Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre
Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy		
	Signature	**Date**
Head Teacher	**Fiona MacCorquodale**	**Feb 2026**
Governing Body	**Children, Curriculum and Standards Committee**	**Feb 2026**
Next review date	**Feb 2027**	

The name of the senior leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school are:

Fiona MacCorquodale – Headteacher

Bev Newman- Deputy head

Touvonna Walsh-Royer- Learning and attendance mentor

The name and contact details of the school staff members pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis are:

Touvonna Walsh-Royer- Learning Mentor

Bev Newman- Deputy Head

office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk

Introduction

Regular and punctual attendance at school is essential for ensuring that pupils gain the full benefits of their education. The purpose of this policy is to outline the school's approach to managing and promoting attendance in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, "Working Together to Improve School Attendance".

Legal Context

This policy adheres to the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- DfE guidance: Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)

All children of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually.

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Aims of the Policy

Our attendance policy seeks to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to their full-time educational entitlement.
- Support pupils to achieve high attendance rates.
- Address barriers to attendance and provide targeted support to pupils and families.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher:

- Oversees the strategic approach to attendance across the school.
- Ensures compliance with statutory obligations for attendance monitoring and reporting.

Designated Attendance Leads:

- Monitors pupil attendance daily and identifies patterns or concerns.
- Leads on interventions to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Liaises with families, external agencies, and the Local Authority.

Teachers:

- Record attendance accurately during morning and afternoon registration.
- Promote good attendance through positive classroom culture and engagement.

Parents/Carers:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Notify the school of any absence on the first day and provide reasons for absences.
- Engage with the school to address any barriers to attendance.

Promoting Good Attendance

The school will:

- Celebrate and reward good or improving attendance.
- Share attendance information with parents through newsletters and reports.
- Offer support to families where attendance falls below the expected standard.

The school's target for attendance is 93% or more

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Types of Absence

Attendance is categorised as either authorised or unauthorised:

Authorised Absence:

- Illness (with medical evidence provided if requested).
- Medical or dental appointments (only when unavoidable during school hours).
- Religious observance – pupils taking one day of religious observance such Eid-pilgrimage is unauthorised)
- Exceptional circumstances (rare and must be requested in advance and are approved by the Headteacher- evidence of tickets etc may be requested)

Unauthorised Absence:

- Family holidays during term time.
- Absences for reasons not accepted by the school (e.g., shopping, birthdays).
- Absence due to tiredness or oversleeping
- Absence because a parent is unwell
- Absence due to minor ailments (see NHS guidance 'should I keep my child off school?')
- Persistent lateness after the register closes at 9:30am.

Persistent and Severe Absenteeism

- Pupils missing **10% or more** of their sessions are considered persistently absent.
- Pupils missing **50% or more** are classified as severely absent.

The school will:

- Identify and support pupils at risk of persistent or severe absenteeism.
- Work collaboratively with families and external agencies to address barriers to attendance.
- Refer cases of persistent absenteeism to the Local Authority where necessary.

Procedures for Absence

- Parents must inform the school of absences by 9:10am on the first day.
- Absences must be reported daily unless otherwise agreed.
- The school will contact parents if no explanation for absence is received.
- Children must return to school as soon as possible with any medical evidence if requested to support the absence.

Lateness

Pupils are expected to arrive by 9:00am. Registration closes at 9:10am. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as late (L) or may be marked unauthorised (U) if beyond 9:30am.

Persistent lateness will be addressed through:

- Communication with parents.
- Meetings to discuss underlying causes and solutions.
- Referral to external agencies if necessary.

Penalty Notices and Legal Action

The school follows Local Authority guidelines for penalty notices and legal interventions:

- Penalty Notices may be issued for unauthorised absences of **10 or more sessions**.
- Failure to pay fines may result in prosecution under the Education Act 1996.

Monitoring and Reporting

Attendance is monitored daily, and reports are shared termly with:

- Parents/carers.
- The Governing Body.
- The Local Authority and DfE, where required.

Support for Families

The school is committed to working with families to overcome barriers to attendance. This includes:

- Offering Early Help support.
- Referring to mental health, family support, or other local services.
- Developing individualised support plans where needed.

Links to Other Policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day