The Park Federation Academy Trust
Cranford Park Academy

Attendance Policy

2026 - 2027

Approval

Signed by CEO and Federation Principal on behalf of the Board of Directors	Helen Abell
Date of approval	May 2019
Date of last review	July 2026

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Park Federation Academy Trust
Cranford Park 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.

Those people responsible for attendance management in this school are:

Chair of governors: Ranisha Dhamu
Attendance Champion Lead: Mrs S Evans
Attendance Officer: Mrs M Booker

Should you have any matters relating to attendance, please email cpaoffice@theparkfederation.org

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.

Cranford Park Academy's expectation is that your child's attendance must be at 96% in line with the national average however, we would like our pupils to exceed this.

Pupils who fall as low as 90% attendance will almost miss 4 weeks of school every year. This is over 100 hours of earning.

Why is attendance key to success?

- There is a link between poor attendance and under achievement

- Pupils who have good attendance often make friends quicker and sustain friendships well
- It is important that pupils start school with good attendance and punctuality habits that they will need for secondary school and the work place

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, what 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 competitions and certificates.
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements 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.

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.

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. Where possible your child should attend school before or after any appointments. You may be asked to provide hospital letters and appointment cards.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave" has been given. Such unauthorised absences may include but not limited to:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark in the register
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays, day trips and holidays in term time
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Absences attached to the school holidays where medical proof has not been provided to authorise the absence.

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.
- Absences attached to school holidays will require medical proof in order for the absence to be authorised.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil is defined by the Department of Education (DfE) as being a persistent absentee is any pupil who has missed 19 days (38 sessions) across the school year for whatever reason. Cranford Park’s Attendance Team monitors pupils that are on track to become PA by the number of sessions **(2 sessions=1day**), 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 term	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

For example, if a child has had a block of illness during Autumn term for 20 days, they would have been absent for 40 sessions which makes them automatically a persistent absentee. They will remain a PA for the rest of the academic year.

Example: 1 day = 2 sessions.

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 you will be informed of this immediately.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us by telephone before **9.00 am** on the first day of absence and keep the school informed daily
- Or, you can come into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.
- Complete the absence form on the school's Piota App.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our attendance officer or the Principal if absences persist;
- If absence falls below 90% or does not improve parents will be invited to an informal meeting to discuss and share any supportive measures to improve attendance this may include an Attendance Contract being put in place.

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

- Call the 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 contact numbers held on the school system.
- May contact the police for a welfare check, if we have failed to make contact via telephone and a home visit has taken place and been unsuccessful.

- If we cannot contact you and there has been no communication for an ongoing absence we may refer the matter to the Children Missing Education team who may make contact with you.

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.

Fixed Penalty Notices

The Education Act 1996 sec. 444.1 and 444.1a states that;

''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.''

A Penalty Notice may be issued if your child does not attend school regularly. The Penalty Notice is £80.00 per parent, per child, paid within 21 days or £160.00 if paid within 28 days, if unpaid a Summons will be issued.

Parents or children may wish to contact the Attendance Support Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. attendancesupport@hillingdon.gov.uk

In the case of repeated Penalty Notices, if a parent receives a second Penalty Notice for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.00. Penalty Notices per parent will be capped to two Penalty Notices within any three year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a Penalty Notice of up to £2,500.

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 **8:40 am for both juniors** (Years 3–6) and **infants** (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) 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.

At **9.30am** 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 is late by just 5 minutes every day that adds up to over 3 days lost each year.

Being 15 minutes late is the same as being absent for 2 weeks in one year.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the one of the Deputy/Vice Principals and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but 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 8:45 am** and for **the Afternoon Nursery it is 12:30 pm.**

Exceptional Leave:

The procedure for requesting leave should be made in writing prior to the leave being taken. Leave taken during term time will **not** be authorised and may incur a Penalty Notice.

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 £7.44p.per hour.
- All Hillingdon 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 may be asked to provide evidence in support of your request.
- The Principal will meet personally with every family applying for Exceptional Leave where possible to stress the importance of good school attendance habits and links between attendance and attainment.
- Reasons for Exceptional Leave will be logged on the pupil's record and shared as part of the transfer/transition process.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued for any unauthorised absences.

This may be a Penalty Notice of £80.00 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days increasing to £160.00 payable within 28 days of issue.

If a family have been issued with a Penalty Notice for unauthorised exceptional leave and further unauthorised leave is taken the matter may result in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court.

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.

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 Hillingdon.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

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

Poor attendance procedure

- If your child's attendance falls below 93% you will be sent a letter advising you.
- If there is no improvement you will be sent a further letter inviting you to attend a meeting with the Deputy Head and Attendance Officer to discuss the matter and to see how the school can help you.
- If there is still no improvement a formal Attendance Contract Meeting will take place.

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.

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

Cranford Park Academy

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at Cranford Park Academy.

Child's Name:

Parent's or Carer's Name:

Signed:

School year of your child:

Thank you.