



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved	/ /
To be reviewed	/ /
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Signed (Proprietor)	

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Priory Park Community School (PPCS) understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and that we all have a role in keeping children safe. Regular and consistent communication is made between parents/carers and school to convey clear messages on the effects of poor attendance on attainment and well-being.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). This policy also meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#).

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](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Senior Leader

The Senior Leader Tim Hucknall is responsible for:

- Being the designated Senior Leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school
- To meet with the Attendance Officers on a regular basis to monitor the school attendance of all students.

He can be contacted at office@prioryparkschool.co.uk

3.4 The Attendance Officers

The Attendance Officers Natalie Kirby and Sarah Dixon are responsible for:

- Complete first day contact calls, texts and emails
- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and Senior Leaders
- Tackles attendance issues and persistent absentees through various actions including but not limited to letters, home visits, meeting with parents and professionals.
- Keeps detailed records of all communication
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Set high expectation for the attendance and punctuality of all students and communicate these regularly to students and parents through all available channels
- Recognise children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues
- Work with outside agencies, professionals, and families to treat the root cause of absence and remove any barriers to attendance.
- To work as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead as PPCS recognises that Attendance is Safeguarding. They will record significant attendance concerns and actions on CPOMs.
- To implement the Working Together to Improve School Attendance as a matter of daily practice.

3.5 Class Teacher / Form Tutors / Non-Teaching Staff

The Class Teacher / Form Tutor / Non-Teaching Staff are responsible for:

- Know and understand the importance of good attendance and consistently promote this in their communication with students and parents.

3.6 School administrator

The School administrator is responsible for:

- School administrator is expected to take calls from parents about absence and record all communication on the Integris system.

3.7 Parent/Carer Responsibilities

The Parent/Carer is responsible for:

- Parents/Carers must telephone PPCS on the first day of absence and subsequent days thereafter
- If an absence is longer than two days or parents have received an Attendance Concern Letter medical evidence must be provided to authorise absence due to illness.
- Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours, whenever possible. If this is not possible, the absence will only be authorised when the appointment card / letter is shown. The student should return to school immediately after the appointment, unless advised otherwise by a medical professional.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at 12pm for the second session.

Priory Park Community School starts at 9am and finishes at 2pm.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 3.7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as an unauthorised, using the appropriate code

4.4 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phone call / text / email
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Complete home visits when deemed necessary
- Inform ant relevant professionals

4.5 Reporting to parents

- Parents/carers will receive a termly report which includes attendance figures.
- Parents/carers will receive a termly email which will include their young persons Attendance Summary, our Attendance Promise and our School Attendance – its Everyone's Responsibility
- Parents/carers will receive weekly emails to celebrate Attendance and Punctuality – these includes Gold/Silver/Bronze Award, 100% for the Year, 100% for the Term and Parent of the Week
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend a Termly Celebration Afternoon where Attendance and Punctuality will be celebrated

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as bereavement, urgent travel.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

5.2 Term Time Holidays

Please be aware that since the change of regulations Sept 2013, the law regarding term-time student absences has changed. The new regulations state that "headteachers may

not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are "exceptional circumstances". Therefore, any requests for term-time holidays will not be authorised and any such absences will be referred to the Dudley Local Authority. If unauthorised leave during term time is taken, PPCS will consider issuing a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child that is taken out of school. Standard information provided with each penalty notice states that a £60 fine is payable within 21 days of the Notice being issued, rising to £120 if paid between the 21st and 28th day. If neither of these sums is paid within these periods, the Local Authority may consider a prosecution for an offence contrary to Sec. 444(1) Education Act 1996.

5.3 Reducing persistent absence

PPCS will target unauthorised absences with meetings, letters, home visits, information sharing with relevant professionals and referrals to the Dudley Local Authority if appropriate.

5.4 Dudley Education Support Service legal action

When securing parental compliance with the law cannot be achieved, ESS may take legal action in relation to attendance and exclusion matters by:

- Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence from school, of £120 or £60 dependant on payment date o Non-payment could result in a fine of up to £1,000 or; o Prosecution in a Magistrates' Court where parent may be fined up to £1,000 under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, or;
- Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised general absence from school, of £120 or £60 dependant on payment date o Non-payment could result in a fine of up to £1,000 or; o Prosecution in a Magistrates' Court where parent may be fined up to £1,000 under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, or;
- Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice where a child is identified in a public place whilst excluded, of £120 or £60 dependant on payment date o Non-payment could result in a fine of up to £1,000 or; o Prosecution in a Magistrates' Court where parent may be fined up to £1000 under s103 Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Prosecution in a Magistrates' Court under s444 (1) Education Act 1996 o Conviction may result in a parent being fined up to £1,000; or
- Prosecution in a Magistrates' Court under s444 (1A) (aggravated offence) Education Act 1996 o Conviction may result in a parent being fined up to £2,500 and/or being sentenced to a maximum of three months custody

Cases under s444 (1) are currently run via a system known as Single Justice Procedure (SJP). The parent is notified by post of DMBCs intention to prosecute in the form of a 'Charge Pack'. They receive copies of the witness statements and other documentary evidence and are required to submit a plea by return post. If they plead guilty, they are not required to attend court and will receive notification of their sentence at a later date. If they plead not guilty, a trial date will be set.

Prosecutions can be escalated to the aggravated offence under s444 (1A) when a parent has been prosecuted previously or there are other aggravating factors. In these cases, the

parent will receive a summons to attend court. If a parent fails to attend court, a warrant is issued for their arrest.

Parents will be invited to attend an interview under caution if ESS is considering a prosecution under s444 (1A) only. Failure to attend interview will not halt legal proceedings.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Rewards for punctuality and attendance will be awarded on a weekly, termly and yearly basis.

PPCS will praise and reward consistently good and improved attendance and punctuality.

The Attendance Officers, together with the Leadership Team, are continually seeking new and innovative ways of improving, maintaining, and celebrating good attendance. The team regularly updates staff on attendance issues and ensures that students are fully informed on all procedures and consequences of non-attendance at school.

7. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officers at PPCS monitors student absence on a daily basis.

If a student's absent, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-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.

8. Suspensions

- Suspension and Permanent exclusion will be used sparingly and kept for the most serious of unacceptable behaviour
- Suspension and Permanent exclusion (which shuts students out from learning) is a serious punishment and must be used only after due consideration and consultation
- Suspension and Permanent exclusion must be based on a careful consideration thorough investigation of objective evidence, clearly documented
- Suspension and Permanent exclusion must be considered and non-retributive
- Suspension and Permanent exclusion should not be reactive
- A fair hearing will be given to all parties (right of appeal will be notified in writing where appropriate)

- Students will not lose the opportunity to take public exams at the discretion of the Governing Body. Only the Headteacher has the power to exclude a student from school. This would include someone designated as the acting Headteacher in the absence of the Headteacher
- The Headteacher cannot routinely, or on an ad hoc basis, delegate the power to exclude to another teacher.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Contact Details

Priory Park Community School, Meadow Road, Dudley, DY1 3JY

- Tim Hucknall, Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance. 01384 813640.
- Natalie Kirby, Attendance Officer. 01384 813640.
- Sarah Dixon, Attendance Officer. 01384 813640.
- Eileen Churchill, Administrator. 01384 813640.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school

D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations

T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day