



Green Park Community Primary School Attendance Policy



Created: September 2026



Review by: September 2027

School	Green Park Community Primary School
Policy	Attendance Policy
Attendance Lead	Lindsey Kinnon
Reviewed / Updated	September 2026
Approved by	Governing Body
Next Review	September 2027

1. Statement of Intent

At Green Park Community Primary School, we believe that regular attendance is fundamental to pupils' education, wellbeing, safeguarding and wider development. Every school day provides opportunities for learning, friendship, personal development and participation in the life of our community.

We are committed to working in partnership with pupils, parents and carers to promote excellent attendance and punctuality. Our approach is supportive, consistent and child-centred. We seek to understand and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity, while taking appropriate action where attendance does not improve or where legal intervention is required.

We recognise that attendance is individual to each pupil. Where health, SEND, family circumstances, safeguarding or other barriers affect attendance, we will consider the pupil's individual circumstances and work with the family and relevant services to identify appropriate support.

2. Statutory Framework and Guidance

This policy reflects the statutory requirements and guidance in force for the 2026–2027 academic year. It should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, behaviour, SEND and medical needs procedures.

- Department for Education: Working Together to Improve School Attendance – statutory guidance, updated July 2026.
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education Act 1996, including duties relating to regular school attendance.
- Department for Education: Children Missing Education – statutory guidance.
- Relevant Kent County Council attendance procedures and the current Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where attendance concerns have safeguarding implications.

3. Aims

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Ensure pupils benefit from their full entitlement to education.
- Identify attendance concerns as early as possible.
- Understand and address barriers that prevent regular attendance.
- Work positively and collaboratively with parents and carers.
- Ensure attendance procedures are fair, consistent, proportionate and child-centred.
- Recognise attendance as an important safeguarding issue.
- Use attendance information to identify patterns, trends and groups requiring additional support.
- Meet all statutory duties relating to attendance, absence, registration and children missing education.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors: monitor attendance strategically, receive regular reports and hold leaders to account for improving attendance.
- Headteacher and SLT: provide strategic leadership, ensure statutory duties are met, monitor attendance and oversee support and escalation.
- Attendance Lead / Attendance Officer – Lindsey Kinnon: monitor attendance, follow up unexplained absence, maintain accurate records, coordinate support and liaise with families and external services.
- Class teachers: complete registers accurately, promote good attendance, notice patterns of absence or lateness and raise concerns promptly.
- Parents and carers: ensure children attend regularly and on time, report absence on the first day and work with the school to address barriers.
- Pupils: attend regularly, arrive on time and speak to a trusted adult if something is making attendance difficult.
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5. The School Day and Registration

Green Park takes two attendance registers each day: one at the beginning of the morning session and one at the beginning of the afternoon session. Registers are maintained electronically using the national attendance and absence codes.

The register remains open for a maximum of 30 minutes after the start of each session, in accordance with statutory guidance. Pupils arriving after the start but before the register closes will normally receive code L. Pupils arriving after the register closes will normally receive code U unless another absence code is appropriate.

All pupils arriving late must enter through the main entrance and report to Reception so that their arrival and reason for lateness can be recorded.

Pupils	Morning	Afternoon
EYFS, Years 1, 2 and 3	8:45am	1:10pm
Years 4, 5 and 6	8:30am	1:25pm
Register closes	30 minutes after opening	30 minutes after opening
Late pupils	Report to Reception	Report to Reception

6. Attendance Codes and Accurate Registration

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and DfE attendance guidance. Staff must use the code that most accurately reflects the circumstances.

The principal codes include:

- / and \ – present at the school for the morning or afternoon session.
- L – late arrival before the register closes.
- U – late arrival after the register closes, where no other absence code is appropriate.
- I – unable to attend because of sickness.
- M – absent for a medical or dental appointment.
- G – absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.
- O – absent without authorisation for a reason not covered by another code.
- C – absent with leave for other authorised circumstances.
- B – attending an approved educational activity.
- Other national codes will be used where applicable, including codes for religious observance, transport difficulties, public health, school closure and other exceptional circumstances.

7. Reporting Absence

Parents and carers should contact the school on the first day their child is absent and provide the reason. This is important both for attendance and safeguarding because the school needs to know that pupils are safe and accounted for.

Where no explanation has been received, the school will make appropriate contact with the parent or carer. Repeated unexplained absence will be followed up promptly.

- Parents should keep the school informed if an absence is expected to continue.
- The school may request further information where necessary to understand the reason for absence.
- Where the school cannot establish a pupil's whereabouts, safeguarding and Children Missing Education procedures will be considered with a possible home visit to check on the child's welfare.

8. Supporting Attendance – Graduated Approach

Green Park follows a graduated, support-first approach. Attendance concerns will not be managed solely by applying numerical thresholds. Attendance data will be considered alongside the individual circumstances of the pupil and family.

Stage 1 – Universal and Early Support

- Promote the importance of attendance through assemblies, newsletters, class discussions and positive communication.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality regularly.
- Contact families when emerging concerns are identified.
- Talk with pupils to understand worries or barriers.
- Offer practical support and advice.

Stage 2 – Targeted Support

- Meet with parents or carers to understand the reasons for absence.
- Agree appropriate actions and review dates.
- Consider an attendance support plan or other documented support.
- Work with the pupil, family and relevant school staff.
- Consider Early Help or other appropriate services where wider needs are identified.

Stage 3 – Formal Intervention

- Where attendance does not improve despite support, the school may involve Kent County Council's attendance service.
- The school may use formal attendance meetings, written agreements or other appropriate interventions.
- Legal intervention may be considered where statutory thresholds are met and it is appropriate.

9. Persistent and Severe Absence

A pupil is nationally defined as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions. A pupil is severely absent when they miss 50% or more of their possible sessions. These are national definitions and do not replace the school's responsibility to intervene early.

Pupils approaching persistent absence, or whose attendance is deteriorating significantly, will be identified and considered for support before absence becomes entrenched.

Particular attention will be given to vulnerable pupils, including pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after children, young carers and pupils experiencing other barriers.

Severe absence will receive an urgent and, where appropriate, multi-agency response.

10. Lateness and Punctuality

Regular punctuality is important because late arrival can result in missed learning and disruption to the pupil's start to the day.

- Parents and carers should ensure pupils arrive in time for the start of their session.
- Late pupils must report to Reception.
- Code L will normally be used for arrival before the register closes.
- Code U will normally be used where a pupil arrives after the register has closed and no other absence code is appropriate.
- Patterns of lateness will be monitored and discussed with families.
- Persistent lateness, particularly where pupils regularly arrive after the register closes, may result in formal attendance intervention and, where appropriate, legal intervention.

11. Leave of Absence and Term-Time Holidays

Parents and carers do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Leave of absence must be requested in advance and can only be authorised where the circumstances meet statutory requirements.

The Headteacher will consider requests in accordance with the law and current DfE and Kent County Council guidance. Each case will be considered on its individual circumstances. Term-time holidays will normally be recorded as unauthorised absence. Parents and carers should not make travel arrangements before a request has been considered.

12. Penalty Notices and Legal Intervention

Where support is not appropriate, has not been engaged with, or has not worked, the school may consider legal intervention in accordance with the national attendance framework and Kent County Council's current Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct.

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, normally equivalent to 5 school days, within 10 school weeks, where the absence includes one or more relevant codes such as G, O or U. Meeting the threshold does not mean a penalty notice will automatically be issued; the school and Local Authority must consider whether it is appropriate and effective in the individual circumstances.

Under the current Kent arrangements, the first penalty notice is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice for the same parent and pupil within a rolling three-year period is £160 with no reduced rate. The current Kent arrangements at the time of action will apply.

Where two penalty notices have already been issued for the same parent and pupil within the relevant three-year period, further absence will be dealt with through the appropriate alternative legal or attendance intervention rather than automatically issuing a third penalty notice.

13. Absence Due to Illness and Health Needs

The school recognises that pupils may sometimes be unable to attend because of illness or health needs. Genuine illness will be recorded using the appropriate national attendance code.

The school will seek to understand repeated or prolonged absence and, where appropriate, work with families, health professionals and other services to support a return to school.

- Reasonable adjustments will be considered for pupils with SEND or medical needs.
- Relevant healthcare plans and medical procedures will be followed.
- The school will avoid making assumptions about illness and will focus on removing barriers to attendance.

14. Attendance and Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding matter. Unexplained, prolonged, sudden or significantly reduced attendance can indicate that a pupil may be experiencing difficulties or may be at risk of harm.

- Unexplained absence will be followed up promptly.
- Attendance patterns will be considered alongside other safeguarding information.

- Where appropriate, concerns will be shared with the DSL and managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Where a pupil is missing from education or their whereabouts are unknown, the school will follow safeguarding and Children Missing Education procedures.
- Staff must not assume attendance concerns are solely an attendance issue where wider welfare concerns may exist.

15. Children Missing Education

The school will follow the Department for Education's statutory Children Missing Education guidance and Kent County Council procedures when a pupil is at risk of becoming, or may already be, missing from education.

- Reasonable enquiries will be made to establish a pupil's whereabouts when they cannot be accounted for.
- The school will maintain accurate contact information and encourage parents to report changes promptly.
- A pupil will not be removed from the school roll simply because they have stopped attending without appropriate checks and procedures.
- Where the pupil's whereabouts are unknown, or there is reason to believe they have left without securing education elsewhere, the school will follow Kent County Council's CME procedures.
- The school will cooperate with the Local Authority and other agencies.

16. Vulnerable Groups and SEND

Some pupils may face additional barriers to attendance, including SEND, anxiety, mental health needs, medical conditions, family circumstances, social care involvement, caring responsibilities, bullying, safeguarding concerns or other unmet needs.

- Attendance data will be reviewed by relevant pupil groups to identify inequalities or patterns.
- Support will be personalised rather than based on a one-size-fits-all approach.
- The SENCO, DSL, Attendance Lead and other professionals will work together where appropriate.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered where disability or SEND creates barriers to attendance.
- The school will work with relevant professionals for pupils with social workers or other complex needs.

17. Promoting and Celebrating Attendance

The school will promote the importance of regular attendance through positive relationships, communication with families and celebration of improvement and success.

- Attendance will be discussed positively with pupils.
- The school may recognise good attendance, improved attendance and positive punctuality.
- Recognition systems will not disadvantage pupils because of unavoidable absence, disability, medical needs or circumstances beyond their control.
- The emphasis will be on attendance, improvement, engagement and readiness to learn rather than simply achieving 100% attendance.

18. Attendance Data, Monitoring and Reporting

Attendance data will be monitored at least weekly by the Attendance Lead and SLT. The school will analyse whole-school, year-group, individual and group-level patterns to identify emerging concerns and evaluate support.

- Attendance and lateness will be monitored weekly.
- Persistent and severe absence will be reviewed regularly.

- Vulnerable groups will be monitored.
- Interventions will be recorded and reviewed.
- Governors will receive regular attendance information.
- Attendance priorities will be informed by school performance, national context and school improvement priorities.

19. Record Keeping and Data Protection

Attendance records, communications, support plans and intervention records will be maintained securely and in accordance with the school's data protection and information management procedures.

The school will maintain accurate admission and attendance registers and retain records for the periods required by law and Local Authority procedures.

20. Working with Families and Other Agencies

Green Park believes that strong relationships with families are central to improving attendance. The school will seek to work with parents and carers respectfully and without judgement while remaining clear about statutory responsibilities.

- Meetings and conversations will focus on understanding barriers and agreeing practical next steps.
- The school may use Early Help or other services where wider family needs affect attendance.
- The school will work with Kent County Council's attendance service where appropriate.
- Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the school will follow safeguarding procedures and involve relevant agencies.

21. Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy and Local Offer
- Medical Conditions / Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education procedures
- Absconding Policy and Procedures
- First Aid and Health and Safety procedures
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equality Policy
- Complaints Policy

22. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Headteacher and Attendance Lead will review the effectiveness of this policy through attendance data, persistent and severe absence data, punctuality data, intervention outcomes, pupil and parent feedback, staff feedback and Local Authority guidance.

The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or Kent County Council procedures.

23. Approval

- Reviewed / updated: September 2026
- Policy lead: Lindsey Kinnon
- Approved by: Governing Body
- Next review: September 2027

Appendix 1 Late letter (Code L)

Appendix 2 Late letter (Code U)

Appendix 3 Absence Letter

Appendix 4 School Attendance Meeting Letter

Appendix 5 School Letter Warning re: Penalty Notice Referral

Appendix 6 Unauthorised absence confirmation of PN request

Appendix 7a Response to Leave Request (Not Authorising)

Appendix 7b Response to Leave Request submitted retrospectively (Not Authorising)

Appendix 8 Unauthorised leave confirmation of PN request

Appendix 9 School letter where they believe a holiday was taken

Appendix 10 Traveller Attendance letter

Appendix 11 Traveller Absence due to travelling

Appendix 12 School Referral Pathway

Appendix 1

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been arriving late at school. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code L):

«dates_of_lates_before»

Total lates before registration closed: «total_lates_before» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at ?? am and at ?? pm.

A pupil's lateness will seriously disrupt their learning and can be embarrassing for your child.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 2

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has arrived after the register has been closed. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code U):

«dates_of_lates_after»

Total lates after registration closed: «total_lates_after» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at ?? am and is closed at ?? am for the morning session and taken again at ?? pm and closed at ?? pm for the afternoon session. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked 'U' which records the absence as unauthorised for that session.

Arriving after the register has closed is seriously disrupting your child's learning and is impacting on their overall attendance.

Persistent late arrival may lead to a referral for a Penalty Notice or a referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

If «forename» continues to arrive late after the register has closed we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 3

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was absent.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt their learning, not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve «forename»'s attendance. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 4

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «forename» «surname»

Despite previous warnings, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. «forename»'s attendance at school is currently «percentage_attendance»% which means «he_she» has missed «total_authorised_absences» half day sessions for authorised absence and «total_unauthorised_absences» half day sessions for unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on your child's education which we cannot ignore.

As there has been no improvement in «forename»'s attendance, I must advise you that further absences from school as a result of illness may require medical evidence (e.g. copy of a prescription, Doctors/Dentist appointment card). If medical evidence is not provided when required, further absences will be marked as unauthorised.

I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting. The time and date have been set for ?? at ?? It is important that you and «forename» attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around poor attendance. The meeting will be attended by:

??

If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me so that an alternative time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and «forename»'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher
The School

Appendix 5

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

At our school we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that «forename» has been absent from school for a total of «total_unauthorised_absences» unauthorised half day sessions. I refer you to legislation regarding Penalty Notices.

‘As from 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) during any 100 possible school sessions.’ A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

Please note this is a warning letter that a Penalty Notice could be requested if a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) are reached.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

If further unauthorised absence occurs you will be contacted and invited in for a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 6

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

With reference to our letter dated ??, «forename» has now reached a total of «total_unauthorised_absences» half day sessions of unauthorised absence. As a result we will now be requesting a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 7a

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Request for leave during Term-Time

For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»

I have received your request to take «forename» out of school for a family holiday between ??date and ??date, a total of ??Number of school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I have considered your request but I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. If you decide to take «forename» out of school I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 7b

«addressee»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Request for leave during Term-Time
For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 8

«addressee»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Name: «forename» «surname» DOB: «date_of_birth»

With reference to our letter dated **??date**, the leave of absence taken between **??date** and **??date** has now been recorded as Unauthorised Absence and as a result a Penalty Notice has been requested.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 9

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence, except in exceptional circumstances. ***(State why you are treating this absence as a family holiday and/or why there are no exceptional circumstances)***

Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively therefore this absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence, where a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 100 school session a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The Penalty Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty instead of being prosecuted for failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school. The amount of the penalty is £120 per parent, per child, but if payment is made by you within 21 days of receipt of this Notice it will be £60 per parent, per child. If you pay this penalty within the time limits, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence, i.e. your liability for the offence will be discharged.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 10

«addressee»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Traveller Absence **«forename» «surname»**

I am writing to say how concerned I am over the number of times «forename» has been absent from school. This academic year «forename» has missed «total_authorized_absences» authorised half day sessions and «total_unauthorised_absences» unauthorised half day sessions achieving an overall attendance rate of «percentage_attendance»%.

Traveller children have to attend school for 380 sessions (190 days) each year, which is the same for all children and you are at risk of being referred to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer if «forename»'s attendance falls below 90%. I am unable to authorise any absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances or if you will be travelling for occupational purposes and agree this with the school in advance.

If you would like to speak to me about «forename»'s attendance, please telephone the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 11

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Traveller Absence

«forename» «surname»

Thank you for contacting me to say that «forename» will be absent from school from **??Date** as you will be travelling due to your work.

The law allows me to authorise «forename»'s absence if your trade or business means that you have to travel from place to place. However, you have not let me know when «forename» is likely to return to school. Unless you contact me during the next 10 school days to confirm a date, I will refer «forename» to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education.

After 20 days absence, there may be grounds to take «forename»'s name off the school roll and you will have to re-apply for a school place when you return.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 12

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

