



**Park Brow  
Primary School**



Happy - Respect - Pride - Caring - Potential

## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2023/24**

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Attendance Officer:	Elizabeth Casey
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Policy produced with reference to: *DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance*

# **Park Brow Primary School**

## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

### **Introduction**

At Park Brow Primary School, we recognise that regular attendance at school is essential to raising standards and attainment, and to ensure children reach their full potential. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Park Brow Primary School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

*As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.*

- **100%-97% - Green Zone**
- **96%-93% - Amber Zone**
- **92% and below - Red Zone**

Park Brow Primary School believes teachers, parents, carers, pupils and all members of its school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

### **Aims**

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds a consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

## **Promoting regular Attendance**

Attendance is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

To help us all focus on this, Park Brow Primary School will ensure:

- there is a designated senior leader for championing and improving attendance;
- effective strategies are in place to deter poor punctuality;
- an engaging curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly;
- high quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school;
- pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to minimise disaffection from school;
- vulnerable groups are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously;
- effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided;
- parents/carers are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required;
- good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual pupil incentives;
- attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with children in assemblies;
- attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

## **Expectations of Parent/Carer**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

We expect parents to:

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours and confirmation of the appointment is provided.
- Contact school by 9am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the office if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- In case of emergency we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher.
- Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts, well-being days and birthdays.

## **What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning, promoting good routines. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. If child brings home a school diary each evening, please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it ready for the next day. Discuss school reward systems and how they can achieve them. Good attendance/punctuality is a lifelong skill and habit, which will be needed for the rest of their lives. Without those good habits, it may seriously harm their life chances in the world of work, social situations etc.

## **Starfish / Nursery**

Starfish and nursery children start promptly at 8.30am in the morning and finish at 11.30am, please have children at school at 8.30am as they start their activities as soon as they come into nursery. Afternoon children start at 12.30pm and finish at 3.30pm.

## **Reception**

Reception doors open at 8:30am and close at 8:40am in the mornings.

## **What is Expected of School**

School has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils. If a pupil is absent, we will:

- **The start of the school day for Reception up to year 6 pupils is 8.50am** promptly, the class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from 8.50am, the registers will be entered electronically by 9.00am.
- Gates will be open shortly before this time. Gates will be locked before 9am for security reason.
- Any late pupils should enter the school through the main entrance. If any pupil arrives late, the office staff will record details in a late book. The record should show name of the pupil, class and time. The register officially closes at 9.30am any pupil arriving after this time will be marked absent for this session. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence.
- All registers are monitored daily each morning for absences. If your child is absent with no reason recorded, our Attendance Officer will contact families (First Day Response) to ascertain information with regards to the absence.
- At 9.10am a text message will be sent to the parent / carer of all pupils absent, requesting that school be contacted with a reason for absence. If the school is not contacted the Attendance Officer/office staff will phone the parent / carer of any absent pupil between 9.15am and 9.30am.
- If the parent / carer cannot be contacted, school will phone other contacts numbers if no contact can be made and a reason for absence is not provided our

Attendance Officer or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will conduct a home visit to ensure the safety of the child and to find a reason for absence and ensure the safety of the child -the same procedures apply to Starfish and Nursery provision.

- All schools are expected to find out more information about the nature of the absence, potential length of absence and will offer further advice on how to manage your child's return. Please do not get frustrated with staff. All schools are expected to do this.
- If you have reported why your child is absent but they are off school for a number of days school will make a daily welfare call to check on how they are. We may also make a home welfare visit to see how they are.
- Reception take their afternoon register at 12:30pm, 1pm for year 1 & 2, and for KS2 at 1:30pm
- School closes at 3.20pm. The gates will be opened just prior to this time.
- Reasons for absence will be recorded using the Department for Education's attendance codes.

### **Understanding types of attendance**

**The Local Authority deems regular attendance as 95% or above. The Government have amended the measure of persistent absence to 90% and Local Authorities are expected to raise attendance levels to above this rate. Therefore, attendance less than 95% is deemed unsatisfactory.**

Park Brow Primary School must legally record every absence. This is why it is important that parents/carers directly inform school regarding the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

### **Authorised absence**

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness (where the child is too unable to attend school) and medical/dental appointments
- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides medical evidence to support (e.g. evidence of hospital / dentist appointment)

*We encourage parents/carers 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 and attend school prior to / after the appointment.*

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

## **Unauthorised absence**

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence following a parental request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as: birthdays, feeling tired; a duvet or well-being day, parent too unwell to bring them to school
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have not been explained;
- pupils who arrive after the close of registration.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority.

From September 2018 school can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence. If there is further unauthorised absence in the 10-week period, the LA may issue a Penalty Notice.

## **Persistent absence**

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact the office (0151 477 8540) in the first instance. We will be able to talk about a return plan with you which should help and assist.

## **Severe absence**

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education (DfE) This cohort of pupils are a priority group for Park Brow Primary School and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance. It is essential that parents/carers work in partnership with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

## **Why regular attendance?**

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

**90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

### **The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance, encouraging good communications between home and school. The Education Welfare Officer will:

- Review attendance with school and investigate any pupils identified as cause for concern.
- Work with the school to analyse the attendance of any child below 95%, if under the persistent absence level of 90% appropriate action will be taken.
- Write to the parents of any pupil identified as having attendance problems, parents of the pupil will be invited to attend an *Attendance Improvement* meeting to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any issues preventing the pupil from attending, agreeing to a monitoring period of half a term or longer.
- Conducting home visits during pupil absence to explore reasons and gain clarity on behalf of the school
- The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family. However, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists (as under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act of 1996) the EWO will be required to consider escalation to the instigation of legal proceedings which include Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices (after 10 unauthorised days), Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders.

Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the local authority.

### **Legal Sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. 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:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason Prosecution may occur if the payment has not been made after 28 days.



**School is unable to grant permission for parents to take their child on holiday during term time. If children are absent from school due to holidays their absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence. It is likely that you will be issued a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking your child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.**

### **Leave of absence in term time**

**The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.** Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can regularly miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

### **How we manage lateness**

- School starts at 8.50am. The school day starts and registers are taken by 9am by the class teacher. Pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time.
- If a pupil arrives late to school parents/carers will receive a text message/telephone call to inform them of their child's late arrival.
- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice. The close of registration for Park Brow Primary School is 9.30am.
- Regular lateness before the close of registration will require a meeting with our Attendance officer to explore and resolve any issues you may be experiencing, if this persists, a staged approach will be adopted to include the headteacher and school governors.

If a parent/carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the office who will offer support to resolve the problem.

### **Removal from roll**

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

### **As a school we are now required to:**

Inform the LA in every circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school. School must complete an Exit form and submit to the [cme@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:cme@knowsley.gov.uk)



- provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school
- If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:
- provide the school/attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing;
- if a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

### **Vulnerable Children**

Children who are Looked After (CLA), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Officer. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home. Any outside professionals who are also working with the children and family will also be notified of the absence. Children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible.

### **Reluctant attenders/School Refusal**

You should do everything possible to encourage your child to attend. However, if the reason for their reluctance appears to be school-based, such as difficulty with work, or bullying, please discuss this with the school at the earliest opportunity and the school will do everything possible to resolve. Colluding with your child's reluctance to attend is likely to make the matter worse. **The school has a clear zero tolerance with respect to Bullying or similar behaviour** (See School's anti bullying policies and procedures)

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The Attendance Officer is the attendance lead and is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school

- The attendance lead monitors absence daily to identify children at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. They compare the attendance of different cohorts within the school.
- All staff are aware of children in their class who have been / are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee.
- When a child's attendance drops below 92% a letter is sent to parents to make them aware their child's attendance is dropping and is a concern.
- The EWO works with the attendance lead to view attendance within school and investigate any pupils identified as cause for concern.

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
- 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 attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### **Analysing Attendance**

- The school will:
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and 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

### **Using Data to Improve Attendance**

- The school will:
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### **People responsible for attendance matters at Park Brow Primary School**

The school cannot work in isolation. The partnership of school, parents and the Local Authority is fundamental, with all involved accepting responsibility and working together to improve attendance for the benefit of the pupils and the community.

Prompt action on non-attendance and accurate and consistent registration are important areas of child protection.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents, pupils and relevant support agencies to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times. Early identification of needs and support required can prevent concerns escalating.

### **A statement of commitment from the Board of Governors**

This Attendance Policy is approved and endorsed by the BoG. All staff, pupils and their parents are made aware of the policy.

Every Inclusion Governors meeting will include the topic of attendance and our school governors take an active interest in this area of the school's life.

The headteacher oversees this area of the school's life and reviews details on a weekly basis and takes proactive action.

The headteacher is committed to ensuring that the resources required with respect to supporting attendance are always provided.

The Head teacher and Board of Governors are committed to ensuring that monitoring is carried out with respect to attendance and achievement. This information will be used as necessary to inform and change policies, procedures and practice.

### **Legal Note**

*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.*

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.

Appendices – *working towards best practice* - (Example guidance for strategies used in schools)

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupils	Arrive on school site for the start of the school day at 8.50am
	Class Teacher	Registers are completed by 9am and ready to be collected and returned to the office Ensure attendance has a high profile in class Use Dojo reward system to promote good attendance Discuss absence with pupils returning to school
	Office Staff	Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via SIMS Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (from 9am) Log on SIMS, parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is recorded in the late file and entered on to SIMS Text messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence. First day response phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned. SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems. Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff. Daily Attendance information sent to DSL for attendance.
	Pastoral Staff	Work with targeted pupils Support SLT with home visits when no contact has been made / pupils have been off for a length of time
	EWO	Home visits / safeguarding home visits as required. Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families. Phone call contact with pupils/parent/carers Instigation of legal proceedings Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to DSL for attendance.

	SLT / Designated Senior Leader	<p>Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with safeguarding requirements.</p> <p>Home visits when no contact has been made / pupils have been off for a length of time</p> <p>Liaison with EWO, Pastoral staff and Curriculum Leaders regarding support work with identified pupils.</p> <p>Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively.</p>
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When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	Class teacher	<p>Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance</p> <p>Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by contacting parent/carers where appropriate.</p> <p>Use Dojo reward system to promote good attendance</p>
	Office Staff	<p>Informing SLT of pupil patterns of absence.</p> <p>Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for DSL for attendance, class teachers and pupil rewards</p> <p>Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parent/carers</p>
	Designated Senior Leader	<p>Liaison with EWO, pastoral staff and class teachers regarding support work with identified pupils</p> <p>Ensure all staff know their class % attendance for the previous week</p> <p>Inform class teachers of SA / PA in their class</p> <p>Inform class teachers of 'margin children' to be a focus the following week (88-90%, 90-92%)</p> <p>Send letters to 'margin' pupils 90-92% to make aware of PA</p> <p>Determine priority actions for the following week</p> <p>Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement</p>

When	Whom	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	Designated Senior Leader	<p>Use attendance data to identify and act to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils</p> <p>Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy</p> <p>Determine priority actions for the next half term</p> <p>Monitor and track attendance SA / PA</p> <p>Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern</p> <p>Half termly attendance report for governors</p>

TERMLY	Designated Senior Leader	<p>Ensure the importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off site provision</p> <p>School Attendance Review alongside the EWO</p> <p>Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance</p> <p>Report to HT / governors on attendance</p> <p>Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents' evenings (Nursery to Y6)</p>
	Head-teacher	<p>Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors</p>