



Parkside Primary School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed October 2024

Aims

Parkside Primary School aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting excellent attendance
- Reducing non-attendance, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Early intervention to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also strongly promote good punctuality.

We are concerned about any child missing education, not only in the way it impacts on the individual's potential achievement but also in relation to their safety and welfare. All children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational need. We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

Children who are absent or persistently late, can soon fall behind with their learning. They frequently develop large gaps in their learning which impacts on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281212/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281212/school_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures.pdf). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part-6)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26/part-3)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/59/part-7)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/2682/2010/2011/2013/2016/amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1911)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This Attendance Policy is part of a broader suite of Safeguarding policies including the Schools Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

School Procedures

What are the roles and responsibilities?

Parkside Primary School

Parkside Primary School is responsible for:

- maintaining accurate registers of pupil attendance;
- ensuring all pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time;
- encouraging, supporting and rewarding high standards of attendance and punctuality throughout the school;
- referring poor attendance to the Local Authority through the Behaviour, Attendance & Children Missing Education Service (BACME) Team and investigating any unexplained absences;
- working in partnership with parents/carers and their children to resolve issues which may lead to lateness or non-attendance;
- celebrating the positive attendance/punctuality of the children within classrooms and during assemblies.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos;
- making sure school leaders fulfill 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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- implementing this policy at Parkside;
- monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The Designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- leading attendance across the school;
- offering a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;
- having an oversight of data analysis;
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- arranging calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues;
- delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and their families.

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is **Amanda Warriner** and can be contacted via 0208 559 4278 or amanda.warriner@parkside.waltham.sch.uk

The Attendance Administrator

The school Attendance Administrator is responsible for:

- liaising with the designated senior leader who is responsible for attendance;
- monitoring and analysing attendance data (half termly, termly, yearly and at an individual child level);
- identifying whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern;
- analysing historical and emerging patterns of attendance/absence then working with senior leaders to develop strategies to address these patterns;
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher;
- working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence;
- providing relevant attendance data for the children to class teachers to allow them to facilitate discussions with parent/carers.
- advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices;
- acknowledging positive attendance/punctuality instances across the school;
- reporting any concerns as per our Safeguarding Procedures.

The Attendance Administrator is **Carly Tuttle** and can be contacted via 0208 559 4278 or carly.tuttle@parkside.waltham.sch.uk

The School Office staff

School office staff are responsible for:

- informing the Attendance Administrator about calls taken from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis;
- transferring any calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Administrator if she is on site;
- report any concerns as per our Safeguarding Procedures.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office;
- informing the attendance administrator if they have information about a child's attendance;
- making attendance a positive part of their classroom ethos by celebrating children's successes;
- reporting any concerns as per our Safeguarding Procedures.

Class teachers will be provided with relevant attendance data for the children in their class so they can facilitate discussions with parent/carers.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends Parkside every day on time;
- call the school to report their child's absence before 9.20am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return or alternatively email absence@parkside.waltham.sch.uk;
- provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child;
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to share with the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

Where parents/carers inform our school that they wish to 'home educate' their child, our school will inform the BACME Team, who will implement the "Elective Home Education" procedure.

The Registration Process

- School starts at 8.45am for KS2 and 8.50am for Reception/KS1 each morning
- Children should line up in their designated place when the bell sounds and the class teacher will take them into their classroom.
- The class register will be taken and left open for 5 minutes for any delayed arrivals.
- Children who are late for school need to arrive at the main reception. Their accompanying adult will be asked to sign them in using the InVentry system (older children will do this process themselves). A reason for being late will need to be provided (the Attendance Administrator will monitor this).
- The registers are taken again after the lunchtime break.

The Attendance Register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register and all pupils must be placed on this register.

We use electronic registering in school with SIMs. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent

- Attending a medical appointment
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

(Other codes are available to use based on individual circumstances - speak with the Attendance Administrator).

When the register has been taken on SIMs and **saved** then the class teacher will record the number of children present in the classroom on the whiteboard as well as recording daily absences on the class Fire Register.

If the school has to evacuate the building under any circumstances (for instance with a fire alarm), the Fire Register enables staff to account for all the children present on that day. Class teachers need to take the Fire Register with them when leaving the classroom to teach a lesson e.g. PE, Cooking or Computing etc..

Absence from School

All absences must be explained by a parent/carer. A letter from home explaining an absence will not necessarily mean the absence will be authorised by the school. If a child is absent from school through sickness for a period of 3 consecutive days or more, medical evidence must be produced to support the absence immediately upon their return. Failure to produce this evidence will result in the child's absence being coded as unauthorised and parents will be informed of this.

Examples of evidence that will be acceptable:

- A doctor's appointment card
- A dentist's appointment card
- A hospital admission letter
- A hospital discharge letter
- Medication prescribed – please bring into school the prescription or empty packets/bottles which can then be photocopied or send a photograph via email to absence@parkside.waltham.sch.uk.

Behaviour, Attendance & Children Missing Education Service (BACME)

In Waltham Forest, the Behaviour, Attendance & Children Missing Education Service (BACME) leads on the area of attendance and of monitoring Children Missing from Education.

They work to ensure that educational opportunities for all children in the borough, who are of statutory school age, are maximised by means of regular school attendance and by supporting schools operationally when receiving individual referrals.

They are responsible for;

- Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices on behalf of the Local Authority;
- Issuing Notification of Parental Responsibility (NPR) - An NPR is a legal document that notifies parents and carers of their legal obligations with regards to regular school attendance.
- Providing a chairperson for School Attendance Panel Meetings (SAPs);
- Presenting cases to court for prosecution in relation to poor school attendance.

Authorised Absences

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for one of the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical appointments
- Days of Religious Observance – up to a maximum of 3 days per academic year.
- Interviews or entrance exams for secondary school.
- Exceptional circumstances – up to a maximum of 3 days as authorised by the Headteacher

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

During the School Day

- The school expects that all appointments, other than emergency ones, are booked outside of school hours.
- Children leaving or returning to school must be signed in or out using the InVentry system in the Main Office.
- Early collections from school will not be authorised other than for an emergency or medical appointment. A letter or appointment card must be presented at the Main Office in order for the school to be able to authorise the absence.
- Notice must be given in advance if a child needs to attend an appointment, interview or educational activity at another venue.

If a child is returning from an appointment in time for a school meal, the office must be advised before 10am that day.

Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health - before 9.30 or as soon as practically possible.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school and we have not had any communication from anyone.

On the first day of a pupil's absence, the parents are contacted to find out the reason why. If we have not had contact with the family by the third day of absence, we will make a home visit, leaving correspondence if they are not home, asking them to contact the school. The school may contact Social Care or the Police if we cannot make contact with the family or we are concerned there may be a safeguarding

issue. If any pupil does not return after 5 days, the process of reporting them as a child missing education will begin resulting in the school informing BACME.

Lateness and punctuality

- A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L code).
- A pupil who arrives after the register has closed at 9.20am will be marked as present, using the appropriate code (U code). This code will affect their attendance percentage. Persistent U codes will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.

Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Persistent Absenteeism/Lateness

The parent/carer of a child who is persistently absent, or persistently late, after the registers have closed, can be prosecuted under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act. The following steps will be taken in this instance:

- Parents/carers of pupils whose attendance falls below 95% will be informed by letter.
- If the attendance does not improve the parent/carer may be invited in to school to discuss any concerns with Amanda Warriner (The Designated Senior Leader).
- The school may refer to the home-school agreement with the parent/carers to support families who have patterns of poor attendance
- If there is still no improvement the parent/carer will be invited in to meet with Lisa Cousins, the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers may be offered an action plan to include allocation of additional attendance support, individual incentive programmes and may be asked to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting about their case
- Parents may be given a Notification of Parental Responsibility (NPR) which is a legal document that notifies parents and carers of their legal obligations with regards to regular school attendance

Fixed Penalty Notices

Schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The school will make a request to BACME to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents who take their child out of school without permission and also where a child fails to return to school by the stipulated date after an authorised absence.

Fixed term penalties of £160 per parent per child is imposed but is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to meet the payment within 28 days could result in the matter being referred to the Magistrates court in accordance with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period.

Additional fines can be issued for being persistently late (which would be a U code - after the register had closed).

Taking children off the School Roll

Parents/carers have a legal requirement to ensure their child is in full time education. If parents fail to send their children to school or fail to notify the school of any extended absence, the school will refer to BACME which may result in your child being removed from the school roll.

Strategies for Promoting High Standards of Attendance/Punctuality

As a school, we place a high regard on promoting excellent attendance of the children. Some of the initiatives we use are:

- pupils are constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance during class time and during assemblies;
- we endeavour to motivate the child to have excellent attendance;
- stickers will be awarded at the end of each week to children who have attended school every day;
- The school will award termly certificates to all individual pupils whose attendance is 100%.
- A weekly attendance trophy is awarded in Celebration assembly for the class with the highest attendance of the week (if above 95%). Names of class winners are published on the website

The Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Parkside Primary School will implement the most up-to-date DfE attendance policies and guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Walking to and Home from School Alone and Collecting Children from School Policy
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy & Report

Policy reviewed: October 2024

Policy ratified by Governing body:

Review date: October 2026

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)