



Park Spring Primary ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by:	Park Spring Primary Headteacher	Date: November 2023
Last reviewed on:	November 2023	
Next review due by:	November 2024	

This policy is the intellectual property of Leeds City Council.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Contact List – September 2023.....	3
3. Policy Statement.....	4
3.1 The Implications of Absence from School.....	4
4. Aims.....	4
4.1 The School Aims.....	5
4.2 Responsibilities.....	5
5. Legislation and guidance	5
6. Partnership Expectations	5
7. Roles and responsibilities	6
7.1 The Governing Body	6
7.2 Headteacher	6
7.3 The School Attendance Champion SLT.....	7
7.4 Teaching staff	8
7.5 Attendance and pastoral staff.....	9
7.6 Parents / Families	11
8 Attendance procedures.....	12
8.1 Registration	12
8.2 Responding to lateness.....	12
8.3 Responding to absence (ABSENCE PROCEDURES - Safeguarding)	12
8.4 Responding to absence (Action planning)	14
8.5 Working with the Local Authorities School Attendance Service	15
9 Authorised and unauthorised and absence	15
9.1 Authorised absence	16
9.2 Unauthorised absence	16
9.3 Approval for term-time absence	16
9.4 Reducing Persistent Absence	17
10 Strategies for promoting attendance.....	17
11 Children Missing Education (CME).....	18
12 Links with other policies	19
Appendix 1: attendance codes.....	20

1. Introduction

This Attendance Policy is available on the school website and is reviewed and ratified annually by the governing body/board of trustees or as events or legislation requires. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified will be remedied without delay.

Academic year	Headteacher	School Attendance Champion (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2023-24	Rachel Horan	Ian Barker (DHT)	Pam Lamming	Rachel Yates

Policy Review date	Date Ratified by governors	Date Shared with staff
October 2024		

School Name	Park Spring Primary School
Attendance Target	95%+
School opens at	8:55
Registers close at	9:30

2. Contact List – September 2023

Role / Agency	Name and role	Contact Details
Headteacher	Rachel Horan	rhoran@parkspringprimary.co.uk
Attendance Champion SLT	Ian Barker	ibarker@parkspringprimary.co.uk
Attendance Officer	Wendy Holl (also Family Liaison Officer)	wholl@parkspringprimary.co.uk
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	Pam Lamming	plamming@parkspringprimary.co.uk
Chair Of Governors	Rachel Yates	ryates@parkspringprimary.co.uk
School Office		office@parkspringprimary.co.uk
School Attendance Service (SAS)	Queries relating to attendance	0113 3785994 Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk
Elective Home Education (EHE)	Queries around Elective Home Education	EHE@leeds.gov.uk

Children Missing Education (CME)	Referrals for children missing education	0113 378 9686 CME@leeds.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Team	Advice / Training / Safeguarding Audit	0113 3789685 estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk

3. Policy Statement

Park Spring Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to reach their full potential. There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups.

Park Spring Primary School aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure that every child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance for all students at Park Spring Primary School

We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents and carers.

This attendance policy is part of broader suite of safeguarding policies and should not be viewed in isolation. Safeguarding policies include the Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy.

Please expect us to both CHALLENGE and SUPPORT where there are attendance issues. Please note we are wholly committed to forging working relationships with families to help reduce or remove barriers to good punctuality and attendance.

3.1 The Implications of Absence from School

The following shows the link between % attendance at school and number of days absent.
98% = less than 4 days absent in one school year.

95% = less than 10 days absent in one school year.

90% = 4 weeks absent in one school year.

85% = 5½ weeks absent in one school year.

80% = 7½ weeks absent in one school year.

Over 5 years children with an **average attendance of 85-90% will have missed half a school year** of education while children with an **average attendance of 80% over the same period will have missed a whole school year.**

4. Aims

4.1 The School Aims

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to Attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding.
- Parents, carers, and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded.

4.2 Responsibilities

The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff, and governors. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

5. Legislation and guidance

5.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance, [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) 2022

5.2 The Education Act 1996 states that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

[Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 6

[Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 3

6. Partnership Expectations

What the school expects of our pupils
That pupils attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
Pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment
Pupils who arrive after registration time report to the office

Pupils tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school
What the school expects of parents/carers
Ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time to fulfil their legal responsibility
Notify school on the first day of absence and provide reason for absence
Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances
Supply medical evidence when required
Ensure all parental and child contact details are up to date
Provide school with two emergency contact details
Speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child/ren from attending
What the parents/carers can expect from the school
A broad, balanced education
Encouragement and rewards for good attendance and punctuality at school
Prompt action when a problem has been identified
Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
Contact with parents and carers on the first day when absence is unexplained
Liaison with officers from the Local Authority from a variety of teams to assist and support families where needed
Regular communication with parents and carers including school contact & procedural details and attendance and punctuality advice via the weekly newsletters.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Governing Body

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

7.2 Headteacher

The Head is responsible for:

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2023. [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023)
- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 -

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions)

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

7.3 The School Attendance Champion SLT

The School Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Head.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis -

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
 - young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
- Compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

7.4 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasizing with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
 - handle confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.

7.5 Attendance and pastoral staff

Attendance and pastoral staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).
- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.
- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding.

- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why, and when the pupil will return to school.
- Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance inputting the correct code as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 school days after the session.
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning).
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings trying to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible.

For pupils at risk of persistent absence

- Providing regular attendance reports to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures.
This can include:
 - letters home
 - attendance clinics
 - engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners
 - working with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and finding methods that work and are understood
 - consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures
 - providing regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort
 - providing regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils

For pupils who are persistently absent

- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans (using document 'Record of a meeting with a parent(s)') with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Identifying tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil.

- Leading daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Liaising with school leaders (designated safeguarding, SENDco and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments.
- Coordinating and contributing to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions.
- Working in partnership with School Attendance Service and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures.
- Providing regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions.

7.6 Parents / Families

Unplanned absence

- Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9:30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 8). These are the various ways you can notify us of pupil absence:
 - 1) Call the School and select the ‘Report an Absence’ option and leave a message.
 - 2) Call the school and speak to a member of staff in the school office.
 - 3) Text the attendance Mobile Phone on **07891 274 260**.

However, you make contact, please note we will aim to contact you via telephone to discuss further the reason for absence and determine a return date or how school can help.

Our medical policy allows us to provide medicines with your permission. If a child does not have a temperature and / or has not had sickness or diarrhoea for 24 hours clear, we are happy for them to return.

- Absence due to illness will be 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 parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. 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.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as an authorised absence as long as the pupil’s parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. You can notify us of medical appointments in the same way as you would notify us of a pupil absence, or you can request to speak to Wendy Holl (Family Liaison Officer). However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made

in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 8.

8 Attendance procedures

8.1 Registration

Registration takes place each morning at **8.55 am** and each afternoon at **12:50 pm (KS1), 1:00 pm (LKS2) and 1:10 pm (UKS2).**

- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) on the register for each pupil present and an absent mark for any pupil that is absent.

8.2 Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving in the classroom after 9.30am when the register has been taken are deemed to be late and will be marked as L code.
- After 9.30am and 2pm the pupil is deemed to be late/absent. Any pupil arriving in school after these times will be marked U. In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.
- The attendance officer will be at the school gate from 8:45 to 9:15. After this time she will be available in the main school office. She will meet, greet and help register ANY pupil and family arriving late. Any pupil arriving after 9:15 **MUST** accompany their child to the school office to help with the registration process.

8.3 Responding to absence (ABSENCE PROCEDURES - Safeguarding)

If parents/carers know their child is going to be absent in advance, they can inform the school by speaking to the class teacher, phoning the school or by sending in a written letter e.g. a medical appointment.

If your child is absent with no prior notification you must:

- Contact us by 9:30am on the first day of absence; if you are unsure how long your child will be absent from school, in the case of illness, you must contact the school daily every day your child is absent.
- If your child is absent, we will: phone you on the first day of absence **if we have not spoken to you**. We will phone the first contact then second and third contact if necessary. If we still can't get in contact with you or any other contacts, then we will send a text message to the first contact " to contact the school office as soon as possible to discuss your child's absence from school". This is an important safeguarding procedure and - where we are unable to establish first day contact – we may visit the home of the absent children to verify their whereabouts and ensure their safety. If, by the end of the day, there has been no contact made, the school may contact social services to report this.

When a child is absent the school will follow the **safeguarding** procedures set out below:

Day 1 - First day contact, telephone/text the pupil's parent or carer & all known contacts to establish reasons for the absence. (*Day 1 text script: Good morning please could you contact school to advise why (pupil name) is not in school today. You can text 07891274260. Thank you*)

Day 2 - Follow up on first day contact, a subsequent telephone call and/or text must be made. School will explore all known contact details listed for the pupil including any email addresses. (*Day 2 text script: 'Good morning please could you contact school to advise why (pupil name) is not in school AGAIN today. You can text 07891274260. Thank you'*)

Day 3 – Repeat steps for day 1 and 2. In the first instance telephone in person, then re-use Day 2 text script if no contact made. If no contact has been established (by 11:00 am) school will complete a safeguarding home visit. At this visit if no contact made in person (at the home) the letter 'Day 3 Safeguarding concern / contact school' document (letter) will be posted through the door of the dwelling.

Day 4 – Repeat steps for day 1 and 2. Additional investigations to establish the pupil's whereabouts; will include making contact with.

Professional agencies currently involved with the family/pupil

The school where a known sibling attends

The pupil's school friends

Neighbours or known associates of the family

Social Media (where possible)

Day 5 – Repeat steps for day 1 and 2.

Day 6 – Repeat steps for day 1 and 2. In the first instance telephone in person, if no contact has been established (by 11:00 am) school should complete a SECOND safeguarding home visit. At this visit if no contact made in person (at the home) the letter 'Day 6 Safeguarding concern / contact school' document (letter) will be posted through the door of the dwelling and also emailed to the parents / carers.

Day 20 – A child at 20 days continual unauthorised absence (with no explanation / contact from the family) is now considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. At this point we will make a referral to CME team.

If the pupil attends on Day 2 after no contact from parent on Day 1 the school will contact the parents to seek a reason for the child not being in school on Day 1. All reasonable efforts must be made by school staff to ascertain a reason for absence.

Parents are made aware of the school's approach to term time absence by all staff.

8.4 Responding to absence (Action planning)

- Repeated absences will lead to detailed monitoring by the school attendance staff, the School Attendance Champion and the Headteacher.
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to pupil and parent or carer.
- School will organise support to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- School will organise meetings with parents or carers to review and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the local authority for legal action.

Definition of terms:

- School target 95%+
- Good: 95%+
- Risk of Persistent Absence: 94.9% to 90%
- Persistent Absence: Below 90%
- Borderline PA: 89.9% to 85%
- Poor PA: 84.9% to 80%
- Serious concern: Below 80%
- Severe: Below 50%

From 2023 to 2024 academic year, ALL parents / families will receive TERMLY notification of their child/ren's ATTENDANCE (YEAR TO DATE) and for the CURRENT TERM – as a % attendance and as NUMBER of DAYS ABSENT. The notification will include school targets, expectations of school attendance and ways that school will follow up any issues arising.

Parent's and families can expect contact at any point during the year where WEEKLY attendance register monitoring suggests any issues.

Where a pupil is 'AT RISK OF PERSISTANT ABSENCE' (as soon as they fall below 95%) ALL parents/ families will receive a communication (text/ telephone call or letter) stating this risk. (This may vary depending on the number of days absent and the number of possible days the child could have attended at this point of the school year and also the attendance record of that pupil over the last years). Where a text is used, the script will be:-

RISK PA (Known reason text)

(Child's name) attendance is currently at ??% which is below our expectation of 95%+. We understand the causes of this and thank you for good communication. We will continue to support and monitor over the coming weeks.

RISK PA (Unknown reason text)

(Child's name) attendance is currently at ??% which is below our expectation of 95%+. Please contact Mrs Holl in order that we can discuss and support. We will continue to monitor over the coming weeks.

Where a pupil is '**PERSISTENTLY ABSENT**'

Telephone contact will be attempted to arrange a meeting between school and family. If no contact is made a text will be sent:

PA text 1

(Child's name) attendance is currently at ??%. School target is 95%. Persistent absence is defined as an attendance rate BELOW 90%. This defines your child as PERSISTENTLY ABSENT as they have attended for less than 90% of this school year. Please call school ASAP to arrange a meeting as this is a safeguarding concern.

If there is no family - school contact within 2 working days, school to make contact by telephone to arrange a meeting. A meeting **MUST** be arranged and may involve a member of SLT dependant on case context.

At the meeting school will record the agreed actions and targets set.. A target for attendance over a determined period of weeks **WILL** be agreed and set. This will be reviewed, booking a review meeting prior to the end of each meeting.

If attendance rate does not significantly improve:

- A further meeting will be called and **WILL** involve a member of the Senior Leadership team.
- Outside agencies may be contacted and involved in the case.
- School will consider imposing fines where a child has been absent for ANY 10 days in a rolling 12-week period.

8.5 Working with the Local Authorities School Attendance Service

- School works in partnership with the statutory School Attendance Service to devise a strategic approach to attendance through Register Checks and Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Headteacher/Attendance Champion (SLT) and the Attendance school staff may meet with an Attendance Improvement Officer from the School Attendance Service when required, to discuss and improve attendance for persistently absent or severely absent pupils.
- Action plans will be developed for persistently and severely absent pupils.
- If parents/carers do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal legal intervention may be requested from the School Attendance Service.

Statutory intervention can include

- Penalty Notices
- Parenting Order
- Education Supervision Order
- Prosecution

9 Authorised and unauthorised and absence

9.1 Authorised absence

Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (where possible routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Headteacher’s discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time where there are **exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher.**
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence.

9.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is defined as:

- Being late after the registers have closed - ‘U’ code
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having a haircut
- Where no explanation is offered by the parent or carer
- Where the school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- Special occasions e.g. birthdays/weddings
- Holidays/leave in term time
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Translating for family members
- Visiting sick relatives
- Exceptional term time leave longer than agreed by the Headteacher

9.3 Approval for term-time absence

Head teachers will only grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents/carers, and it is a statutory requirement for the Head Teacher to decide with every absence whether it is authorised or unauthorised. Wherever reasonably possible, we expect parents/carers to make routine appointments (e.g. medical, dental) outside of school time. If this is not possible, please give written notice, in advance, with a copy of the appointment slip.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see section 8.1)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

➤ Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

The Government have issued regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence;

- Head teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Exceptional Circumstances being defined as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching times.
- Parents/carers do not have any entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be applied for in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion.

9.4 Reducing Persistent Absence

Legal sanctions Schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

10 Strategies for promoting attendance

We have the following strategies to promote high attendance and punctuality:

- Ace Attendance displays in class.
- Class and Individual weekly DOJO awards
- Cluster and School Give it 100% events
- Targeted attendance initiatives for pupils whose attendance is causing concern

- Celebrating Y6 attendance throughout their time at Park Spring

11 Children Missing Education (CME)

A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in [Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE September 2016\)](#) and **follow the Leeds Children’s Services LA procedure** and contact: cme@leeds.gov.uk. Tel: 0113 3789686.

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to

requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child’s name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children’s social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

12 Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
l	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