

PEEL HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

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| Date of Issue: February 2022 | Date of Last Review: September 2021 |
| Headteacher Signature: <i>E Ford</i> | Governor Signature: |



Together we *achieve* our best

INTRODUCTION

- Peel Hall Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.
- We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.
- For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education
- Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Salford attendance targets.
- The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.
- This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.
- It is important that parents keep their emergency contact details up to date at all times.
- [For information regarding COVID-19 see page 8 for the DFE Guidance Addendum: Recording attendance in Relation to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) During 2021 to 2022 Academic Year](#)

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

- Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00am. Any pupil arriving after registers close will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Head or Inclusion Leader will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered.
- The afternoon registration will be at
 - EYFS: 12.45
 - KS1: 1.00pm
 - KS2: 1.30pm
- Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

- If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day, before 10.00am stating the reason for the absence.
- If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day the school will undertake the following, in this order:
 - Send a text message to request a reason for absence
 - Telephone to request a reason for absence
 - Where the school is unable to make contact by telephone a message via the app or an email will be sent, this may also be followed up with an attendance letter
 - In some circumstances a home visit will be made to determine the whereabouts and safety of a pupil.
 - If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write again. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 4 weeks if no explanation can be obtained.
 - Regular register checks are carried about by the Inclusion Leader or member of the school office staff.
- If attendance falls below 90%, a letter will be sent home by the Headteacher requesting an improvement and offering support.

- If attendance rate does not improve, the Head Teacher will liaise with the Inclusion Leader or member of the school office staff who may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.
- Parents are expected to contact school on a daily basis throughout an absence, before 10am.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)

- Either authorised or unauthorised, a child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.
- Absence, for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%.

Onward Referral to Support Services

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for will be discussed with the school's Inclusion Leader and Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The school's link Education Welfare Officer visits the school on a regular basis to address any attendance issues. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

- It is the responsibility of the Inclusion Leader or member of the school office staff to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.
- In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s.
- If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health / School Nurse, if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's link EWO.
- Frequent absence or a sudden change in attendance patterns can also be monitored as part of our safeguarding measures

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Promoting Attendance

- The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.
- The Parent attendance leaflet can be used in this way
- School will consult with parents this school year on a home/school agreement which will incorporate attendance expectations

Requests for Absences in Term Time

- The law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.
- Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave.
- Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.
- Parents should put any request for a term time absence in writing to the headteacher
- If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter.
- If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned holiday it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence**.

Penalty Notices

- Section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Head Teachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came in to force on 27th February 2004.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:
 - Overt Truancy

- Parentally-condoned absences
- Holidays in term-time
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9.30am)
- Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority at £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of date of issue, rising to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days of date of issue. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may lead to legal action being taken against you.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

- Individual certificates and prizes are presented termly where full attendance has been gained.
- Individual certificates are presented termly where 96% or more attendance has been gained.
- Half termly rewards are given to the class with the highest attendance above school target.
- Weekly assemblies present attendance figures and trophies to the classes with the highest attendance above school target.

Attendance Targets

- The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.
- The Inclusion Leader will monitor attendance and any child with below 95% attendance may trigger a concern and parents will be contacted and an action plan put into place (in line with Salford protocols)
- Children with attendance below 90% will be monitored and supported by the Inclusion Leader and may lead to a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.

The Registration System

The School will use a computerized system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

| CODE | DESCRIPTION | MEANING |
|------|--|-------------------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) | Approved Education Activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| F | Extended family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorised absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveler absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised absence |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| W | Work experience | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Enforced closure | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Pupil not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | School closed to pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |

Register Security

- The registers must be safely stored and as such our registers are held within a secure information management system.
- Digital registers must be backed up at least once a month
- Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

The Law

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence

- This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

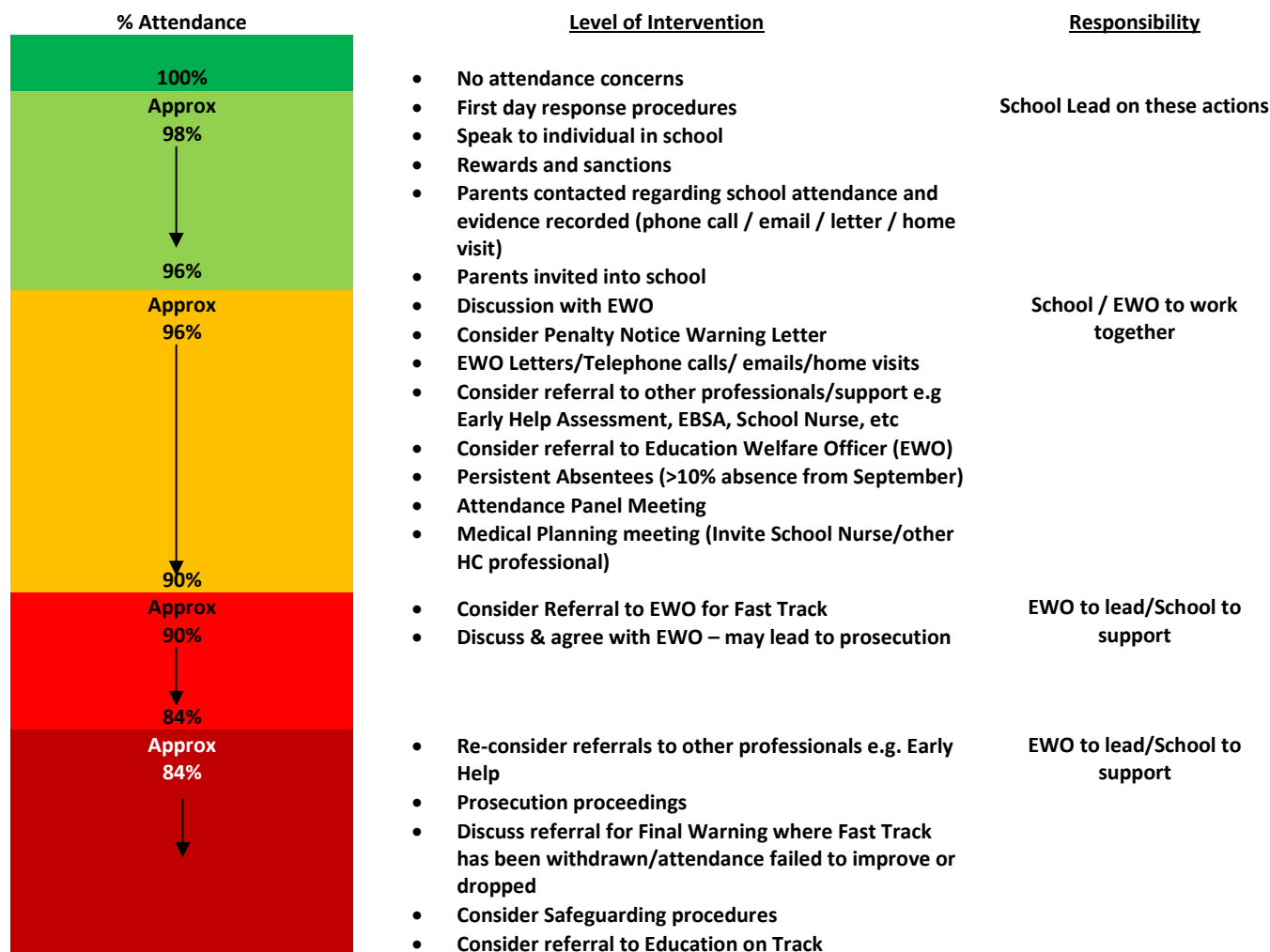
2. Authorised absence

- This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

- This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:
 - Work experience placements
 - Field trips and educational visits
 - Sporting activities
 - Link courses or approved education off site
 - Most types of dual registration

Document provides a framework for school / EWO intervention. However, each case will be considered on its own circumstances and it may be appropriate to deviate from this suggested pathway.



- **Attendance Panel – Agreed by School and EWO:**
 - Referral for EWO completed and parents invited to meeting, Attendance Panel Action Plan agreed
 - Gather further information at meeting – possibly more complex than only attendance issue
 - If appropriate, gain parental consent to refer for Early Help Assessment. To be completed jointly by school/EWO
 - Review 4-6 weeks – close if improvements made or consider next course of action
- **Penalty Notice:**
 - Unauthorised Holiday – 10 sessions (5 school days) - referral to PenaltyNoticeRequest@salford.gov.uk
 - Unauthorised Absence – 10 sessions (5 school days) – **must be agreed with the Schools named EWO**
- **Fast Track:**
 - A phased approach of 3 meetings between the EWO/Parent & School over a 12 week period to address poor attendance
 - Parenting Contract completed with agreed actions between EWO/Parent & School
 - PACE interview if significant improvement in attendance has not been made and determine if prosecution is appropriate
 - Criminal conviction for parent if found guilty at Manchester & Salford’s Magistrates Court
- **Final Warning:**
 - Advisory notice and letter sent to parents to address continued poor attendance, where a Fast Track has already taken place.
 - Meeting arranged if needed
 - Approx a 6 week period for improvement (a half term)
 - PACE interview if significant improvement in attendance has not been made and determine if prosecution is appropriate
 - Criminal conviction for parent if found guilty at Manchester & Salford’s Magistrates Court

Guidance

Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year

Updated 6 January 2022

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

- This publication is an addendum to the non-statutory [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).
- We have amended regulations to enable schools, in the 2021 to 2022 academic year, to continue to record where a pupil does not attend in circumstances relating to COVID-19.
- **Expiry or review date**
- This guidance will be reviewed before August 2022.

WHO IS THIS PUBLICATION FOR?

This guidance is for:

- School leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies, independent, and free schools
- Local authorities

SUMMARY

This guidance sets out how schools should record where pupils are not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus in the 2021/22 academic year. This category should only be used to record where their attendance would be contrary to legislation or guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), or the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to 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
- The duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

NOT ATTENDING IN CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO COVID-19

This category must be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 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 COVID-19 from UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), 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 COVID-19

This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

EXAMPLES IN WHICH 'NOT ATTENDING IN CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO COVID-19' COULD APPLY

In line with current legislation and guidance from the UKHSA and DHSC, examples are as follows.

- **Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms of COVID-19**
- Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should follow the latest government guidance on whether they need to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.
- Where a pupil is required to take a PCR test, and they test negative and feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the PCR test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). 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. For symptomatic pupils, Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test.
- After a pupil tests positive for COVID-19 (LFD or PCR), they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. They should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance.
- Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

- From 14 December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months (pupils) identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a LFD test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result.

DAILY TESTING OF CLOSE CONTACTS APPLIES TO ALL CONTACTS WHO ARE:

- Fully vaccinated adults – people who have had 2 doses of an approved vaccine
- All children and young people aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months (pupils), regardless of their vaccination status
- People who are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
- People taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a covid-19 vaccine

Although close contacts are strongly advised to get a test, they should continue to attend school unless they are symptomatic. Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Children under 5 years are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts. Pupils with SEND identified as close contacts should be supported by their school and their families to agree the most appropriate route for testing including, where appropriate, additional support to assist swabbing. For further information please see [SEND guidance](#).

Further information is available in [NHS Test and Trace: what to do if you are contacted](#) and in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

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 a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.
- **Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a test**
- In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.
- Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance guidance for schools](#).
- **Remote education**
- If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

[Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)