



'Being different, Belonging together'

ATTENDANCE POLICY

| <u>Policy Information</u> | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Status: | Statutory | Reviewed by: | Pupil and Staffing |
| Cycle of Review: | Annual | Policy Ratified: | January 2019 |
| Signed as accepted: | | | |

Purpose of this Policy

Good attendance at school is essential for children to enjoy learning, experience success, develop confidence and enable them to become lifelong learners who are prepared for life in the modern world. Learning early that attendance is the key to success enables them to access the broader curriculum, develop ownership of their learning and create a sense of aspiration for what life has to offer. *The greater the attendance, the greater the achievement.*

What does the law say?

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have by regular attendance at school. The government Department of Education considers any less than 90% attendance as 'persistent absence'. This calculation is based on the overall absence figures from the school register. Overall absence is the aggregated total of all authorised and unauthorised absences. Authorised absence is absence with permission from either the Headteacher or another authorised representative of the school. Unauthorised absence is absence without permission. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences and arrivals after registration has closed.

You should know that:

- All absence figures have to be reported to the Local Authority, Department for Education and the Governing Body.
- It is the responsibility of the parents, guardians or carers to be fully aware of the school's Attendance Policy.
- It is the responsibility of the parents, guardians or carers to manage their child's attendance in line with this policy.
- It is the responsibility of the parents, guardians or carers to inform the school of absence/lateness by 9.30am no later.
- Absence can have a huge impact on the confidence, self-esteem and friendship groups for child that can have long-term consequences.
- Everyone wants the best for their child, so why would you not support your child by ensuring that they are in School for the full entitlement of 190 days per year.
- This policy adheres to the Fixed Penalty Notices Code of Conduct (January 2014)

Rationale

At Frances Olive Anderson Church of England Primary School, we aim for high standards in all we do.

The School is committed to providing a carefully planned education for all students. We believe that regular school attendance is vitally important in helping all students benefit fully from this education. Accordingly, we will strive to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance, and that any problems which may hinder full attendance are acted upon swiftly.

In pursuit of these goals it is acknowledged that:



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- in the first instance, it is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that their child receives a suitable full-time education, and to ensure attendance at school, as required by law.
- situations may exist which require students and/or their parents/carers to be supported and rewarded either by the school, and/or external agencies, to meet their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

Home-School Links

In view of the above, good relationships between home and school are considered to be essential.

We expect parents/carers to ensure that students attend school regularly in accordance with the most recent DFE requirements which also encourages parents/carers to avoid term time holidays whenever possible. We also expect students to be punctual and appropriately prepared for the day. It is essential that contact with the school is made, as soon as is reasonably practical, whenever a student is unable to attend, or where there are problems of a confidential nature which may result in the student being kept away from school.

Parents/carers and students can expect the school to record daily, the punctuality and attendance of all students. The school will make early contact with home if a student fails to attend school without any reason being received by the school. Any problem notified to school will receive prompt and confidential action. If any member of staff has a concern regarding a pupil's punctuality or absence we will investigate this immediately to ascertain what support may be required.

Encouraging good attendance

We encourage good attendance through communication between school and parents/carers. Parents/carers are always encouraged to attend Parents' Consultation Evenings. In addition, attendance checks and awarding Certificates for 100% attendance achieved throughout the year are further examples of ways in which the school encourages good attendance.

Responding to non-attendance

When a student does not attend school, we will respond promptly. That is to say:

- the school will operate a first day absence contact process. If a student has been marked as 'N' and no message has been received by the school office by 9.30am, where possible the parent/carer will be contacted to seek an explanation. If this is forthcoming, the office will code the absence and record the reason for absence in the notes section
- If a student arrives at school thirty minutes after the registers have closed then they will be marked as "U" which means unauthorised absence for that session.
- on a student's return from absence where no authorisation has been received, school will continue to seek a reason. A letter will be sent home for clarification.
- if **overall absence** falls below 90% for the preceding 12 week term a letter will be sent home and parents/carers will be given the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the absence and how school can support.
- if the student has a history of **poor overall absence** (i.e. less than 90% for the last academic year) and falls below 95% during the first term then contact will be made and parents/carers will be invited to an informal meeting to discuss the reasons for the absence and how school can support.
- if **overall absence** continues to fall below 90% in the following term then the parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and a member of the senior leadership team to discuss concerns, if the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence, and an action plan will be drawn up.
- if the Headteacher or member of the senior leadership team are not satisfied with the reasons given for absence(s) then the school will refuse to authorise the absence(s) unless medical evidence is produced by a parent;



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- if **overall absence** falls below 90% for a six week period (weeks can be positioned either side of a holiday) and is unauthorised, both parents/carers may be issued with a fixed penalty notice. If a parent/carer pays the penalty notice within 21 days from the date it is served the sum due from the parent/carer to discharge the penalty notice is £60.00. The parent/carer can still pay the notice after 21 days but the payment increases to £120 and this must be paid before 28 days have passed from the date of service.
- if there are no improvements, then the case will be discussed again with the EWO with a view to a formal referral being made to the Educational Welfare Service, prior to possible further legal proceedings on behalf of the local authority. Prosecution of offences is a matter within the discretion of the local authority and a decision will be taken in line with the local authority prosecution policy for these matters and proceedings, where commenced, will be issued by the local authority;
- If a prosecution is brought and the parent/carer is found guilty or pleads guilty then a conviction for an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 or for an offence under Section 103 of the Education and inspection Act 2006 both carry a fine of up to a maximum of £1000 and in addition the local authority will seek to recover costs in respect of bringing the proceedings. Further, a successful prosecution will result in a parent having a criminal record which could be disclosed should they apply for a position where a DBS check is required.
- When the student returns, a reintegration programme will be established, e.g. a Pastoral Support Programme, tailored to the individual student’s needs and managed by the class teacher, head teacher with support from the SENDCO if necessary. Liaison with, and support from, the appropriate staff, the student, parents/carers and other agencies will be established if required.

Liaising with other agencies

Pupils with poor attendance may be the subject of Early Help Assessment support. Other agencies may be involved in order to support pupils and families.

Good relations and working practices are essential. The school will work in partnership with other agencies where appropriate e.g. Behavioural and Support Services, Educational Psychologists, Social Services.

Organisation

It is important that **every** member of staff conveys to the pupils the importance of maximum possible attendance, whilst being mindful of the age of the pupil. All members of staff have the responsibility to report concerns regarding attendance to the head teacher or in her absence the deputy head teacher.

Review

This policy is monitored by the Governing body and was adopted by the Pupil & Staffing Committee in January 2019. It will be reviewed annually.



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APPLICATION FOR STUDENT'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

It is expected that family holidays are normally taken during the official 13 weeks of school holidays (term dates are available from the school a year in advance). With effect from September 2013 the Regulations have changed and the school is now prevented from granting any leave of absence except in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays, re-unions, special birthdays and other family events are not considered exceptional and so we will not be able to grant leave of absence for such events.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Pupil Name | | Year | |
| Leave Requested | From -- / -- / -- To -- / -- / -- | School Days to Be Missed | |

Reason for requesting an absence in term time (please complete the relevant section):

1. This is an annual holiday on dates fixed by my employer

Please give name and contact details for employer

2. Leave of absence requested on compassionate/medical grounds/Other Reason

Please provide details

Signed _____ *Parent/Guardian*

Date _____

On completion please pass to Office for processing.

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| Office: Attendance % | The government Department of Education considers any less than 90% attendance as 'persistent absence'. This calculation is based on the overall absence figures from the school register. Overall absence is the aggregated total of all authorised and unauthorised absences. Authorised absence is absence with permission from either the Headteacher or another authorised representative of the school. Unauthorised absence is absence without permission. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences and arrivals after registration has closed. |
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Head teacher's Response

Copies to: Head teacher → School Office → Original to Parent/Guardian