

PARK WOOD SCHOOLS FEDERATION



Attendance Policy

Reviewed: September 2017

Next Review: September 2020

Aims

As a School we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a **minimum** of 96%, with an aim of meeting our yearly attendance target, set by Medway Local Authority, Government expectation.
- 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 Junior/Secondary school

Parents can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of absence (if possible by 9.30am) stating the reason why they are not attending school and their expected return date
- 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
- Encouraging punctuality and a strong emphasis on the importance of attendance
- Arranging dental and medical appointments out of school hours or during school breaks

The School will:

- If a phone call or letter has not been received at the office on the first day of absence the school will carry out first day calling, followed by a letter home as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school brochure and the Home-School Agreement
- Publish our attendance rate in letters, on the website and the Governing Body's Annual Report
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance, with schemes such as the Attendance trophy (awarded in Monday's assembly) and the 100% attendance certificates
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters
- Send letters home to parents explaining the consequences of poor attendance and the possible repercussions, which the school will uphold if necessary
- Analyse and acknowledge patterns of attendance amongst all our pupils and groups of pupils as part of robust self-evaluation

Authorised Absence

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

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there may 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 haircut
- Going on a family day out because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory
- When another family member is unwell
- Falling attendance could result in medical evidence being requested to authorise all future absences

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

Please see Appendix 1 for Infants

Please see Appendix 2 for Juniors

Term Time Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006:

Amendments to 2006 regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Parents must inform the school if they intend to take their child out of school. Any child taking holiday in term time will be recorded as being unauthorised, this will then be passed to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner for consideration of whether a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. If a PN is issued then parents must, from the 1st September 2013 pay £60 per parent, per child within 21 days, or £120 per parent per child within 28 days. ***These regulations have been set by the Department of Education (Government) and not the school***

We are aware that there may be **exceptional circumstances** when children need to be away from school. Parents need to put this in writing to the Headteacher and each request is reviewed fully on its individual merits.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). 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 AASSA 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.

Appendix 1 – Infants

- Morning registration is at 9am*
- This is the time children must be in the school building and ready for class. Children can enter the building from 8.50am onwards.
- 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 school work for the rest of the day.
- If children miss the short but vital session at the start of the day, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for the child.
- All children arriving after 9am must be signed in at the school office and will receive a late mark.
- Registration closes at 9.30am - Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the Dfe guidance.
- The school will let parents know if there are concerns about a child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected when they have expected to be collected at the end of school time will be kept at the school office, where the Office Manager or Senior Member of Staff will supervise. A phone call to the primary contact will be made, if there is no answer each next contact will be called until collection of the child has been arranged.

If no one can be contacted before the school closes then Children's Services will be called on 01634 334466.

* In exceptional circumstances this may be amended in agreement with the Headteacher

Appendix 2 – Juniors

- Morning registration is at 8.50am*
- This is the time children must be in the school building and ready for class. Children can enter the building from 8.40am onwards.
- 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 school work for the rest of the day.
- If children miss the short but vital session at the start of the day, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for the child.
- All children arriving after 8.50am must be signed in at the school office and will receive a late mark.
- Registration closes at 9.20am - Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the Dfe guidance.
- The school will let parents know if there are concerns about a child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected, when they have expected to be collected 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.

*In exceptional circumstances this may be amended in agreement with the Headteacher