ATTENDANCE POLICY

Person responsible for policy:	Emma Shaw
Date approved:	March 2025
Review date:	March 2026

Contextual Information

Park Lane School caters for pupils aged 5-19 that have severe and complex disabilities. Some of the pupils have additional difficulties including visual and hearing impairment, Autism, physical, behavioural and medical needs. The school forms part of the Special Educational Needs provision for the East of Cheshire and takes pupils from Wilmslow, Knutsford, Poynton and Congleton.

Rationale

Park Lane School believes that good attendance is vital for all our pupils if they are to achieve their full potential through the education provided, and therefore encourages parents, staff, head teacher and Governors to work together to ensure good attendance in order to make sure that every child gains the maximum opportunity to benefit from an education that meets their needs.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of the policy are:
- To outline the importance Park Lane School places on good attendance.
- To clearly outline the roles of parents, staff and Governors in ensuring good attendance.
- To outline procedures should the attendance of any child give cause for concern.

Registration

The school day starts at 8.50 am. The registers will remain open until 9.30 am. This is to support pupils who are travelling to school on Local Authority transport from areas outside of Macclesfield and who may be delayed. Some parents must transport children to more than 1 school and this may result in a child arriving in Park Lane after 8.50 am. The registers are retaken at 1.30 pm for afternoon sessions. Registers are taken twice daily.

Absence

If a child is absent due to illness, please ring school before 8.50 am. The phone number is 01625 801964. You can also use School Spider to notify school of your child's absence.

If you are unable to ring to report your child's illness, please email either:
admin@parklane.cheshire.sch.uk or
head@parklane.cheshire.sch.uk

If parents wish to take their child out of school for a specific reason, for example a family celebration or religious event, please put your request in writing to the Head Teacher to request the time off for their child.

Term Time Holidays

From September 2013 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 remove any reference to the right of Head Teachers to grant pupils leave for family holidays or extended leave during term time. Therefore, from 1st September 2013 the following was put in place for pupils aged 5 and over.

Parents no longer have an entitlement to take their child out of school on holiday during term time except in exceptional circumstances which may include:
- Recovery from surgery or a long-term illness.
- Family event which involves travelling.
- The specific requirements related to their son/daughter's disabilities, for example, the availability of suitable accommodation.
- Holidays funded through a charity with stipulated holiday dates.
- If you have a son/daughter at a different school who has different holiday dates.
- Fixed periods of parental leave which are during term time and which cannot be changed.
- Religious grounds.
- Travelling to see close family who live in other countries, for example a parent and/or Grandparent.
- Other exceptional circumstances will be considered individually by the Head Teacher.

Please be aware that failure to request leave in term time will result in a child's absence being unauthorised. In compliance with the amendments the Local Authority will be monitoring pupil absences across its schools.

Pupils with Health Needs that prevent them from attending School

A very small number of children may be unable to attend school on a full-time basis due to their significant and complex health needs including mental health difficulties. In these circumstances the school offers:

- Bespoke timetables where pupils come into school for specific lessons or to use specific equipment which they will benefit from for short periods of time during a week.
- Reduced timetables that may involve reducing the number of hours or days the pupil will attend school. This is agreed by discussion with parents and health professionals. Review dates are set and clear plans are created.
- Outreach support in the home when the pupil is well enough to participate in lessons but is unable to travel to school.

Some pupils are accompanied in school by staff from the Complex Care Team and are based with the child in class who support the pupil's medical and health needs. They will also travel with the pupil on local authority transport where this is provided. If this health care support is not available, the child cannot come into school.
Role of Head Teacher and Senior Leaders

Attendance Officer: Emma Shaw

The Head Teacher clearly demonstrates a commitment to good attendance by:

- Regular monitoring of pupil attendance through regularly reviewing attendance registers, which are maintained by the office staff on Arbor who note reasons given for pupil absence when notified by parents and carers.
- Liaising with office staff regarding unexplained pupil absence. Office staff will contact parents or carers by 10.30 am regarding an unexplained pupil absence. Failure to contact a parent or carer will be passed on to the Senior Leader who is on duty that day to follow up on the pupil's absence using phone, email and school text service. Senior Leaders can also contact the school of siblings, if appropriate, to see if they are in school. If there is no contact with the parents, then the senior leader should ring CHECS for further advice.
- Following up any concerns regarding a pupil's attendance through discussion either by phone call or, if deemed necessary, in person by inviting the parent into school.
- Being available to parents who wish to discuss matters concerning attendance.
- Personally, responding to letters from parents requesting that their child is given authorised absence from school to go on holiday in order to demonstrate their awareness of pupil's attendance and how seriously taking pupils out of school on holiday during term time is viewed by the school.
- Seeking advice and guidance from the designated Local Authority Attendance Officer.
- Being supported in this role by the Senior Leadership Team who should all provide good role models for attendance to both pupils and staff.
- Informing designated social workers if any pupil is on a Child in Need plan, Child Protection Plan, or a Looked After Child, if their attendance is causing concern.
- Preparing, updating and publishing statistical data regarding attendance from class registers. Attendance data is benchmarked against national and local averages, used to identify persistent/severe absence, and shared with governors and LA in Targeting Support Meetings.
- Sharing the policy with parents at the start of each academic year and reviewing with pupil and parent input where appropriate.

Role of Class Teachers

- To build good relationships with pupils and their parents to promote good attendance and be able to use their knowledge of family circumstances to raise concerns about a pupil's attendance in a supportive and sensitive way.
- To maintain support for families where a pupil is absent due to a long-term illness.
- To make arrangements in preparation for a pupil returning from a long-term absence.
- To bring concerns about a pupil's attendance to the Head Teacher or Senior Leadership Team immediately.
- To inform the school office staff of an unexplained absence so that this can be followed by them in the first instance.
- To provide good role models for attendance.

Role of School Support Staff

- To support class teachers in ensuring good attendance.
- To provide good role models for attendance.
- To bring concerns about a pupil's attendance to the attention of the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, in the class teacher's absence.

Role of Governors

- To support staff in the development of a whole school approach to promoting good attendance.
- To delegate responsibility for authorising absence to the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team on their behalf.
- To be kept informed of long-term pupil absence due to ill health or other reasons through the termly governors' reports.
- To be kept informed of pupil attendance through the termly governors' reports.

Role of Office Staff

Attendance Admin Support: Barbara Willis

- To maintain the Admissions Register / Arbor.
- Passing information regarding pupil absence to the class staff in an agreed and consistent way.
- To send out standard letters about a pupil's absence as requested by the Head Teacher.
- Make changes in the register due to lateness or illness as directed by school procedures.
- To complete Arbor, recording the time a pupil has arrived and the reason for their lateness.

Role of Parents

- To avoid taking their child out of school during term time except in exceptional circumstances.
- To put any requests for holidays in writing before the holiday commences.
- Ensure their child attends school daily as far as possible.
- Notify school on a child's first day of absence.
- To attend any meetings and respond to any correspondence regarding concerns about their child's attendance.
- Try to ensure their child is in school before or after a medical appointment unless they are attending a hospital that is some distance from their home.

Role of Drivers and Escorts

- To ensure pupils arrive at school promptly.
- To ensure they inform the Senior Leader on duty of any absences reported to them.
- To report to the office when they arrive late.
- Report to the school any breakdowns or delays as soon as possible.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually. Copies of this policy are available in the Office and on the website.

This policy meets the requirements of Working together to improve school attendance. (DFE).

Relevant Legislation and Guidance Documents

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 School Attendance.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. August 2024.
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance. August 2024.

Code changes - August 2024

The following codes have been added:

C1 - Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2 - Pupils on part-time timetables
Q - Pupils unable to attend school due to lack of access arrangements
Y1 - Unable to attend - Absence due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2 - Unable to attend - Widespread disruption to travel
Y3 - Unable to attend - Part of school closed
Y4 - Unable to attend - Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures)
Y5 - Unable to attend - Pupils in the criminal justice system
Y6 - Unable to attend - Absence due to public health guidance or law
Y7 - Unable to attend - Any other unavoidable cause
K - Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
J1 - Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution

The following codes have been removed from use:

H - Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
J - Approved education activity as the pupil is attending an interview
Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Attendance codes currently in use

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.

The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		

D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.