



River Peck Federation **Attendance Policy**

Adopted and signed on
behalf of the school at _____
the meeting on:

Name of Governing Body
Representative: _____

Signature of Governing
Body representative: _____

Date: _____

Adopted date: March 2021
Renewal/review date: March 2022

River Peck Federation Attendance Policy

The purpose of this Policy and Legislation

To ensure that parents/carers are aware of the legislation relating to attendance and that processes/measures are in place which encourage and support students and attendance at school when they are fit and healthy. The policy is designed to promote regular attendance and punctuality and as such offer all pupils equal access to learning. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school Child Protection/Safeguarding policy.

Legal requirements:

The law requires that students of compulsory school age attend school every day on which it is open.

The School Attendance Policy adheres to the Acts and Regulations below:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education Act 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2016
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

This policy will also have regard to the following DFE statutory guidance documents:

- 'Children Missing Education' September 2016
- 'School attendance parental responsibility measure – Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police.' Updated in May 2020 and guidance document
- School Attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent school and local authorities' – updated March 2021

Responsibilities

School

While parents have primary responsibility in ensuring their children attend school regularly, the school can help parents in their efforts to achieve the maximum attendance of their children. This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

Aims of the school

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data
- Have appropriate registration processes in place
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school, initially with a first day absence text message or absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedures.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- To promote good attendance.
- To adhere to the statutory guidance Children Missing Education and notify the local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register in all cases except when a standard transition occurs or the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by the school

Parent/Carers

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day which is 8.30am for year 5 and year 6 and 8.50 for other year groups
- To inform school on every day of any absence if expected return date is unknown.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible, minimum of two weeks' notice.
- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's Absence Request Form, giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance they should:

- Talk to their child, it may be something simple that needs the school's help in resolving.
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.
- Make an appointment to see a member of the senior leadership team regarding attendance.

Governing Body

The Governing Body has a legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance of pupils at Pilgrims' Way Primary School. The school's attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

Absences

- 1 Parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible when their child is absent and to give a reason for this absence. This may be by phone, letter or in person. We operate a first day absence follow up call if no reason for absence has been given by 10 am, a member of the Admin staff will then contact parents by telephone. If we fail to speak to the parents on the phone, a text message will be sent to obtain a reason for absence.
- 2 The reason is noted by the office staff in the main office, and then entered onto the computer system. If no reason is given, 'A reason for absence form' is sent home.
- 3 If a child is away for more than 3 days and no reason given, the school will send a letter requesting a meeting with senior leaders. In some instances, the attendance officer or another member of staff may visit the family's home to establish the safety of the child and reasons for the child being away from school.
- 4 The school will also complete an assessment to the Early Help Team which is used to decide any extra support the child needs to reduce or eliminate areas of difficulties.
- 5 Senior leaders will monitor attendance and punctuality on a weekly basis using Scholar Pack electronic attendance programme.
- 6 Parents will receive a letter and an electronic print from our attendance programme informing them of either an unacceptable level of absence or unexplained absences. The computer gives dates and times.
- 7 Our registers are checked frequently by senior leaders. They will contact any families that are giving cause for concern.

Types of Absences

The parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the child attend the school at which he/she is registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that his/her child attends that school then the parent is guilty of an offence. When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and the appropriate register code will be used.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as

satisfactory justification for absences. For example the child is away from school due to illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Persistence Absence

Persistence absence (or PA) is absence of 10% or more. An individual child is deemed to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if his/her attendance is less than 90% (regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised).

Children Missing in Education (CME)

Definition of CME

Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school roll being educated otherwise e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who had been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time.

Department for Education Definition of children at Risk of Missing Education

Children and young people with poor school attendance are often the most vulnerable and more likely to become children missing from education. The authority recognises that the duty to identify children not receiving education does not apply in relation to children who are registered at school who are not attending regularly. The authority's CME strategy does, however, include the reinforcement of duties that already exist for schools and therefore supports the monitoring of children at risk of missing education in the future. The monitoring of children at risk of missing education is carried out in partnership with schools where attendance of individual pupils gives cause for concern with the aim of reducing the risk in the future.

Punctuality

The school believes it is important for students to learn from an early age that punctuality is both important and polite. Being late not only has an effect on a student's own learning, self-esteem and confidence but is also disruptive to the learning of their classmates.

- At **8.30am** children in years 5 and 6 can come in through the school's main entrance and go to their classes at Pilgrims' Way School. At Bellenden School, Y5 and Y6 pupils wait in the hall at 8.30 to be collected by a member of staff.
- The gate is opened at 8.45 every morning for all other year groups to come into the playground and at 8.50am a bell is rung for them to go to their classrooms. The register is taken in all classes by **9:00am**.
- Children arriving after **9:00am** should enter the school by using the main office entrance

- On arrival, the administration staff will record your child's name, time of arrival and obtain a reason for the child's lateness
- Registers are closed at **9.30a.m.** Any child arriving after that time will receive an unauthorised absence mark.

Appointments with Doctor/Dentist etc.

- Parents are asked, where possible, to arrange appointments outside school hours or in the holidays.
- If appointments are unavoidable, a treatment card or an appointment notification text should be brought to the school and shown to the office. Copies are made and kept in the office. If parents need to take their child out of school early for whatever reason, they must sign the book at the office. Pupils should be collected from and returned to the school office by an adult.

Term time Holidays

Statutory guidance from the Department for Education states that "Head Teachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances". Parents/carers should help the school to observe this directive by not applying for holidays in term time.

Should you need to request leave of absence under exceptional circumstances, the process is:

- Obtain a request form from the school office
- Complete the form giving reasons for leave and return to the school office
- Authorisation of time off can only be granted by the Executive Head Teacher or Headteacher.
- Each special leave request is considered on an individual basis, using the criteria laid out below.
- Regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval for leave of absence. If parents do not apply in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
- If a pupil is kept away for longer than the agreed period, without additional notification/contact from a parent/carer, a referral will be made to the Local Authority
- The additional period of absence will be marked as unauthorised (unless there are unavoidable reasons).
- A special leave request for a period longer than two weeks is seen as exceptional and will need to be authorised by the Governing Body

Please note that if special leave is not authorised and the parent/carer decides to take their child(ren) out of school, the local authority may serve a fixed penalty notice. This could result in a fine of £60 per parent per child. If this fine is not paid in time, this could lead to an increase to £120 per child per parent. Failing to pay this

could result in parent(s)/carer(s) facing prosecution and if proved, each parent/carers may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to a maximum of £2 500 per child.

Criteria Used to Authorise or Deny Special Leave

- The amount of time requested
- The age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record e.g pupils with an attendance figure of below 96%
- There have been 10 sessions (5 consecutive days) or more of unauthorised absence already taken in the academic year.
- The proximity of SATs and other assessments
- The length of the proposed leave
- The pupil's ability to catch up the work
- The pupil's educational needs
- The general welfare of the pupil
- The purpose of the leave
- The frequency of the activity
- When the request was made

Monitoring Attendance

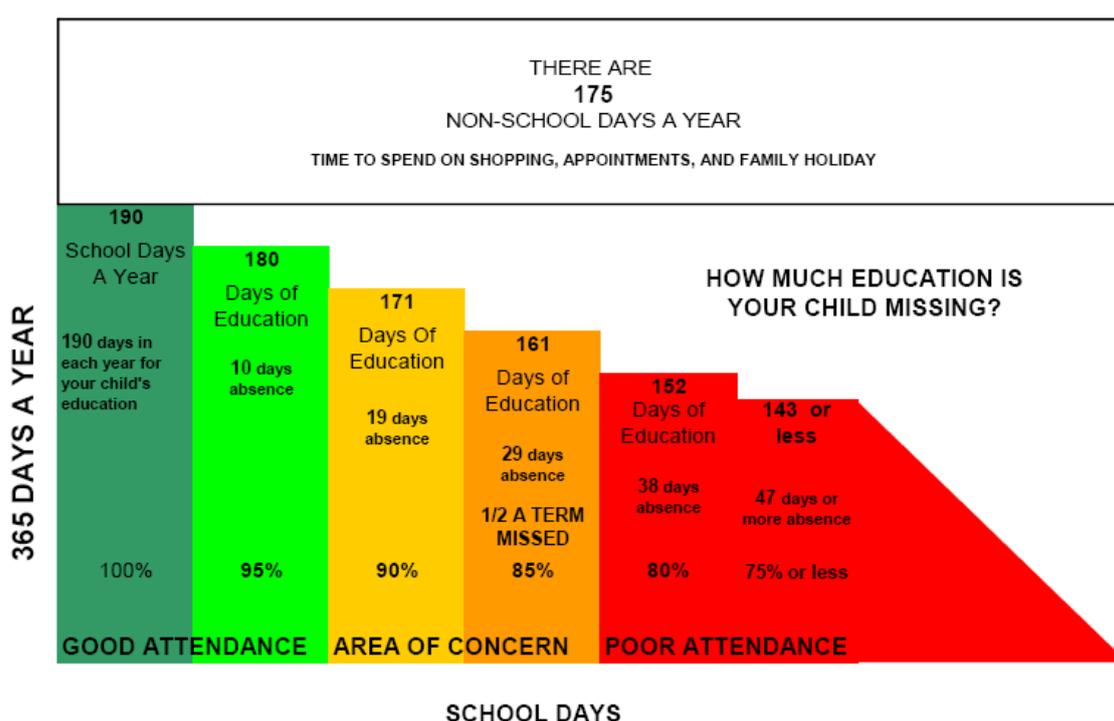
The School attendance target is 96% or above. Attendance figures will be monitored and reviewed weekly. Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality, or patterns of absence e.g. regular broken weeks of at least one day's absence, or regular absences on Mondays/Fridays, regular absence immediately prior to or following school holidays or unauthorised holidays in term time, various actions will take place. These consist of:

- Verbal contact made with parent/carers
- Written communication with parent/carers
- School meeting with parent/carers to complete Attendance Contract
- Attendance Contract review meeting (led by a senior leader)
- Attendance Panel meeting (led by a member of the senior leadership team)

Attendance Reports/Analysis

We believe that excellent attendance and punctuality is needed in order for students to flourish and succeed. Not only is there a strong link between excellent attendance and academic achievement, but studies have shown the links between excellent attendance and future careers prospects. The government has established a minimum target of 96% attendance to be achieved by all students.

Consequently, the attendance of all students is analysed regularly and shared with parents at the end of the school year with their child's school report. If there are concerns surrounding a student's attendance, their parents will be notified earlier.



We record and promote good attendance in the following ways:

Pilgrims' Way School	Bellenden
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly certificate to the class with the best attendance presented in Friday's whole school assembly. Attendance updates in the monthly newsletter. Attendance and punctuality figures are recorded on the report to Parents and Carers at the end of the academic year, along with positive comments for effort where appropriate. Pupils whose attendance is 100% for the whole academic year receive a certificate and a medal. Attendance and punctuality figures are recorded on the report to Parents and Carers at the end of the academic year, along with positive comments for effort where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prizes for each class whose attendance is 97% or higher. Classes are informed in whole school assembly on a Friday. Attendance updates in the monthly newsletter. Attendance Badges – Bronze badge for one term 100% attendance, Silver for two terms 100% attendance and Gold for 3 terms 100% attendance. Attendance and punctuality figures are recorded on the report to Parents and Carers at the end of the academic year, along with positive comments for effort where appropriate. Attendance and punctuality figures are recorded on the report to Parents and Carers at the end of the academic year, along with positive comments for effort where appropriate.

Covid-19 Addendum

This addendum has been produced in line with the Department of Education (DFE) guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

This Addendum outlines:

- Attendance expectations
- Attendance coding
- Circumstances for non-attendance related to non-attendance related to COVID-19 during the academic year 2020-2021
- Further key information

Attendance expectations

From September 2020, pupil attendance is mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at 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. **Penalty notices should only be considered when all other options to improve attendance have been exhausted.**

Attendance Coding

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).

A new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)' has been created and must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020-2021 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 to not attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

The River Peck Federation will be using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' as detailed below:

- Pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X.
- Schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak.

Circumstances for non-attendance related to COVID-19 during the academic year 2020-2021

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'

The River Peck Federation will follow the procedures detailed below for pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19):

- Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test.
- If a pupil tests negative, they can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), they should be recorded with code I (illness) as would usually be the case.
- Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms.
- They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.

The River Peck federation will follow the procedures below when someone in the pupil's household has symptoms:

- The NHS test and trace guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 10 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 10 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious,
- Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

- Pupils 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 a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used on the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a lockdown scenario only

- Shielding advice is currently in place until March 31st 2021. This means that clinically extremely vulnerable pupils who have remained on the shielding list have been advised to stay at home and shield.
- Families will receive a letter if their child is required to shield which they can share with Pilgrims' Way/Bellenden Primary School.
- Non-attendance will be recorded as X.
- The River Peck federation will contact parents of pupils who are shielding when it is paused to set out the expectation that they can return to school.
- Code X will not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to Bellenden/Pilgrims' Way Primary School.

Remote learning

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), they will be offered access to remote education (through google classroom.) The River Peck federation will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, however this will not need to be tracked in the attendance register.