



**The Park Federation Academy Trust  
James Elliman Academy**

**Attendance Policy**

## Approval

<b>Signed by CEO and Federation Principal on behalf of the Board of Directors</b>	Dr. Martin Young
Date of Approval	March 2024
Date of Next Review	March 2025

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## The Park Federation Academy Trust James Elliman Academy

### Introduction

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### Why Regular Attendance is so important

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our monthly newsletter;
- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, JEA their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class rewards and certificates
- Where absence is causing the school concerns, parents will be informed in writing and in some cases asked to attend a meeting with the school's Attendance Officer and SLT.

### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

#### **The designated senior leader is responsible for:**

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

- The Designated Senior Leaders responsible for attendance are Mrs Tajinder Johal and Mrs Rebecca Pinkney

### **The Attendance Officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance and the principal
- Working with the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Bev Simmons and can be contacted via [jeaoffice@theparkfederation.org](mailto:jeaoffice@theparkfederation.org)

### **Class teachers**

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on the schools Management Information System (MIS) Arbor. Registers will be taken in the mornings and after lunch

If teachers are made aware of a pupil absence this is to be communicated to the office.

### **School Office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Follow up poor attendance with parents and outside agencies

### **Parents and Carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:55am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with 2 or more emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## Section 4: Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments, which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority, through its Attendance Service (AS) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which never have been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark in the register
- Day trips and holidays in term times
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Shopping or looking after siblings

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never a good idea to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

You can support your child by:

- Ensuring regular and early bed times
- Helping with homework
- Having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- Providing a healthy breakfast
- Reporting any academic or social concerns promptly to the school
- Retaining open and honest communication with your child's school
- Being positive about school (even if your own experience was less than positive)
- Encouraging your child to invite friends home for play dates

### Persistent Absenteeism (PA)/ Children Missing Education:

A pupil is defined by the Department of Education (DfE) as being a persistent absentee, or a child missing education, is any pupil who has missed 19 days (38 sessions) across the school year for whatever reason. The Attendance Services at the Local Authority (Slough Borough Council) monitor pupils that are on track to become a PA by the number of sessions (2 sessions = 1 day), the following guidelines are used to help schools identify these pupils at the end of each **half term**.

Identification at the end of each half	Number of sessions of absence, at the term end of the half term, to be on track for persistent absenteeism
Term 1	7 sessions
Term 2	14 sessions
Term 3	20 sessions
Term 4	25 sessions
Term 5	32 sessions
Term 6	38 sessions

Therefore, a child is a persistent absentee as defined by the DfE once they have reached 38 sessions of absence, irrespective of which part of the year we are in at the time, and for whatever reason.

For example, if a child has had a block of illness during half term 1 for 20 days, they would have been absent for 40 sessions which make them a persistent absentee in half term 1 and therefore they will remain a PA for the rest of the academic year.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and the school needs parent's fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

All attendance is discussed weekly. If attendance does not improve, JEA will follow the protocol for PA. (Appendix 1)

## **Section 5: Absence Procedures**

### **If your child is absent you must:**

- contact us by telephone (option 1 – absence line) as soon as possible on the first day of absence and keep the school regularly informed, preferably daily.
- or, you can come into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.
- parents and carers must report absence to the school for the first three consecutive days.
- on the fourth day of an absence the school will require medical evidence to support the absence period. This can be in the form of a prescription or appointment card at the very least.

### **If your child is absent we will:**

- telephone you if we have not heard from you by 10am on the first day of absence
- invite you in to discuss any situation, where a pattern of poor attendance is developing, with our Attendance Officer and either the Year Leader, or one of the Vice Principals, depending on the level of concern.
- refer the matter to the Attendance Improvement Officer if attendance reaches 38 sessions of absence, of which 10 sessions are unauthorised within a 12 week period.

### **In the rare event that we cannot contact you to determine an absence we will:**

- call the two remaining contact numbers to check everything is ok and ask you to make contact with the school.
- conduct a home visit with two members of staff if we cannot make contact with all three contact numbers held on the school system.
- contact the police immediately for a welfare check if we have failed to make contact via telephone and a home visit has taken place and been unsuccessful.

### **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we

need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

In the rare event that we cannot contact you to determine an absence we will:

- call the two remaining contact numbers to check everything is ok and ask you to make contact with the school
- send two members of staff to the family home if we cannot make contact with all three contact numbers held on the school system
- contact the police immediately for a welfare check if we have failed to make contact via telephone and a home visit has taken place and been unsuccessful

## **The Attendance Improvement Officer**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 44.1 and 44.1.a.

"If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence."

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Attendance Service themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01753 787670 or [attendance@slough.gov.uk](mailto:attendance@slough.gov.uk).

**Regulations have been amended regarding the payment of Penalty Notices (fines). The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 states that parents, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2013, must pay £120.00 per parent, per child should they receive a Penalty notice.**

### **Payment of Penalty Notice**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

The payment must be paid direct to the local authority (Slough Borough Council). Parents can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice.

### **Lateness:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts at 8:45am and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Your child will



receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. The school gates are open from 8.30am every day and the children can enter their classrooms from that time.

At **9:00 am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be informed in writing. If persistent lateness continues you could be asked to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Attendance Officer to resolve the problem. Please remember you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

The start time for the **Morning Nursery is 8.30am** and for **the Afternoon Nursery is 12.30pm**.

Should lateness continue a monitoring letter will be sent and advice sought.

## **Exceptional Leave**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

- It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
- Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school and employment.
- Graduates earn an average of £15.01 per hour. Young people that leave school with no qualifications earn an average of £7.44 per hour.
- All Slough schools are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Exceptional Leave. The Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. You will be asked to provide substantial evidence in support of your request.
- Reasons for Exceptional Leave will be logged on the pupil's record and shared as part of the transfer/transition process.
- The Attendance Services from Slough Borough Council will issue Fixed Penalty Notices (fine) for any unauthorised absence.
- Anyone on extended leave can be off rolled after 21 days.

## **Section 6: Recording attendance**

### **Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session (after lunchtime). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

## **Section 7: Monitoring Attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly across the school half-termly, termly and yearly across the school at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via attendance letters and end of year reports.

### **Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### **Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## **Children Absent from Education (CAE)**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children absent from education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children absent from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. At JEA when a child has left the school or not been in school and we have not been able to make contact with parents/carers, a CAE is completed and sent to the Local Authority.

## **Section 8: Academy targets, projects and special initiatives**

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. When attendance drops below 96% an initial warning letter will be sent to parents.

Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is one of the keys to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in Slough.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. We look for ways to ensure that high attendance is supported in school. All children and staff are made aware of the attendance figures in weekly briefings/assemblies and displays.

Attendance is celebrated weekly and termly:

- The Principal awards weekly certificates and stars to the class in each year group with 96% attendance for the week. Any classes who achieve 100% will earn a multi-day.
- Each term, all pupils with 100% attendance will receive a certificate.
- Each Half term, pupils with 100% attendance (for the half term) will be entered into a prize draw.
- Each Half term, pupils will earn a raffle ticket for every week they have 100% attendance and will be entered into a prize draw
- At the end of the academic year, all pupils with 100% attendance (for the year) will be awarded with a certificate and prize
- Weekly attendance is published on our year group boards and the importance of good attendance is discussed regularly with parents

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter/school app and we ask for your full support.

### **Staff responsible for attendance management in this school are:**

- Mrs Johal (Principal)
- Mrs Pinkney (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Mrs Simmons (Attendance Officer)
- Miss Morgan (Child & Family Support Officer)
- Mrs Wright, Miss Devshi and Mrs Chander – (Senior Leadership Team)

## Summary

The academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to the Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE). Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports and optimises your child's attainment. It is also a fundamental part of the 'Every Child Matters' intentions to:

- Being Healthy
- Being Safe
- Enjoying & Achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

## Appendix 1

### JEA Attendance Protocol for Persistent Absence

Term	Actions	When	By who...
Autumn 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitored for two weeks.</li> <li>VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware</li> </ul>	Week 5/6	Attendance Officer Attendance Officer
	Below 90% children are added to watch list and discussed by Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer	Week 5/6	Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO) Attendance Officer
	<p>If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer</p> <p>An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.</p>	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)
Autumn 2	VPs call any parents or carers where children's attendance is <b>below 90% and has not improved since autumn 1.</b>	Week 3	Vice Principals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitored for two weeks.</li> <li>VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware</li> <li>PA referral sent to Slough Borough Council</li> </ul>	Week 5	Attendance Officer Attendance Officer
	<p>If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer</p> <p>An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.</p>	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)
Spring 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VPs and AO to meet with any parents where attendance is still below 90% despite phone call in Autumn 2 – if still no improvement in time for meeting parents are informed in the meeting that their child will receive a PA referral.</li> <li>VPs to phone parents of <b>new</b> children who have dropped below 90% attendance.</li> </ul> <p>All meetings and calls logged on CPOMS</p>	Week 3	Vice Principals, CFSO and Attendance Officer Vice Principals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitored for two weeks.</li> <li>VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware</li> </ul>	Week 5	Attendance Officer Attendance Officer
	If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)

	An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.		
<b>Spring 2</b>	Any PA children where attendance has not improved since Spring 1 are asked to attend a meeting with DP and Attendance Team and be given a letter (Letter 3) stating we might ask for support from external agencies. Submit a fine Logged on CPOMS.	Week 1	Deputy Principal Attendance Officer Child and Family Support Officer
	VPs to meet with any parents where attendance is still below 90% despite phone call in Spring 1.  VPs to phone parents of new children who have dropped below 90% attendance. All meetings and calls logged on CPOMS	Week 3	Vice Principals, CFSO and Attendance Officer Vice Principals
	New children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitored for two weeks.  VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware	Week 5	Attendance Officer  Attendance Officer
	If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer  An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)

<b>Summer 1</b>	MARF sent for any PA children where attendance has not improved despite previous letters and attendance meetings. Logged on CPOMS	Week 1	DSL
	VPs to meet with any parents where attendance is still below 90% despite phone call in Spring 2.  VPs to phone parents of new children who have dropped below 90% attendance. All meetings and calls logged on CPOMS.	Week 3	Vice Principals, CFSO and Attendance Officer Vice Principals
	New children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitor for two weeks.  VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware	Week 5	Attendance Officer  Attendance Officer

	<p>If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer</p> <p>An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.</p>	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)
<b>Summer 2</b>	<p>Follow up MARF for any PA children where attendance has not improved despite previous letters and attendance meetings. Logged on CPOMS</p>	Week 1	DSL
	<p>VPs to meet with any parents where attendance is still below 90% despite phone call in Summer 1.</p> <p>VPs to phone parents of new children who have dropped below 90% attendance. All meetings and calls logged on CPOMS.</p>	Week 3	Vice Principals, CFSO and Attendance Officer Vice Principals
	<p>New children falling under 90% to be sent a letter (Letter 1) and logged on CPOMS and monitor for two weeks.</p> <p>VPs are notified via CPOMS so they are aware</p>	Week 5	Attendance Officer  Attendance Officer
	<p>If there is no improvement after the two weekly monitoring period, parents and carers are invited into school to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Officer.</p> <p>An action plan for improvement is put in place and monitored over a period of four weeks.</p>	Week 7/8	Attendance Officer Child & Family Support Officer (CFSO)