

Learning is fun at

# Park Hill Infants' School



All different, All equal, All achieving

## Attendance Policy

November 2021

Review Date: November 2024

Version	Date	Actions
V1	January 2017	Original document
V2	June 2019	Reviewed
	July 2019	Approved at FGB on 9 July 2019
V3	September 2021	Amended Registration Times and Late Letter criteria Amended legal phrasing relating to Penalty Notices under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 Removal of the term 'fixed penalty notice', replaced by 'penalty notice.'
		Approved at Progress and Attainment Committee on 15 November 2021

By law, parents are required to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly. Absence should only occur when a child is unfit to learn or has a day of religious observance.

Children's life chances are enhanced by regular attendance at school and the school will support parents and carers in achieving excellent attendance in order to maximise educational opportunities for their children. The school will communicate the minimum expected attendance level for every pupil for the academic year at the beginning of the academic year and reminders will be sent throughout. Where a child is placed on school roll in-year, this information will be communicated to parents and carers upon their admission to the school.

There are clear links between poor attendance and poor attainment. An analysis by the DCSF in 2005/6 found that over 90% of pupils with fewer than 7.5 days' absence gained at least five A\*-C grades at GCSE compared with only 31% of pupils whose absence was over 20 days.

### Our Expectations

#### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day;
- be picked up from school punctually;

#### **We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- notify the school if their child is going to be late due to an unforeseen circumstance (i.e. car breaking down, urgent appointment)
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is unable to attend school;
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school;
- provide at least two up to date contact numbers and inform the school of any changes of address;
- provide supporting medical documentation if the absence is for 3 days or more. This can be produced in the form of an appointment card, prescription or letter;
- provide a note, letter or appointment card indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.

#### **We expect that school staff will:**

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, twice daily;
- monitor every pupil's attendance;

- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- follow up all unexplained absences;
- encourage good attendance;
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children; provide a safe learning environment; provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns;
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance;
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare.

### Encouraging Attendance

The school encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment;
- by responding promptly to a child or parent/carer concern about the school or other pupils;
- by taking time to discuss issues which may be impacting on attendance and helping parents/carers to overcome obstacles;
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics;
- by celebrating excellent and improved attendance;
- by monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance and holding meetings with them and finally referring the family to Education Welfare Service (EWS) if the irregular attendance continues.

### Arrival and registration

<b>Morning Registration – Reception &amp; KS1 (All classes)</b>	
<b>09:00am – 09:10am</b>	Gates are opened, children arrive to class
<b>09:10am</b>	Gates are closed, AM register is opened and called
<b>09:15am</b>	Children arriving after this time are marked with an 'L' code. A reason for lateness should be entered into SIMS if received.
<b>09:25am</b>	AM register is closed. Children arriving after this time are marked with an 'U' code (unauthorised.)* A reason for lateness should be entered into SIMS if received.
<b>Afternoon Registration</b>	
<b>Reception (Class 1, 2 &amp; 3)</b>	
<b>13:15pm</b>	PM Register is opened and called
<b>13:30pm</b>	PM Register is closed. Children arriving after this time are marked with an 'U' code (unauthorised.)* A reason for lateness should be entered into SIMS if received.
<b>KS1 (Class 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 &amp; 9)</b>	
<b>13:30pm</b>	PM Register is opened and called
<b>13:45pm</b>	PM Register is closed. Children arriving after this time are marked with an 'U' code (unauthorised.)* A reason for lateness should be entered into SIMS if received.

- A school day counts as 2 attendance marks.
- It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside of the registration times are signed in or out from the school office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of fire as an appendix to class registers.
- Registers are checked regularly by the Education Welfare Officer to ensure they are kept accurately by teachers and to assess the reasons and incidence of any absences.

### Illness and medical appointments:

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If there is no alternative it is essential that a medical appointment card/letter is brought to the school office. All children returning to school

must be signed in at the school office.

- The school office **must** be informed by 9.30am on the day of a child's absence through illness. Parents should contact the office on 020 8680 0747, option 1. In the event that the parent is unable to speak with a member of the office team, a message should be left on the school's answering machine, clearly stating their child's full name, class and the specific nature of the illness along with an estimated date of return to school.

### Leave of Absence during Term Time

Leave of absence during school time is **not a right** and can only be taken with the permission of the Head Teacher. The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we therefore do not see any reason for parents/carers to take their child/ren out of school during term time. All applications must be received at the school not less than 3 weeks before the intended period of leave.

- The Headteacher on behalf of the Governing Body will only authorise leave in exceptional or emergency circumstances and days must be kept to a minimum.
- Requests for occasional days will not be authorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. Birthday treats/day trips with family are not considered exceptional and will not be authorised.

**Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority may issue Penalty Notices to parents of children with unauthorised absences from school. The fines are issued to each parent, for each child, and are: £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.**

### Responding to Non-Attendance

Pupils whose attendance falls to 90% or lower are classed by the Department for Education (DfE) as 'persistent absentees'. Such pupils are likely to be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will, in the first instance, work with the family to attempt to remove the obstacles causing the non-attendance. We encourage all parents to engage with the Education Welfare Officer. Where attendance fails to improve and absence cannot be justified in law, the consequence may be the issuance of Penalty Notices in accordance with the Local Authority's penalty notice protocol. In addition, the school will support the EWS in prosecutions brought under Section 444 Education Act 1996, or in applications in the Family Proceedings Court for Education Supervision Orders.

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.30 a.m. the school will contact them that day.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and emergency contacts for the child. If by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers or invite them into school to discuss the child's absence. The school will advise parents that if the absence persists that a referral will be made to EWS. We will always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child's social worker within one day.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWS may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

*The school register opens at 9.10 am, when students are expected to be present, and closes at 9.25am. If a student arrives after the close of the register, they are given an attendance mark for health and safety reasons, but are regarded in law as being absent. If a child persistently attends school after the close of the register consideration will be given to (a) the issue of a Penalty Notice under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority may issue Penalty Notices to parents of children with unauthorised absences from school. The fines are issued to each parent, for each child, and are: £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.*

or (b) a referral to our EWS for a prosecution. Lateness not only affects the learning of the student in question, but also affects the learning of others.

Persistent lateness after the register has been taken by the class teacher but before the register is closed at 9.25am, is equally concerning. The school will monitor lateness closely and send a letter of concern to parents /carers if this exceeds 5 days in any half term. Further persistent lateness will result in parents being invited into school to discuss the matter and this may result in a referral to EWS.

### **Changing schools**

It is important that, if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school, they inform the Headteacher as soon as possible in writing. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address, if it is known.

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and/or Children Missing from Education Officer at Croydon Council as appropriate.

### **School Organisation**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

#### **Head Teacher, Governors and staff:**

- Put into practice the school attendance policy;
- make sure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- ensure that procedures are carried out to contact parents/carers on the first day of a child's absence;
- provide key staff with time-tabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with EW and appropriate access to attendance data;
- consult with parents/carers and children in order to improve attendance at school;
- liaise closely with EWS on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay;
- work in close collaboration with EWS during their termly/half termly register analysis;
- set whole school attendance targets;
- monitor and evaluate attendance with EWS.

#### **Office Staff:**

- to oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually;
- to liaise with EWS regularly;
- to complete first day of absence calls
- to send out letters to persistent late comers.

#### **Class teachers:**

- to complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily;

- to pass all correspondence regarding attendance, to the Headteacher and school office immediately;
- to inform the Headteacher of concerns;
- to be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

We will ask parents and carers to come into school to discuss any circumstances which may impact on their child's attendance. We commit to supporting families in order that children have maximum opportunity to achieve in the school system. Children whose attendance falls under 80% are missing on average one day's schooling each week and this seriously damages their life chances.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_