



Parkside Community Primary School

Head teacher: Charles Soyka

Chair of Governors: Miranda Barnett

Attendance Policy

Last reviewed: October 2018

Date of next review: October 2021

Signed:

Date: October 2018

Attendance Policy

Approval by Governors: October 2018

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Parkside Community Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils via our school website.

The Aims of Parkside School Attendance Policy

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy also applies to Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

Procedures

Parkside School will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration procedures.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- To have consistent and comprehensive daily records which give details of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents/carers to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality.
- To refer to the County Attendance Improvement Team any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance. Looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for absence offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Informing the Headteacher where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Discussing attendance issues at parents evening where necessary.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Making referrals to the County Attendance Improvement Team.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's AIO.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

Administration staff

Staff in the school office are responsible for:

- Collating and recording attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Ensuring the late book/off site book is completed.
- Contacting parents/carers of absent children where no contact has been made.
- To support the Class teacher in keeping an overview of class and individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for absence offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance.

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment which could not be arranged outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school office by 9am on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be authorised the school will require an appointment card/letter/email/text.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Registration

All the school doors open at 8.45am until 8.55am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. The attendance register must be completed by 8.55am and 1pm.

Lateness

Once the doors are closed at 8.55am the only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way from 8.55am will be marked as late.

Any child who arrives for school later than 9.30am without good reason will be marked as unauthorised late for the morning session.

Children who have a medical appointment and subsequently arrive at school later than 9.30am will be marked authorised absent for the morning session providing an appointment letter/card is shown to office staff on arrival.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness, parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

Absence

Parkside School understands there may be occasions where a child is unable to attend school. The following procedures should be followed for unplanned and planned absences:

Unplanned Absences

Parents/Carers should contact the school by 9am on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents/carers with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised and in certain circumstances may request additional information or evidence to authorise an absence.

Situations which will require additional information/evidence include:

- Absences which last for longer than 3 consecutive days (this includes weekends and holidays)
- Repetitive sibling absences where multiple members of the family are absent together.
- Family emergencies which prevent attendance at school.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence, a letter will be issued requesting these details from the parent/carers. If no reply is received by the specified date then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Planned Absences

Medical appointments

Routine doctor and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. Where this is unavoidable, parents/carers should inform the school office and class teacher in advance and provide the school office with a copy of the appointment letter/card. Children should still attend school before/after the appointment time where possible to reduce the amount of school time missed. Authorised absence due to a medical appointment does not extend to siblings who are expected to attend school as normal. Any sibling absence due to a medical appointment will be recorded as unauthorised.

Exceptional Circumstances

For all other types of planned absence an absence request form must be completed in advance. You can obtain a form from the school office or download it from the school website. Absence requests will be reviewed by the Headteacher and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Parkside School does not authorise term time holidays.

Monitoring Attendance

Parkside school expects attendance of at least 95% and office staff regularly monitor this. Any child whose attendance falls below this threshold will initially be sent a letter of concern. If attendance does not improve, a meeting will be arranged between parents/carers and the Headteacher. This meeting will be an opportunity to discuss attendance concerns and to initiate an improvement plan.

Should attendance continue to decline a referral will be made to the County Attendance Improvement Officer.

Penalty Notices

At Parkside School we expect parents/carers to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has more than 15 sessions (7.5 days) unauthorised absence over two terms (including unauthorised holidays) the Headteacher may ask the LEA to issue a Penalty Notice in accordance with current regulations. If the penalty is not paid within 28 days the LEA will prosecute the parents/carers for their child's irregular attendance.

Publication of Information

Parents, pupils, staff and governors are informed of whole school attendance issues and statistics on a regular basis via the weekly newsletter and notice boards in school. Individual attendance information is shared with parents, pupils and staff and this information is included in the Child's End of Year report.

