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ATTENDANCE

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Autumn Term 2021 v4

Our Vision

For the children of Park View to become positive, responsible, caring and successful citizens well equipped to overcome the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Our Aim

To enable the children to fulfill our vision by providing inspirational education in a nurturing environment where all can achieve their goals and show genuine respect for themselves and for others.

Our Values

- Friendship
- Ambition
- Respect

The Park View Code

We are proud of our school and always do our best to:

- treat each other with kindness and respect
- learn and let others learn
- care for our school and everything in it
- keep ourselves and others safe
- tell the truth and take responsibility for our actions

**For the purpose of this booklet, parent also means any legal carer.*

At Park View we want all our children to have excellent attendance.

As *parents it is **your legal responsibility** to make sure that your child attends school regularly. You can be fined or taken to court for breaking this law. This applies to children who are of 'Compulsory School Age'. If you have a child in our nursery class and their attendance is low, he/she may lose the nursery place (as outlined in the nursery place offer letter).

The school has a legal duty too and must follow the law when it comes to managing the attendance of its pupils.

This booklet explains how parents can make sure that their children attend school regularly and how the school policy on attendance works.

Children have the **right** to an education and parents (as Duty Bearers) must **allow them this right**.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child Article 28 states that 'every child has the right to an education.'

Reporting a Child's Absence

If your child is going to be absent from school due to illness, please contact the school from 8.30am onwards to speak to a member of staff. We expect that parents themselves will be the ones phoning school, not other family members. If you do not contact us and your child does not arrive at school, this is a safeguarding concern.

Authorised Absence

Parents cannot authorise an absence, only school staff can do this. If your child is too ill to come to school, school staff can authorise this absence. School staff may ask for medical evidence, for example an appointment card from the doctor or a photograph of prescription medicine on your child's return.

Absences for hospital/dental appointments that **cannot** be made outside school hours can be authorised by school staff. School staff will always ask for proof of such appointments and will also ask to see doctor's appointment cards/prescriptions if a child is off school with an illness for a period of time.

It is expected that you will make routine medical and dental appointments for children **outside of school hours.**

Religious Observance and Exceptional Circumstances

If parents wish their children to be absent from school due to a religious observance or an **exceptional** circumstance, they must write to the headteacher (**before** the date of absence) to request the absence. The headteacher will write back to let the parent know if the absence is **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence cannot be authorised if the parent cannot provide a **satisfactory explanation** or **genuine proof** of the reason for the child's absence.

Examples of unsatisfactory reasons for absence include:

- a pupil's/family member's birthday
- shopping for uniforms
- having hair cut
- closure of a sibling's school for teacher training (or other) reasons
- could not get them up/they refused to come in
- illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- *family holidays
- tired after family holiday/other siblings awake in the night
- head lice

Term time holidays are **not allowed and cannot be authorised. Legislation put in place in September 2013 prevents headteachers authorising term time holidays. Park View operates within this law. Manchester City Council issue fines to both parents with parental responsibility if children are taken on holidays in term time. Even if a child has 100% attendance, the school cannot authorise holidays in term time.*

How does the school support parents?

The Attendance Team (made up of admin staff and safeguarding leaders and the headteacher), monitors the attendance and punctuality of all children and alerts and supports parents when their child's attendance falls below 96%.

A formal register check is completed approximately every 4 weeks and children's attendance is grouped into bands depending on their attendance percentage. If a child's attendance has fallen below 96% a letter will be sent to parents (see table below). Children with attendance 90% or below are classed by the government as 'persistent absentees' and this is a cause for concern.

GOLD	100%	excellent
GREEN	96% - 99%	good & expected
AMBER	90% - 95%	concern
RED	below 90% (persistent absentee)	critical concern

It is the Attendance Team's job to inform parents when their child's attendance has dropped below the school's target and to help the parents to get their child's attendance back on track. If attendance begins to slip below the 96% there is an increased risk that the child's progress will be affected.

If a child's persistent absence is due to ill health the school can refer the child to the school nurse who will then undertake a full health assessment. The school nurse may also contact the child's GP, which could result in referrals to other health professionals.

How does the school reward good attendance?

The classes with the highest attendance receive the attendance trophy for the following week and has special access to a play area at break time.

After our 4 weekly register check, parents will receive an email or smartphone message to congratulate their child if attendance is above the school's target of 96%.

There is a weekly raffle with prizes for one child in each Key Stage with 100% the previous week.

There is also a larger raffle with prize for one child in each Key Stage with 100% attendance the previous half term.

Individual children receive certificates and a bronze, silver or gold badge each term for 100% attendance.

Those children who achieve 100% attendance for a full year are taken on a free school trip (for example to the cinema) as a reward.

What happens if my child's attendance drops below the school's target?

Approximately every 4 weeks the Attendance Team does an in-depth register check to monitor the attendance of each child. Parents of children whose attendance drops below 96% will receive a letter to let them know their child's attendance percentage.

If a child's attendance is between 90% and just below 96% parents will receive a letter to alert parents and raise a concern. Depending on individual circumstances, at this stage parents may also be invited into school for a meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for overseeing attendance.

If a child's attendance is 90% or drops below 90% this is a cause for concern.

Parents will receive a letter inviting them in for a meeting where an attendance case will be opened. An Attendance Improvement Plan will be put in place. Next steps may include a Parenting Contract and/or, an Early Help offer or referral to other agencies to request support for the parents and child.

When a case is open but parents do not attend meetings, school must refer the case to the Manchester City Council where a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) will be issued. Court proceedings may follow if a parent fails to pay the penalty or if the child's attendance does not improve significantly.

School will always support parents who are trying to improve their child's attendance but have a duty to follow the legal procedures set out by the government.

Parents must remember that they are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and that this is required by law.

What if my child is in amber or red band and is ill?

Whilst we appreciate that children do get ill, unless the illness is serious, on most occasions that child can come to school if

he/she is given some 'over the counter' medication before setting off. School will not authorize sickness absence for those on the red or amber categories without medical evidence.

For a child with persistent illness, school expects that parents will already have medical treatment in place. If not, the school will make a referral to the school nurse for a health assessment.

