Park Academy West London
an Aspirations Academy

Attendance Policy

2026-2027

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1. Statement of Intent

Park Academy West London believes that good attendance is essential to pupils' achievement, wellbeing and wider development. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not attend school regularly.

We recognise that barriers to attendance can be complex and that some pupils find attending school more difficult than others. We therefore combine high expectations with early identification, appropriate support and strong relationships with pupils and families.

Attendance is a whole-school responsibility. Our approach recognises the contribution of high-quality teaching, behaviour and safeguarding, SEND and pastoral support, positive relationships with families, and effective use of resources such as pupil premium.

The academy is committed to:

- promoting high attendance and punctuality and communicating their importance clearly;
- ensuring equity and fairness for all pupils;
- identifying emerging attendance concerns and intervening early;
- working with pupils, families and external agencies to understand and address barriers;
- ensuring parents understand their legal responsibility for their child's education;
- monitoring attendance carefully to identify individual pupils, groups and patterns requiring intervention; and
- maintaining a safe, supportive environment in which pupils are able to attend and succeed.

The academy's Senior Attendance Champion is Mr McNab and the Attendance Officer is Ms Bunce. Attendance enquiries should be directed to attendanceteam@park-aspirations.org.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996;
- Equality Act 2010;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- DfE, *Working together to improve school attendance*;
- DfE, *Children missing education*;
- DfE, *Keeping children safe in education*;
- DfE guidance on providing remote education;
- DfE guidance on sharing daily pupil attendance data.

This policy should be read alongside the academy's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Children Missing Education Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- SEMH Policy;
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy;
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy; and
- Complaints Procedures Policy.

3. Definitions

Absence includes not attending school when required or arriving after the register has closed.

Authorised absence is an absence which the academy has authorised, including qualifying illness, unavoidable medical or dental appointments, agreed religious observance and other authorised leave.

Unauthorised absence includes unexplained or unnecessary absence, truancy, unauthorised term-time holidays, leaving school without permission and arrival after registration has closed.

Persistent absence (PA) means missing 10% or more of possible school sessions for any reason.

Missing education refers to a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Regional Board

The Regional Board has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and holding leaders to account for attendance. It will ensure that attendance is prioritised appropriately, staff receive suitable training, and the academy fulfils its safeguarding and statutory responsibilities.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the policy, ensuring parents understand the academy's expectations and appointing a member of SLT as Senior Attendance Champion.

Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer

They are responsible for:

- leading the academy's strategic approach to attendance;
- developing and implementing approaches to improve attendance;
- monitoring attendance and evaluating the impact of interventions;
- analysing data to identify pupils and groups requiring support;
- communicating with pupils and families;
- following up persistent and severe absence; and
- fulfilling relevant reporting responsibilities to the local authority.

Staff

All staff are responsible for supporting good attendance, applying this policy consistently and escalating attendance or welfare concerns appropriately. Staff responsible for registration must complete registers accurately and promptly.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually, providing accurate contact information and notifying the academy promptly of changes to their circumstances or reasons for absence.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day, arrive punctually and attend all lessons and agreed activities.

5. Attendance and punctuality expectations

The academy expects pupils to attend every day that school is open to them, for the full school day, and to attend every timetabled lesson punctually.

The school day begins at **8:30am**. Pupils should be on site by **8:25am** and ready to learn at 8:30am.

Break 1: 11:00am–11:30am
Break 2: 1:30pm–2:00pm

Pupils must return promptly and be ready to learn following each break.

The morning register will be marked by **8:55am** and close at **9:30am**. Pupils arriving after 8:55am but before the register closes will receive a late mark. Arrival after 9:30am will be recorded as an absence for the morning session.

The afternoon register will be taken in accordance with the academy timetable. Lesson attendance will also be recorded and monitored to identify internal truancy or patterns of missed learning.

Pupils should raise any barriers affecting their attendance or punctuality with an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible.

6. Reporting and responding to absence

Parents must contact the academy before **9:00am on the first day of absence**, giving the reason for absence and, where possible, its anticipated duration.

Where a pupil is absent without notification, the academy will contact the parent as soon as practicable on the first day of absence.

All absence will be followed up to:

- establish the reason;
- identify any safeguarding concerns;
- determine whether the absence is authorised; and
- ensure the correct attendance code is recorded.

Where a pupil is absent for more than three consecutive school days, or for more than 10 school days in a term, parents will be expected to provide formal evidence relating to the absence. This will be considered as part of an Attendance Contract Meeting where appropriate.

The academy will request evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent, including illness. Acceptable evidence for illness will normally require documentation from a medical professional.

The academy uses the following thresholds to support early intervention:

Below 96%: parents will be offered an opportunity to discuss attendance with the pastoral or attendance team.

Below 93%: a support meeting will be arranged with parents and the attendance team.

Below 90%: the pupil is persistently absent and a formal Attendance Contract Meeting will be arranged.

The academy will fulfil all statutory requirements to notify the local authority of pupils who fail to attend regularly or have accumulated relevant unauthorised absence.

7. Attendance register

The academy uses Arbor to maintain its admission and attendance registers.

Attendance will be formally recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. National attendance codes will be used in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance.

Registers will record whether a pupil is:

- present;
- absent;
- attending an approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances.

Pupils receiving remote education while absent from school will continue to be recorded as absent using the appropriate attendance code.

Any amendment to an attendance register will retain the original entry and record the amendment, reason, date and person responsible.

The academy will share daily attendance data with the DfE through its management information system and retain attendance records for the statutory period.

8. Leave of absence

Parents must request leave of absence in advance. Decisions to grant leave rest with the Principal and will take account of the individual circumstances, the pupil's attendance and the impact upon their education.

The academy will only grant leave during term time in exceptional circumstances. Requests should normally be made in writing using the academy's leave request form at least four weeks in advance.

The academy is unlikely to grant leave:

- for family holidays;
- during the first month of the academic year;
- during the first or final week of a half term;
- during Year 7 while a pupil is settling into the academy;
- immediately before or during assessment periods;
- where there is existing unauthorised absence; or

- where authorised absence is already above 10%.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered individually.

Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively. Unapproved term-time absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in legal intervention.

Medical and dental appointments

Appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents should notify the academy in advance and provide appropriate evidence. Pupils should miss only the time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and regulated activities

Where absence is required for a regulated performance or activity, appropriate licensing and authorisation must be secured. The academy will work with the local authority and family to ensure statutory requirements are met and disruption to education is minimised.

Interviews

Leave will normally be granted where requested in advance for a pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

Study leave

Study leave may be granted for public examinations where agreed in advance. It will be used sparingly and will not be granted automatically when examination teaching has concluded. School-based revision provision will remain available.

Part-time timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, a temporary part-time timetable may be agreed. The expected days and times of attendance will be established in advance.

Religious observance

Parents should request absence for religious observance in advance. Absence may be authorised for days exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body.

Travelling for occupational purposes

Where a pupil travels because of a parent's trade or business, the academy will satisfy itself that the reason is genuine and work with the family to support continuity of education.

9. SEND and health-related absence

The academy recognises that pupils with SEND, disabilities and physical or mental health needs may experience additional barriers to attendance.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate and in accordance with pupils' individual needs, EHC plans and other relevant plans. The academy will work with families and external agencies to identify and address barriers.

Where non-attendance may be connected to mental health, the academy will work with the pupil and family to identify appropriate support. Any associated safeguarding concern will be referred immediately to the DSL.

Where a pupil is likely to be unable to attend school for more than 15 school days because of health needs, the academy will inform and work with the local authority, provide relevant information about the pupil's needs and education, and support reintegration when the pupil is able to return.

Support may include, according to individual need:

- pastoral support and regular review;
- reasonable adjustments;
- specialist support;
- phased returns;
- temporary adjustments to the school day;
- appropriate safe spaces;
- targeted individual or small-group provision; and
- other personalised approaches designed to support successful reintegration.

10. Exceptional circumstances

National attendance codes will be used where pupils are unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances, including:

- lack of access arrangements;
- unavailable school transport;
- widespread disruption to travel;
- partial or complete closure of the academy;
- criminal justice detention;
- public health requirements; or
- another unavoidable cause which prevents attendance.

The academy will determine and record the appropriate national code in accordance with statutory guidance.

11. Truancy

Truancy includes unauthorised absence from all or part of the school day.

All staff are responsible for identifying and responding to concerns about truancy. Pupils may not leave the academy during the school day without permission and must follow the academy's signing-out procedures when authorised to leave.

Where truancy is suspected, the academy will establish the circumstances, contact parents and take appropriate action.

Repeated truancy may result in formal attendance intervention and, where appropriate, referral for legal intervention in accordance with this policy and relevant statutory requirements.

Where a pupil is believed to be missing from the academy during the school day, the matter will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the academy's safeguarding and missing-pupil procedures.

12. Attendance intervention

The Senior Attendance Champion, supported by the Attendance Officer, Family Liaison Officer and SLT, will ensure that appropriate interventions are used to identify and address barriers to attendance.

This will include:

- early communication with pupils and parents;
- weekly review of attendance;
- letters and meetings at identified thresholds;
- attendance clinics;
- support from relevant academy teams and external agencies;
- attendance contracts where appropriate; and
- legal intervention where support and engagement have not secured sufficient improvement.

Attendance data will be used to identify emerging patterns and determine appropriate support for individual pupils and groups.

The academy will also promote good attendance through rewards, including attendance events, certificates, badges and STREAKS monitoring with cumulative rewards.

School trips and events are considered a privilege. Where attendance falls below 96%, participation may be withdrawn. Individual circumstances, including health needs and other circumstances resulting in unavoidable absence, will be considered to ensure pupils are not unfairly disadvantaged.

13. Working with parents

The academy will seek to develop strong, respectful relationships with pupils and families and communicate attendance expectations clearly.

Parents will be regularly informed about their child's attendance, absence and punctuality and reminded of their legal responsibility to secure regular attendance.

Where concerns emerge, the academy will work with the pupil and family to understand the specific barriers involved and identify appropriate support.

Where barriers relate to school, relevant leaders will work to address them. Where barriers arise outside school, the academy will work with appropriate external agencies and encourage families to access available support.

The academy will seek more than one emergency contact for every pupil wherever possible.

14. Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is persistently absent when they miss **10% or more** of possible school sessions.

The academy recognises that some groups may face greater barriers to attendance, including:

- children in need and looked-after children;
- young carers;
- disadvantaged pupils;
- pupils with EAL;
- pupils with SEND; and
- pupils who have experienced bullying or discrimination.

Support for pupils at risk of persistent absence may include:

- meetings with pupils and parents;
- identification of specific barriers;
- targeted support plans;
- regular reviews and check-ins;
- home visits;
- additional learning or reintegration support;
- assessment of unmet SEND, health or pastoral needs; and
- involvement of external agencies.

Particular attention will be given to severe absence, where a pupil misses 50% or more of possible sessions. The academy will work with the local authority and relevant partners to secure coordinated support for these pupils.

Where absence is associated with increased risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed. Persistent or severe absence may itself contribute to safeguarding concerns and will be escalated where appropriate.

15. Legal intervention

The academy will prioritise support and engagement to improve attendance. Where these approaches do not result in sufficient improvement, formal intervention may be necessary.

This may include:

- formal meetings with parents;
- attendance or parenting contracts;
- involvement of the local authority;
- engagement with children's social care where safeguarding concerns exist;
- a Notice to Improve;
- penalty notices;
- Education Supervision Orders; or
- prosecution.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the academy will consider whether a penalty notice or another intervention is appropriate.

Penalty notices will be issued in accordance with national requirements and the local authority's Code of Conduct.

A first penalty notice for unauthorised absence is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. National limits apply to repeat penalty notices, after which alternative legal action may be considered.

Where attendance does not improve following intervention, the academy will work with the local authority to consider further legal action, including prosecution where appropriate.

Education Supervision Orders may be considered where previous intervention has been unsuccessful and formal support is required as an alternative to prosecution.

16. Monitoring and analysis

Attendance data will be monitored weekly to identify emerging concerns and ensure timely intervention.

Analysis will consider:

- whole-school attendance;
- individual year groups;
- examination cohorts;
- individual pupils;
- disadvantaged pupils;
- pupils with SEND;
- looked-after children;
- other relevant demographic groups;
- pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence;
- punctuality;
- authorised and unauthorised absence;
- internal truancy;
- attendance codes and patterns; and
- trends by day, subject or other relevant factors.

The Attendance Officer will analyse data at appropriate intervals and report findings to relevant staff and leaders.

The Regional Board will review attendance data and trends, providing support and challenge to academy leaders.

Performance will be benchmarked against relevant local and national information, and effective practice will be shared across the trust.

17. Staff training

Attendance forms part of staff induction and ongoing professional development.

Training will ensure staff understand:

- the importance of regular attendance;
- common barriers to attendance;
- their responsibilities for registration and attendance;
- academy procedures for identifying and responding to absence;
- approaches to supporting pupils and families;
- relevant legal responsibilities; and
- the relationship between absence and safeguarding.

Staff with specialist attendance responsibilities will receive appropriate additional training, including the analysis of attendance data and approaches to overcoming barriers.

18. Admission register

The academy will only remove a pupil's name from the admission register where a statutory ground for deletion under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies.

Pupils will never be removed for any other reason, and the academy will not engage in off-rolling.

Required returns will be made to the local authority, including relevant information about the pupil, parents, future address or school where applicable, and the statutory reason for deletion.

Names will not be deleted retrospectively. Attendance will continue to be recorded until the pupil is lawfully removed from the admission register.

19. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the academic year.

The academy's attendance target is 96%.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal in accordance with the academy's policy review cycle and amended sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or academy arrangements require it.

Any substantive changes will be communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1: Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Attendance will be reviewed weekly using a RAG-rated report showing weekly and cumulative attendance.

Academic Mentors will review attendance with pupils each week, identify pupils requiring support and contact parents where appropriate. Significant concerns or patterns will be escalated to the Year Team Lead.

Parents will be contacted on the first day of unexplained absence.

Second-day unexplained absence codes will be provided to relevant pastoral staff for follow-up. Where a reason remains unidentified after appropriate enquiries, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Pupils will complete a Return from Absence Form following absence.

The academy will use the following escalation:

Attendance below 96%
Parents will receive notification that attendance has fallen below the academy target and will be offered an opportunity to meet the Attendance Team.

Attendance below 93%
Parents will receive further notification and a support meeting will be arranged with the Attendance Team or relevant pastoral leader.

Attendance below 90%
The pupil is persistently absent. Parents will be invited to an Attendance Contract Meeting to identify barriers, agree provision and establish targets. Progress will be reviewed over an agreed period.

Home visits may be undertaken where attendance is a concern, absence is prolonged, communication has not been established or other circumstances make this appropriate.

Where families require additional support, the academy may involve the local authority or other relevant agencies.

Where agreed targets are met, improvement will be recognised and monitoring will continue until attendance is secure.

Where targets are not met, the academy may issue a Notice to Improve and undertake a further review. Continued unauthorised absence may result in referral to the local authority for legal intervention.

Appendix 2: Attendance Agreement

By enrolling their child at Park Academy West London, parents agree to support the academy's attendance expectations and procedures as set out within this policy.