



## Attendance Policy

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### 1. Introduction

This Attendance Policy reflects Keys Group's EPIC values—Excellence, Passion, Integrity, Caring—and the Keys Connect approach, which emphasises relational, trauma-informed practices tailored to support pupils with complex needs and attendance challenges.

Keys Group schools are committed to working in partnership with pupils and families to promote and support high levels of attendance. In line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (updated August 2024), our approach prioritises early intervention, relationship-building, and understanding the barriers to attendance. We recognise that improving attendance is not solely a compliance issue but a collaborative effort rooted in pastoral care, wellbeing, and inclusive practice. Park House School consistently demonstrate strong engagement with families and pupils, and we aim to build on this strength by ensuring that support is proactive, respectful, and tailored to individual needs. Attendance is monitored rigorously, and strategies are implemented to address persistent or severe absence, always with the goal of re-engaging learners and fostering a culture where every day in school counts.

The policy complies with Part 3, paragraph 15 of the Independent School Standards 2014 (as amended), and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. It recognises the unique barriers faced by many of our pupils, including historical trauma and ongoing challenges, and commits to a personalised, empathetic approach to attendance improvement.

While our aspiration is for all pupils to achieve 100% attendance, we pursue this goal sensitively and realistically, recognising that many pupils join us with persistent absence patterns.

### 2. Policy Aims

At Park House, we aim to ensure that every pupil:

- Feels safe, secure, and well cared for within the school community.
- Fully participates in school life, enjoying and achieving their potential.
- Feels valued and trusts staff to safeguard their wellbeing.
- Receives support tailored to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Understands the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Name
Governing Body (Chair)	James Madine
Head Teacher	Ann-Marie Oliver
Senior attendance champion	Ryan Barlow
Daily Attendance Contact	Class Teacher/Sommer Hodgson

### 4. Reporting Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of absence before the school day starts via Arbour, phone or class mobile. Arrangements for longer absences will be agreed as needed.

Parents/carers needing support with attendance should contact Sommer Hodgson through school office number 01226 744870

### 5. Registration and Lateness

- Registration is taken twice daily AM: (9:00 – 9.30, PM: 12:30 – 1:00)
- Pupils arriving within 30 minutes after registration are marked late (Code L).
- Pupils arriving after 30 minutes are marked absent (Code U or equivalent).
- Persistent lateness linked to transport or external factors will be addressed collaboratively with families, transport providers, and local authorities.

### 6. Categorisation of Absence

**Authorised absences** include: -

- Genuine illness
- Emergency medical/dental appointments (evidence may be requested)
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes

**Unauthorised absences** include: -

- Family holidays
- Shopping trips
- Birthdays
- Caring for family members
- Transport unavailability

### 7. Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

- Attendance is benchmarked on admission and monitored daily using ARBOR data.
- Patterns of absence are analysed to identify pupils or cohorts needing support.

- Attendance improvement meetings are held fortnightly to review data and progress against plans.
- Positive attendance is recognised with rewards and certificates.
- Pupils with attendance concerns receive personalised Attendance Support Plans developed collaboratively with families.
- Home visits and safe and well checks are conducted for unexplained absences, especially for pupils known to social care. If a pupil is absent for three consecutive days, a safe and well visit will be completed on the third day of absence by a school staff member.
- Multi-agency collaboration is maintained to support attendance improvement.

## 8. Safeguarding and Children Missing in Education (CME)

- Unexplained absences trigger safe and well checks, including unannounced home visits where necessary.
- The school collaborates with social care and other agencies to safeguard pupils.
- The Local Authority is notified of pupils missing from education as per statutory guidance. We would report to them 10 days consecutive unauthorised absence and 15 days sickness absence, consecutive or not.
- The school cooperates fully with local authority procedures regarding CME.

## 9. Legal Framework

- The school adheres to the National Framework for Penalty Notices where applicable, including the new statutory guidance effective from August 2024.
- Parents have legal duties to ensure regular attendance under sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, with penalties including fines and possible prosecution.
- The school will work with local authorities to enforce attendance where voluntary support fails. Where a pupil's attendance continues to be a concern and there is insufficient improvement following school support and intervention, the school may refer the matter to the Local Authority. The Local Authority has the power to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents/carers for unauthorised absence.
- The school monitors pupil attendance closely and applies the following thresholds to identify levels of concern and determine appropriate intervention:
- **50%–90% Attendance (Persistent Absence):**  
Pupils whose attendance falls between 50% and 90% are classified as *persistently absent*. This level of attendance is considered a significant cause for concern and will trigger a review and targeted support and intervention from the school may be put in place. Parents/carers will be contacted, and strategies will be put in place to improve attendance.

- **Below 50% Attendance (Severe Absence):**  
Pupils whose attendance falls below 50% are classified as *severely absent*. This represents a serious safeguarding and educational concern. In such cases, the school will implement intensive support measures and may involve external agencies, including referral to the Local Authority, to address barriers to attendance.

## **10. Parental Responsibilities**

Parents/carers must:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Report absences promptly with reasons.
- Update the school daily during ongoing absences unless agreed otherwise.
- Request leave for exceptional circumstances in advance.
- Provide evidence for planned medical appointments.
- Work collaboratively with the school and other agencies to resolve attendance barriers.

## **11. Training and Equality**

- Staff receive training on attendance policy and its links to safeguarding.
- The policy is implemented with sensitivity to diversity and individual pupil needs.
- Any concerns regarding equality impact should be raised with line management for appropriate action.

## Appendices – Procedures and Localisation of Policy

### Appendix A – Tiers of Intervention around Attendance

Attendance Tier	Identifying Factor	Potential Strategies
1. Expected attendance is maintained	Pupil consistently meets their expected attendance target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Celebrate through positive points or rewards</li> <li>- Continue regular monitoring</li> </ul>
2. Expected attendance is not consistently maintained	Patterns of poor attendance identified through data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss barriers with pupil and parents/carers</li> <li>- Develop and agree an Attendance Support Plan or Attendance Action Plan</li> <li>- Monitor progress for minimum 4 weeks</li> <li>- Engage external support if needed (e.g., Early Help)</li> </ul>
3. Attendance is not improving / lack of engagement	Persistent absence despite support and engagement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formalise support with attendance contract or Education Supervision Order</li> <li>- Clearly explain consequences</li> <li>- Continue multi-agency collaboration</li> </ul>
4. Enforcement	All support avenues exhausted, no improvement or engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issue Penalty Notice in line with National Framework</li> <li>- Consider prosecution to protect pupil's right to education</li> </ul>

## Appendix B – Attendance Management Plan (Stages)

Stage	Description	Actions
Stage 1	Attendance falls below target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send letter to parent/carer informing of concern</li> <li>- Explain impact of low attendance</li> </ul>
Stage 2	Continued absence and decline after Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send Stage 2 letter</li> <li>- Arrange home visit or virtual meeting to discuss attendance and create plan action plan</li> </ul>
Stage 3	Further absence after Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invite parents for attendance meeting</li> <li>- Review Attendance Support Plan</li> <li>- Explain possible escalation</li> </ul>
Stage 4	Unauthorised absences continue after Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issue Penalty Notice Warning letter (Headteacher authorised)</li> <li>- Liaise with Local Authority Attendance Team</li> </ul>
Stage 5	Persistent absence despite penalty notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Request Local Authority to consider prosecution</li> <li>- Continue multi-agency support</li> </ul>

### Appendix C – Attendance Codes (DfE Guidance Summary)

Code	Description	Usage
/	Present (AM or PM)	Pupil is present in school
L	Late (before register closes)	Pupil arrives after start of session but before register closes
U	Unauthorised absence (late after register closes)	Pupil arrives after register closes without valid reason
I	Illness	Authorised absence due to illness
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence for medical reasons (evidence may be requested)
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence for other exceptional circumstances
G	Unauthorised absence	Absence without permission or valid reason
N	No reason yet provided	Absence not yet explained
X	Not required to be in school	For example, pupils in approved off-site educational activity

### Appendix D: Action Plan

#### Attendance Action Plan

Letters Sent	Date

Target	Milestone	Date each milestone reached

Strategies to be implemented by school		
Details of strategy	Purpose of implementing	Member of staff responsible

Expectation of the pupil		

Expectation of Parent/ Carer		
Details of expectation	How has this been communicated to parent/ carer?	Monitoring arrangements

External support		

Record of attendance review meeting		
Date of review		
Individual present		
Situation since last review		
Milestones achieved		
Area discussed		
Outcome of the meeting		
Date of next review		

Name/ role	Signature	Date