

# Attendance Policy



Preston Grange Primary School

Issue Date: March 2019

Last reviewed: March 2019

Next review due: March 2024

# **Preston Grange Primary School**

## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

Preston Grange is a happy, welcoming and caring school; we try hard to create an exciting and challenging place for your child to learn, where they can make the most of their talents and abilities.

We encourage parents and carers to be fully involved in their children's learning and in the life of the school, helping your child attend regularly; on time and ready to learn is a very important part of this.

This attendance policy sets out to answer your questions about attendance and shows how we can work together to ensure school attendance is excellent.

### **Background to the policy:**

This policy has due regard to the following legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2016) College Attendance Advice
- Working together to improve school attendance: Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2023)
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (2023)

All staff will ensure they adhere to and implement the requirements of any equality legislation.

### **Definitions**

Preston Grange Primary School defines "absence" as

- Not attending school for any reason.

Preston Grange Primary School defines an "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Preston Grange Primary School defines an "unauthorised absence" as:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Preston Grange Primary School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 per cent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.
- This policy applies to: Staff, Students and Parents and Carers

### **Statement of the policy**

Preston Grange Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.
- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory college age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.

Links to other policies and additions to the policy: Children Missing From Education (Local Authority Policy), Suspension and Exclusion Policy, Mental Health Policy

### **MAIN POLICY**

#### **Key roles and responsibilities**

The governing body has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Preston Grange Primary School.

The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s Complaints Procedures Policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Preston Grange Primary School.

All staff will be responsible for following the attendance policy, and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

All staff will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.

Designated members of staff must take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session.

The school will ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

- Are being educated from home.
- No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
- Have an authorised medical note.
- Have been permanently excluded.
- If a student is missing for 10 days and their whereabouts is unknown, then the Children missing from education policy provided by the LA will be used

Preston Grange Primary School will inform the LA of any pupil who falls below the threshold for persistent absence (90%) with unauthorised absence.

Absence will be unauthorised if no reason is provided by parents or carers or if medical evidence has been requested and has not provided.

Parent/carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.

Parent/carers will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure that pupils attend school every day.

The HLTA for Mental Health and Wellbeing is in close contact with families around attendance to identify any developing issues in order to provide support (e.g. Mental Health Connect Team referral, EHA)

**Parents and carers will be expected to:**

Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address.

Notify the school, in person or by telephone, when their child is unable to attend, with a reason for absence, on the first day of the absence **and every day that your child is off school.**

Provide a letter/confirmation indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician etc. before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.

Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.

Inform school if their child is going to be late.

Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child/children.

Inform school if children are experiencing anxiety around attending school.

## **Absence procedures**

### **How to inform us that your child is absent**

- Parent/carers are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence. How to tell us if your child is going to be off school:
- Telephone the school office on 0191 300 91 90 before 8:55am and speak to a member of staff; you must give a reason why your child is not able to attend school and tell us when you think they will be back.
- We expect that you phone the school office every day that your child is off school.

\*\* If you are unsure if you should keep your child of school or if it's ok to send them back to school, check the following NHS document for advice:

[www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/)

A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter on the register.

When children fall below the school target of 96.6% the attendance lead writes to parents and monitors the attendance closely. School uses the letters provided by the LA.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and therefore become PA, we will not authorise any absences unless medical evidence is provided. This will trigger a series of letters and close monitoring of absence until attendance is improved. This may lead to a meeting between parents and the school attendance lead. The LA Attendance Lead may also attend these meetings.

If pupil attendance drops below 90% with unauthorised absence, the local authority attendance and placement team will be informed and legal proceedings will begin. This includes Penalty Notice Warnings, Fines, and Education Orders and can lead to court cases.

### **If we don't hear from a parent/guardian**

This is known as 'First Day Response'; to ensure the safety of the child, if we don't hear from you before 8:55am, school will call to find out where they are; it's **VERY IMPORTANT** that school is kept up to date with telephone numbers for emergency contacts. If we can't get hold of anyone to check the child is safe and well, we may visit the registered home address or in extreme cases inform the police.

## **4. Attendance register**

4.1. Staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether the pupil is:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Preston Grange Primary School will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

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

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		

<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry and the staff code of who has amended.

Every entry into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.



## **Lateness**

We believe that every minute in school is very important, at Preston Grange learning starts immediately as soon as the children enter school at 8:55am. Children arriving late will miss this important learning.

- Children arriving late in school are often anxious about what they have missed and this may lead to them not wanting to come to school.
- The school day starts at 8:55am prompt and we need your child to be in class by then; arriving after this will result in a late mark.
- School closes the register at 9.00am. If your child arrives after this, they will be marked as having an unauthorised absence; a Penalty Notice fine can be given if your child is late regularly.

***\*\*If getting your child to school on time is a struggle, please tell us. We are here to listen and help\*\****

## **Term-time Holiday**

At Preston Grange Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.

If parents intend to take a holiday they are asked to complete a Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form (Appendix 1), this form is available from the school office.

Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example bereavement or serious illness.

Taking a pupil out of school for a term time holiday will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will be subject to a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine issued by the Local Authority of £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent per child if paid after this date but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you.

## **Religious observances**

Preston Grange Primary School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.

Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

The day(s) of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

## **Appointments**

Parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school.

Pupils should attend school before and/or after the appointment in order to minimise the impact on attendance.

### **Rewarding good attendance**

Preston Grange Primary School acknowledges good attendance in the following ways:

- School mascot for best class attendance each week
- Certificates and badges for above school target
- Certificates & stickers for improved attendance
- Other rewards such as non-uniform days, film afternoons

### **Monitoring and Review**

Preston Grange Primary School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises, by Mrs Spowart, the Headteacher and governors.

This policy came into effect in: May 2019

Review date: March 2024



## Preston Grange Primary School

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME – REQUEST FORM

#### Important information for Parents

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed, which may ultimately affect exam and test results.

Parents are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure their child attends school regularly. There is no automatic right to take a child out of school during term time but the law allows Head teachers to consider individual requests to authorise a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

The Head teacher must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances justify an authorised absence and it is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information and evidence in order to establish this fact.

The request for an authorised leave of absence must be made in advance and the Head teacher may invite the parent into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.

If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the Head teacher, the expectation is that child's attendance will be of a satisfactory level both prior to and after the date covered by the request.

If the request for a leave of absence is refused and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Head teacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued against you.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if the notice is paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies.

Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child.

<b>Name of pupil</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Year group</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Contact Numbers</b>	
<b>I request permission for my child to be absent from school between: -</b>	
<b>First Day of Absence</b>	
<b>Date of Return</b>	
<b>Total School Days</b>	
Please fully explain the <b>exceptional circumstances</b> that you would like the Head teacher to consider (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).	

Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances that you would like the Head teacher to consider (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

**Declaration (Please read the notes on the front of this form)**

I have read and understood the information about leave of absence during term time, unauthorised absence, and Penalty Notices. I am aware of the possible consequences should my child take a leave of absence without the prior authorisation of the Head teacher

Signature (Parent/Carer) ..... Date.....

***You will be notified in writing of the outcome of your request.***

**For office use only:**

Current Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Previous year's attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of authorised days: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of unauthorised days \_\_\_\_\_

Referral to attendance officer required: YES / NO

Headteacher signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_