop supportive strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Raise pupil, parent and staff awareness of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality;
- Set targets for attendance annually and submit data to the LA;
- Use attendance data to identify/address any trends of individuals or groups;
- Reduce unauthorised absence/leave of absence within a legal framework (Spotlight Campaign and Penalty Notices);
- Reward regular/improved attendance and punctuality;
- Take steps to provide learning for pupils unable to attend school due to serious health issues (and support their return to school).

Procedures for dealing with absences

1. On the first day of absence, parents are expected to call the office and provide a reason for absence. If no contact is made, a phone call is made to children's parents and a record of the outcome is recorded on the SIMS system. Reasons for absence are available for class teacher/leadership reference.
2. If the first day contact phone call has been unsuccessful in establishing a reason for absence, a text message is sent to parents asking them to contact the school immediately with a reason for absence. If there is still no response the attendance office/member of the senior leadership are informed. (Home visit may be made to check well-being of missing children.)
3. If absence continues with no reason, the office sends home (after 3 school days) an absence pro forma letter. This must be completed by parents and returned to school. Failure to return to school within 10 days of absence will result in a letter requesting the expected date of return with consideration of school place.
4. Where a teacher/office staff is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of persistent absence, the child's name and details are referred (in writing) to the attendance coordinator, who will pursue the matter.
5. Pupils with a record of persistent absence (below 85%) will be contacted by the attendance coordinator and unless attendance improves, medical evidence is requested for any further absence. Failure to produce medical evidence will result in an unauthorised attendance.

Personalised Pupil Progress Tracking Sheets

During pupil progress meetings, attendance issues that are impacting on progress are discussed and recorded in the space provided. These concerns are communicated to the attendance coordinator.

What do we define as being late?

If a child arrives at school after 8:45 (when the entrance doors close) the child is considered late and will be given a late mark 'L'. The time registers are 'closed' officially is 9:15am. If a child arrives after this time, they will be given a 'U' (late after register closes) mark.

Procedures for dealing with lateness

1. School doors are closed at 8:45am after this time children are classed as arriving 'late' and must report to the office, where names are recorded and the appropriate code added to the class electronic register on SIMS. Children are expected to 'make-up' lost learning time through lateness.
2. The office sends a letter to parents of children who have arrived late three times. These parents then attend a meeting with the attendance coordinator and a school governor to discuss any issues. Parents failing to attend this meeting will be sent a further appointment. A second meeting is arranged should any of these pupils arrive at school late again.
3. The attendance coordinator monitors punctuality on a regular basis. The impact of letters/meetings is evaluated over time.
4. Persistent lateness will be dealt with by the attendance coordinator and the head teacher in liaison with the education welfare service.

Medical Appointments

Parents are actively discouraged from arranging routine medical appointments during the school day as dentist and GPs' surgeries are open outside of school hours. Parents need to inform the office in advance of any medical appointments and show the appointment letter/card. If children arrive late during the morning due to a medical appointment, the register code 'L' will be used to show they are in school and a note added to their record showing the reason. Should a child miss a whole session due to a medical appointment, this will be recorded as 'M'. An 'M' code, however may only be used for one session in a day. Medical evidence may be requested.

Registration

Registration takes place at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is completed using the electronic SIMS system and is the class teacher's responsibility.

An 'N' is used for absence and the office updates these following first day phone calls.

If a class are on a day trip, the register must be completed for both the morning and afternoon sessions. The afternoon session should not however be completed for those children that are not going on the trip. (A list of all children on trips is left with the office by class teacher.)

Please note that registers must be completed accurately for safety reasons such as in the event of a fire and because they constitute a legal document and form part of a chain of evidence.

A class teacher concerned about the accuracy of their register should contact the office for advice.

On a Friday afternoon the office record the class attendance figures. This is used for the awarding of the weekly KS1 and KS2 attendance certificates and cool cats/trophies.

Class teachers receive a weekly email (sent by attendance coordinator) showing the attendance for their class the previous week. This information is used to update the attendance traffic light displays in each classroom.

Termly certificates (and prizes) are awarded to individual pupils for 100% Attendance. Letters are sent home termly to inform parents of their child's attendance % and how this compares with targets.

Raising Attendance Concerns

Any concerns should be raised in writing/email with the designated member of staff in charge of attendance.

The Attendance File

This is kept by the attendance coordinator and contains information on whole school, class and individual pupils along with analyses of trends over time and across the school. Also records are kept of the outcomes of meetings with parents.

Role of the DLP/Attendance Coordinator

Children are required to attend school 190 days every year. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/person/people with parental responsibility to ensure they do. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored and when it is appropriate for school to take action this will be undertaken and feedback given to class teachers. Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibilities will be prosecuted.

Parkfield Community School participates in the 'Spotlight on Attendance' Campaign in collaboration with EWS to address poor attendance. Persistent unauthorised absence is not tolerated. As part of the Spotlight Campaign parents may be issued with penalty notices and could be requested to appear in court. The attendance coordinator is responsible for gathering evidence/communicating with parents who are part of this campaign and regarding any court proceedings.

Leave of Absence (*no longer referred to as 'family holiday' or 'extended leave'*)

The Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2013 and the Education (Penalty Notices – England) Regulations 2013 are now in force and followed by this school. The law clearly states that parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and that head teachers can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced.

Taking unauthorised leave in term time is therefore grounds for issuing a penalty notice (£60-£120 per parent, per child, eg: two children taking a one week leave of absence to visit family abroad would result in a fine of £240 for the parents, rising to £480 if not paid promptly).

All parents are informed of this when children join the school, reminders are sent out termly and details appear on the school website. This is in line with the policies in all other local schools.

Parents requesting leave during term time are referred to the attendance coordinator, who will explain the procedures in person and the request is then passed in writing to the head teacher. The outcome of the request will clearly state if the leave is authorised or unauthorised and the consequences, this will be posted to parents.

Parents are also warned that penalty notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification.

- All absences from school need to be requested in writing to the Headteacher.
- All families wishing to travel abroad will need to meet the Headteacher or her representative.

- If the pupil is female and from a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practicing or affected community then the Headteacher will use direct questioning to ascertain whether “cutting” of the girl will be undertaken during this holiday. The Headteacher will then take the information from this meeting and make a decision on whether to refer to local CYPS or Police.

Rewards and Incentives

- Certificates and trophies/cool cats are presented in weekly assemblies to the best Foundation, KS1, KS2a and KS2b classes.
- Displays inside/outside hall show attendance figures relative to the rest of the school.
- Staff are provided with a half-termly analysis of attendance/punctuality across the school (prepared by attendance coordinator) and supported in addressing any issues by year leaders/attendance coordinator.
- A display board outside of the lower hall gives pupils and teachers feedback on their punctuality figures for the week/term relative to the rest of the school.
- 100% attendance certificates/prizes are awarded for termly and whole school year full attendance.
- A prize draw is held termly for each phase when a name is drawn from the 100% attenders for a prize of a bike/theme park tickets which are presented at a special assembly.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The systems and policy are monitored and reviewed at least annually.

The attendance and punctuality data is analysed by attendance coordinator weekly.

Findings, patterns and trends are presented on a regular basis (at least termly) to Governors, parents, senior management team, teachers and children.

Factors are recorded that may affect overall school attendance e.g. extended absences, religious festivals, pupil mobility etc.

Pupil records are transferred and received in line with legal requirements.

Reviewed and updated

*Larrissa Gordon
September 2014*

*Next Review Date
September 2015*

Notes:

The term ‘parent’ refers to:

- . Any natural parent to the child/children whether married or not
- . Anyone who has parental responsibility for that child/children
- . Anyone who cares for/has responsibility for looking after that child/children

City Year Mentors

There are a team of mentors working in school as part of the City Year Project, who are attached to each year group and work closely with staff, pupils and parents to support good punctuality/attendance. Mentors liaise with teachers, year group leaders and the attendance coordinator to motivate children and support families as they aim to raise attendance.