

*UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 28) -
'Every child has the right to an education.'*



Whole School Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Introduction:

In the Czech Republic, school attendance is compulsory for 9 years, usually between the ages of 6 and 15.

“This applies to the citizens of the Czech Republic and to the citizens of other EU member states who have resided in the Czech Republic for more than 90 days. Compulsory school attendance also applies to other foreigners who are entitled to reside in the Czech Republic permanently or temporarily for a period longer than 90 days, including asylum seekers. In the Czech Republic, parents are obliged to:

- *make sure their child attends school;*
- *enrol their child in elementary school when he/she reaches six years of age*
- *be personally involved in important discussions about their child’s education*
- *inform the school about any changes concerning their child’s health*
- *excuse any school absence of their child*

“It is necessary to excuse all of your child’s absence from school. If your child is late for school for any reason, it is essential to inform the school, explaining the reasons for your child’s absence.” (Bačáková, M., 2017)

Why regular attendance in school is so important:

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance;
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically;
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with;
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying;
- Regular attenders find the transition easier between age phases / key stages / primary-secondary.

According to the UK Department for Education, *“a persistently absent child is one who misses school for at least 10% of the time.”*

Regular and punctual attendance is required of pupils on all school days. This is **a condition of enrolment at the school.**

Daily regular attendance is mandatory and parents must seek permission from the relevant Head of school (either Head of Secondary or Head of EYFS & Primary) should they wish to

take their children out of school during term time. Teachers, staff and parents should work together to ensure that pupils miss as little school as possible. **Where significant absence is**

impacting on pupil progress, the school reserves the right to review an individual's level of attainment and decide on whether transition into the next school year is appropriate.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their **learning**. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may consequently affect the learning of others in the same class.

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. **Safeguarding** the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of Park Lane International School, we adhere to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* as follows:

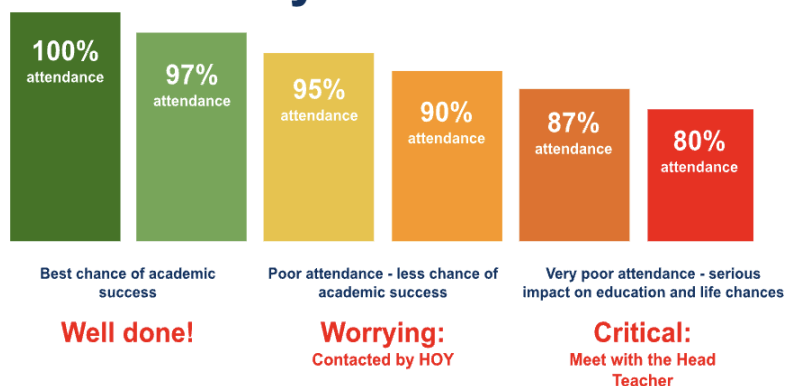
- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding matter and appropriate further action will be taken to address this.

An annual attendance record below 95% is considered to be a cause for concern; below 90% is considered critical and will always lead to an official review by the school's senior management, who may deem it necessary to review your child's school place at Park Lane International School. In some serious cases it may be necessary for us to communicate with OSPOD (Social Care).

We would like to remind our Park Lane families of the importance of good attendance at school:

What is your attendance?



There are 185 non-school days in the year for visits, holidays and other appointments. Please do not request absence for your child unless it is absolutely necessary.

Based on an average school year, **5% of absence** would mean your child will have taken **9 days off school**.

As the school calendar currently allows for more than 13 weeks of regular holidays per annum, holidays during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and such requests, which should be made at the beginning of each school year (before the end of September), will always be referred to the senior management team for approval.

The UK Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) states that: *“Regular attendance is crucial to raising and maintaining high attainment. **If pupils do not come to school, they cannot learn what is taught in a lesson, practise what has been taught, or improve on their performance.** There is a clear correlation. Pupils who attend regularly achieve more highly.”* (Framework section 4.3)

When should my child not come to school?

The school should immediately be informed if a pupil is diagnosed with a **serious infectious disease** e.g. scarlet fever. Families of other members of that year group and, if appropriate, members of the whole school community will then be informed that there is a case of the illness in the relevant year group. The student must not return to school until certified by a medical practitioner to be clear of the infection.

If a pupil has **head-lice**, he or she cannot return to school without a signed note from a medical practitioner stating that the infestation has been cleared. Families of other members of that year group will be informed immediately that head-lice have been found within the cohort.

In cases of **diarrhoea or vomiting** we strongly recommend students be kept at home for at least 24 hours once they have recovered.

If you require any medical advice or have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact, the school nurse: school.nurse@parklane-is.com

Reporting absence

If your child will be absent for any reason, please use the Parent/Guardian portal.

Illness:

If your child will be absent due to illness, please let the office know **before 8.30 am on the day**, using the Parent/Guardian portal.

During the school day, once your child is in school, it is not possible to excuse your child for illness using our online system. The school nurse, your child's HOY or a member of our senior leadership team will be able to determine whether your child needs to come home because of an illness that develops during the school day and they will contact you. If your child contacts you directly to report that they are feeling unwell, please contact the school office so that they can ask one of our first aid trained colleagues to check on them and contact you for an update.

In Secondary, if a student leaves school without permission from their Head of Year or a member of the SLT, this will not be authorised.

You can contact our school offices at the following telephone numbers:

Early Years and Foundation Stage:

- **Send an email to the class teacher**
- **School office:** Prague 6 Sibeliova telephone - **734 265 258**
- **School office:** Prague 5 Nessie telephone - **603 883 355 / 251 560 531**

Primary Year 1 - 6:

- **Send an email to the class teacher**
- **School office:** Prague 5 Nessie telephone: **603 883 355 / 251 560 531**
- **School office:** Prague 6 Norbertov telephone: **733 697 349 / 220 512 653**

- **School office:** Prague 1 Valdstejska telephone: **257 316 182**

Secondary Year 7 - 9:

- **Email:** office.valdstejska@parklane-is.com
- **Telephone:** 257 316 182 (Valdštejská)

Secondary Year 10 - 11:

- **Email:** office.valdstejska@parklane-is.com
- **Telephone:** 734 285 133 (Klárov)

Secondary Year 12 - 13:

- **Email:** office.valdstejska@parklane-is.com
- **Telephone:** 737895744

The office will update the registers and inform form tutors and teachers of the reason for absence.

If your child is **absent for more than three days**, the school requires medical evidence to support absence. Medical evidence can take the form of a doctor's note/certificate, prescriptions, appointment cards, or other appropriate form of evidence.

The school may request medical evidence from a parent in the following circumstances:

- when a student has frequent or extended absences due to illness
- if a student has a chronic health condition that requires ongoing medical treatment or accommodations
- in cases where a student requires an extended medical leave from school due to a serious illness or injury
- if there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness

In Secondary, students are responsible for communicating with their teachers about how they can catch up on any work missed on their return to school.

The procedure above is in place because it is vital for us to ensure the safe arrival of all of our pupils to school. The designated school office administrator will call parents of any missing student immediately when an absence is flagged on the morning register. This procedure is important for our records, too. Without this, absences are recorded as **U = unauthorised (please see appendix for more information)**.

In EYFS and Primary, the class teacher or the school office administrator will contact parents and carers if there has been no communication from the parents and carers about a child's absence. This procedure is important for our records, too. Without this, absences are recorded as **U = unauthorised (please see appendix for more information)**.

There are times when we need to contact parents and carers about, amongst other things, absence. We need to have relevant contact numbers at all times. Please ensure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. **You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details. Details can be updated on the Parent/Guardian Portal.**

Medical appointments:

We strongly encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. **We ask that advance notice of at least a week is given for pre-planned medical appointments, including for dental or orthodontic appointments.**

For last minute emergency medical appointments, please contact the school office between 8.00 and 8.30 am.

Pupils who are unfit to take part in PE must always bring a written explanation from parents or a medical practitioner. This will be monitored by the PE department directly with the support of the school office. If not participating, pupils will be expected to watch the session or perform some simple tasks beneficial to the school community.

Those with long-term or chronic conditions may be permitted to work in the Learning Centre or a classroom. In the Secondary School, students with medical notes should always bring their PE kits to lessons, so they can play an active support role in the lesson, for example being an umpire or coach. In general, if a student is well enough to attend school, they are well enough to participate in PE.

Punctuality:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day or the beginning of a lesson, they may miss important learning and will not spend time with their class teacher or form tutor obtaining vital information and news for the day. In addition, late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence.

EYFS and Primary:

Pupils are registered twice a day; first thing in the morning at the start of the school day, and again in the afternoon session.

- **Registration** starts at **08.50am – 09.00am** for Pre-Nursery, Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes.
- **Registration** starts at **08.20am – 08.30am** for Year 2 - Year 6 classes.

Any pupil arriving after the registration time will be marked **L = Late**.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of the school time (Primary Leadership team / Deputy Head of EYFS and Primary) to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time and school will do what it can to assist.

Secondary:

Key stage 3 and 4 pupils are expected to arrive at school between 7.50 and 8.00. **Registration starts at 8.05 am and the registers are closed by 8.10 am.** Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked **L = Late**.

Key stage 5 pupils are expected to be in school by 8.15 am every day to register and may leave school after their last lesson of the day. As above, lateness will be recorded as **L = Late** on the register.

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which means...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year
20 minutes per day	1 hour 40 minutes per week	2.5 weeks per year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year

Form tutors will follow up with parents if a student is late to school more than twice in a week and pass concerns on to Heads of Year, the Deputy Head of Secondary and Head of Secondary who will request meetings with parents/carers if punctuality continues to be an issue despite interventions.

Out of school commitments:

This type of absence can only be approved for elite sporting/music/expressive arts activities (national/international level) and such requests must be made ahead of time, by agreement with the Head of Secondary or Head of Primary. **In some cases, an Individual Remote Learning Plan will be put in place while the student concerned is absent and they will always be expected to keep up with the work they have missed.** If they do not, or their continued absence correlates with poor academic performance, such agreements will be reviewed.

We recognise that there are circumstances when a pupil may have commitments outside of school which are exceptional. For example, a student may participate in a sport, dance or music at a very high level and be required to be absent from school to participate in an event or training.

Following discussions with parents, usually at enrollment or the beginning of a school year, the Head of Primary or Head of Secondary **may** give permission for a regular absence to

be granted in such cases. However, continuation of this agreement will be reviewed at the end of each key stage and the students' effort and attainment grades will need to be maintained at an appropriate level. The pupil will be expected to keep up with all academic work during an absence and they (or their parents in the case of primary aged children) will need to be proactive in gathering resources and communicating with teachers.

All absences and late arrivals are recorded on pupils' records and reports and, in the case of older secondary pupils, may be reflected in our reporting of punctuality and attendance in university application references. Parents may be invited into school to discuss persistent absence or lateness.

Research shows that: *"When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating."* (Roderick et al, 2014)

Other absence

Our head teachers do not grant leave of absence for holiday purposes unless there are **exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made at the beginning of the school year, preferably before the end of September** and the appropriate Head of School must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school and they will need to be satisfied that this is kept to the minimum possible. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and a student's previous attendance, punctuality, behaviour and attainment record will be taken into consideration.

We define exceptional circumstances as (but not limited to):

- International families visiting relatives who live outside of Europe.
- Families visiting new schools for taster days and interviews.
- Families whose business interests / visa status means they need to travel.

Summary of Absence and Attendance Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
I	Present (AM) (PM)	Present
A	Participating in a supervised sporting activity (football, floorball organised by PE department)	Authorised absence
C	Excused absence such as: Religious observation; Personal or professional exceptional circumstances; Special family occasions	Authorised absence
E	Exclusions	
L	Late arrival	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet known	Unauthorised absence
U	Absent from school without authorisation from the school	Unauthorised absence
V	Present at an approved off-site educational activity: Educational visit or trip; Offsite tests or examinations; Work experience placements.	Present
SH	School holidays	
X	School closed to pupils	Lessons not happening (e.g. end of year for Y11 and Y13)
DL	Distance Learning	Present – attendance at zoom session

Appendix 1. Details of Absence and Attendance Codes

The following codes are used to record and monitor attendance and absence at Park Lane International School and are in line with guidance from the UK DfE.

The codes are as follows:

Present at School

- **Registration Code / :** Present in school
- **Code L:** Late arrival before the register has closed
- **Code N:** Not present

Our policy is for morning registers to stay open from 8.05 am until 8.10 am. A pupil who is not present during this time will be marked by their tutor as code N. If they arrive after the register has closed and before 8.15, the tutor will mark them as code L or with another absence code if that is more appropriate. Pupils are also registered each lesson.

Code V: Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity has been approved by the respective senior leadership team.

The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Educational visit or trip;
- Offsite tests or examinations;
- Work experience placements.

Code A: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school.

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and

circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Religious observation
- Personal or professional exceptional circumstances
- Special family occasions (eg. funerals/marriages)

Code E: Exclusions

If a student breaks the terms of the Code of Conduct and is internally or externally excluded for a fixed period of time, Code E will be used on the register.

Code M: Illness or medical appointment

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Please see the guidance above.

Code U: Unauthorised absence

Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code U (absent from school without authorisation).

Appendix 2. Individual Remote Learning Plan

Individual Remote Learning (IRL)

There are **clear benefits to students being physically present in school** rather than participating in DL/HL, and so whenever it is possible, we strongly encourage parents to ensure their child/ren attend school as normal.

On occasions some students cannot physically be present in school. In this case, the school will support them through a bespoke IRL programme. This provision is only offered in the following circumstances:

- Pre-agreed absence for elite sporting/music/expressive arts activities (national/international level)
- Long term absence due to a medical condition. A doctor's note must be provided in such circumstances. Long term absence is defined as two weeks or more.

In both cases, a minimum of one week's notice must be given before the IRL can begin.

This provision can be put in place following **consultation with a child's class teacher / Head of Year after confirmation from a doctor** or other medical professional has been provided to confirm that a pupil will need to undertake a long term medical absence from school.

An Individual Remote Learning Plan will be created to ensure the student can keep up with the work they are missing.

IRL plans are not designed for those on short-term sickness absences from school.

References:

Bačáková, M., (2017), *Education in the Czech Republic*, UNHCR, Czech Republic.

Department for Education, (September 2018), *School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities*, London.

Ofsted, (May, 2019), *The education inspection framework*, Crown copyright 2019.

Roderick, M., et al, (2014), *Preventable Failure*, University of Chicago.

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