



24th September 2020

Attendance and punctuality

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

New for 2020 to 2021 – not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure schools record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes to the regulations governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Punctuality

All children should arrive at school and line up in their designated bubble area on the playground by 8:45am, where they will be collected by their class teacher or teaching assistant. Registration takes place between 8:50am and 8:55am. If children arrive after their entry doors are closed and locked, they will need to go to the main office and they will be marked as late in the register. Please all let the office know what your child will be having for lunch.

Any children who arrive 20 minutes after the register has been taken will have an 'unauthorised' late mark, which counts for the whole morning session. Children's punctuality will be monitored closely.

Class teachers set children 'early bird' activities every morning, which are an important start to the children's day. This work quite often helps to consolidate any skills or knowledge previously learnt whilst also helping children prepare for the day ahead. Parents/carers should therefore ensure their child arrives in good time.

Absences

In line with current legislation, and current guidance from PHE and DHSC, examples are as follows:

- Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test - if a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- Pupils who live with someone in the household who has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test - if the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their

household first had symptoms. In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test.

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) - pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus. The NHS test and trace guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus.
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine - as usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.

If your child is going to be absent, parents/carers have a legal duty to inform school of the reasons why, by telephoning school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and on each consecutive day afterwards.

Doctors or dentist appointments should not be made in school hours unless it is an emergency. However, we understand there are certain cases with hospital appointments where it is not within the parents/carers control to determine the days and times.

As a school, we are legally required to closely monitor all children's attendance. In the event of a child being absent from school for 10 or more consecutive days with no reason provided by parents/carers, schools are legally responsible for reporting these absences to the Local Authority. A child absent from school under these circumstances would be deemed as 'missing in education' and the Local Authority would have to take the necessary steps in order to locate them.

Attendance rewards

Under normal circumstances (pre-COVID), Park Grove would recognise excellent attendance amongst our pupils with various rewards such as termly certificates and weekly class attendance bears in EYFS/KS1 and KS2. Due to current government restrictions, school is not able to give out such rewards in order to reduce the spread of the disease. This will of course be reviewed

regularly and once we are in a safe position to do so, the rewards system will be reinstated.

If you have any queries or questions in relation to any of the information in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Jo Sawyer
Headteacher
j.sawyer@ebor.academy

Miss Natalie Slater
Pupil Support Team
n.slater@ebor.academy



Park Grove
PRIMARY ACADEMY