



# PUDSEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

EST.1905

## Attendance Policy 2022 - 2024

This policy has been agreed by the Governing Body of  
Pudsey Grammar School

Ratified: Full Governor Board

Date approved: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Date of review: February 2024

### **1. The Law**

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance. It is important for parents to know that:

- Children must attend regularly to achieve their full potential.
- Children who miss out on school can feel vulnerable and left behind.
- Leave in term time is disruptive and can seriously affect your child's education.
- Unauthorised absence can lead to prosecution.

### **2. The Government expects and advises schools and local authorities to:**

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Ensure all pupils are punctual to their lessons.

Attendance below 91% is classed as 'Persistent Absenteeism' by the Department for Education. Attendance below 97% will trigger an intervention by the school unless absence has been authorised.

### **3. The importance of attendance**

Excellent attendance is the key to ensuring that children and young people have the best life chances and opportunities. At Pudsey Grammar School, we strongly believe that having access to a good education is the best way to ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes.

It is the responsibility of Pudsey Grammar School, parent/carers and the pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all our children and young people receive a good education.

Attendance is defined as: participation in a programme of educational activities arranged by the school, this may include off site provision.

The table below shows the link between % attendance at school, number of days absent and how it will impact on students' learning.

Attendance during one school year	Equals days absent	Which is approximately weeks absent	Which means the number of lessons missed	Absences over 5 years
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	Over 40 Lessons	$\frac{1}{4}$ Year
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	Over 80 Lessons	$\frac{1}{2}$ Year
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	Over 160 Lessons	1 Year
70%	57 Days	11 $\frac{1}{2}$ Weeks	Over 250 Lessons	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ Year
60%	80 Days	16 Weeks	Over 350 Lessons	2 Years
50%	100 Days	20 Weeks	Over 400 Lessons	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Years

#### 4. Authorised absence

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time.

**The Headteacher will decide whether or not the absence should be authorised.**

Leave in term time may only be authorised if parents or carers make a request to the school on the appropriate form giving **exceptional** reasons why the leave in term time has been requested.

#### **Requests for planned leave in exceptional circumstances.**

From September 2013, schools are no longer allowed to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time.

Requests for leave can only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. Requests for leave must be made to the school in advance, as the DFE have told schools that they cannot authorise and absences after they have been taken.

Parents/Carers may receive a penalty notice if their child is absent from school without permission. Penalty notices are issued per child per parent at a rate of £60 per notice to be paid in full in 21 days. If unpaid, the penalty notice

increases to £120 to be paid in full in 7 days.

Once paid, the parent/carers has discharged their liability for the offence.

Should the parent/carers fail to pay then the case will be considered for presentation to the magistrates under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for the offence of failing to ensure their child attends school regularly. Should this happen, parents/carers face a fine of up to £1000 and a criminal record if they are found guilty.

## **5. Safeguarding**

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding matter**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The school will follow its procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. These procedures are:

- Where we have no reason for absence a Truancy text will be sent, and an attendance call will be made.
- Where contact with the school has still not been made, the attendance bus will be sent to the address to ascertain a reason for absence
- If no contact is made, further investigation will be carried out by the Attendance Officer and Year Leader.
- Police may be contacted to visit the home address
- In extreme cases, advice will be sought from the Deputy Headteacher/Local Gov and in some cases a Child Missing Education referral will be made to the LA.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Attendance is a whole school issue which is linked to safeguarding and is a shared responsibility. Parents/carers should ensure that their children attend school and provide reasons for any absence.

## **Specific Guidance**

### **Medical absence**

**At Pudsey Grammar School:**

- We ask parents/carers to develop resilience within their child so that they could avoid being absent from school for frequent 'single days'
- We understand that some medical appointments will need to take place during school hours. However, we ask parents/carers, where possible, to try and obtain orthodontist or GP appointments during out of school hours.

- We ask that parents/carers contact the Attendance Monitoring Office on (0113 2558277) to advise of your child's absence. This should be done by 8.20am. The reason for absence must be clearly stated e.g., 'Headache and high temperature', not simply 'unwell.' Students should be encouraged to return to school as soon as possible once they are well.
- Students can only be sent home through the authorisation of the medical / first aid room staff. Students must not make their own arrangements to go home, and parents/carers should only come to the school to collect their child/ren once the school has made contact. If this process is not followed, the absence may not be authorised.
- Where it is possible for a student to continue with their school day, they will be asked to do so and we will review their health as and when required during the day.
- Staff will conduct parent/carer meetings where students have long term illness. Discussion will take place around attendance, progress and resilience/coping skills.
- Staff will conduct parent/carer meetings where students have frequent illness
- We stipulate that only two periods of self-certified absence can be accepted as authorised over the school year. Any additional absences must be justified with medical evidence.
- Medical evidence must be produced for long term and frequent illness (e.g., medication containers/boxes with the pharmacy name labels containing student's name and date) and for short term absences where the student's attendance is below 97%. On occasion, where this is not provided, the parents will be asked to give us permission to contact their GP.

### Lateness

#### At Pudsey Grammar School:

- We close our registers at 11.20am. We advise all parents/carers to ensure that students throughout all year groups (7/8/9/10/11) are on the **school grounds by 8.30am to avoid being recorded as late.**
- Students who are late to school without a valid reason will be expected to complete a **35 minute after-school detention** on the same day for years 9/10/11 and the next day for years 7/8. Parents/carers will be contacted on the day. Should this cause any inconvenience, the school will arrange an alternative day for completing this detention.
- Students must report to the school office if they arrive after 8.40 for years 7/8/9/10/11 where they will be registered with a late mark.

### Support

#### At Pudsey Grammar School:

- We track and monitor the attendance of *a//* children.
- The Attendance officer will send letters to parents/carers and offer to meet to discuss reasons for poor attendance. Where

necessary, the school will seek to provide or signpost support for students and/or parents.

- We report attendance figures to the Student Support Governors and respond to school attendance issues.
- Family support services are provided to assist in improving attendance for some of those students where attendance is less than 80%. The school minibs may be deployed in order to help bring students to school.
- We take a whole school approach to improve attendance through Form time discussions, assemblies, rewards and recognitions.
- We introduce incentives and initiatives to promote punctuality and good attendance.
- We use a home school agreement to underpin attendance meetings in school.
- We provide information regularly to parents through letters and texts, giving the attendance figure and comparing that with the school's expectations.
- We share a child's Registration Certificate when transferring information between schools or other relevant external agencies.
- We implement the Cluster Managing Absence from School process.

#### **In support of this, all partner agencies:**

- When appropriate, work with children and their families to address needs to improve school attendance.
- When presented with the challenge of poor attendance professionals will take appropriate decision to address this.
- At every opportunity, promote a positive message to children and their families about the importance of school attendance using a variety of creative means and media.

#### **Monitoring safety:**

If a student is absent from school, we will take the following steps:

Absence and continued absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where we have no reason for absence a <b>Truancy text will be sent, and an attendance call will be made. On certain days of the week, the attendance bus will be sent to the address to ascertain a reason for absence</b></li> <li>• If no contact is made, investigation will be carried out by the Attendance Officer and Year Leader.</li> <li>• In extreme cases advice will be sought from the Deputy Headteacher/Local Gov and in some cases a Child Missing Education referral will be made to the LA.</li> </ul>
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#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Position	Role and responsibilities
Deputy Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Policy and practice design, review and day to day implementation</li> <li>· Reporting to governors and external agencies.</li> </ul>
Attendance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Day to day systems implementation.</li> <li>· Checking accuracy of statutory registers.</li> <li>· Recording late marks and implementing sanctions.</li> <li>· Contacting parents with Stage absence management letters.</li> <li>· Conducting parental meetings.</li> <li>· Liaison with the cluster and outside agencies.</li> <li>· Tracking interventions and their impact including legal cases</li> </ul>
Family support Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Liaison with families of PA students.</li> <li>· Home visits in order to bring PA students to school.</li> <li>· Coordinating visits to homes and route planning.</li> <li>· Provide breakfast where necessary.</li> </ul>
Director of Studies and Year Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Make use of attendance data to identify priority students and appropriate interventions</li> <li>· Make attendance calls to parents of disadvantaged students and actively work to solve problems with school attendance.</li> <li>· Contact students and parents to make them aware of attendance issues and discuss how attendance can be improved.</li> <li>· Regularly meet the attendance officer and update the attendance tracker with actions from the year office.</li> <li>· Provide evidence for legal cases and attend SAP meetings as required</li> </ul>
Form Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Create a welcoming and open atmosphere which enables students to share experiences and enjoy school.</li> <li>· Promote the benefits of good attendance.</li> <li>· Refer problems to the year leader and attendance officer.</li> <li>· <b>Do the register within 15 minutes of the start of the day.</b></li> </ul>

Classroom Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Create a welcoming and open atmosphere which enable students to share experiences and enjoy school.</li> <li>· Provide support to students returning after absence and ensure they catch up on work that has been missed.</li> <li>· If a student is absent from a lesson during the day but has been present during previous periods, let the attendance officer know via email.</li> <li>· <b>Do the register within 15 minutes of each lesson</b></li> </ul>
School Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mark students as late when they enter the building after 8.30 for years 7/8/9 and 08:40 for years 10/11.</li> <li>· Amend registers as students are signed out.</li> </ul>

### Pudsey Grammar School Attendance Intervention Processes

It is our policy to work in partnership with parents and carers of students at PGS to overcome barriers to attendance. Where unauthorised absences are too frequent, we may take the following steps.



Fast track process begins for those with 10 unauthorised absences within a 12-week period. Letter sent advising of four-week monitoring period where there must be no unauthorised absence.

**Failure of the 4 Week Monitoring period results in School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting.**



Parents are invited for the SAP meeting with Attendance Officer, Year Leader and the Local Authority to discuss strategies for supporting attendance.



**Penalty Notice warning letter issued.**



A further monitoring period of four weeks begins from the date of the meeting even if parents/carers have not attended. If this is unsuccessful a penalty notice, or fast track fine can be raised through the LEA.

Fast Track cases are used to address erratic attendance. Chronic poor attendance is dealt with through SAP meetings, liaison with outside agencies and legal action through the LEA.