



Fairfield School

Pupil Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

Introduction

At Fairfield, we strive to create an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to aspire to excellence, to achieve their potential and make accelerated progress. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend on time and every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Aims of the Policy

- To promote regular attendance, therefore offering all pupils equal access to learning opportunities.
- To be read in conjunction with our Leaflet Guide for Parents/ Carers on Attendance

Objectives of the Policy

- Meet our attendance targets
- Create a clear procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/ carers
- Ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days
- This Attendance Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable our pupils to attend school regularly, and as a result be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

Governor Responsibilities

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in schools. The schools attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a regular basis.

School Responsibilities

- To promote good attendance
- To maintain regular contact with families during period of absence
- Maintain appropriate attendance data
- Have appropriate registration processes in place
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not informed the school
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences
- To have systematic records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the attendance team and support their work with students as necessary.
- Governors will monitor and challenge attendance data
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily. At the start of the morning and afternoon sessions

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- To inform school of any absence
- To request leave as far in advance as possible in writing on the school's '**Request for Leave Of Absence in term time**' form, giving the reason for the request
- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance
- For pupil's to attend school before / after any medical appointments wherever possible
- There are times when we need to contact parents/carers, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. It is your responsibility to make sure school has your up to date contact numbers.

Why regular Attendance is so important

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem. The achievement and maintenance of

high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents/carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each pupil is everyone's responsibility. Failing to attend Fairfield School on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding issue.

The Law Relating to Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities and Governors to have regard to guidance with regard to safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of pupils. This means that under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the School Governing Body and Local Authority (LA).

Understanding Types of Absence

Were possible, we expect all pupils and staff to be in school each day of the academic year. Pupils are in school for 190 days, 38 weeks of the year with 175 days (weekends and holidays) not in school.

We ask that precautions / plan are in place to reduce the likelihood of absence, though when unavoidable, the school is notified. There are two regular points in the school day when the register is taken 9.30am at the start of the school day and afternoon registration takes place at 1.15 pm

Short Term Absences

When your child has vomited or had diarrhoea, we follow the **Public Health Guidance** and ask that you keep your child off school for 48 hours.

The majority of our pupils have complex medical conditions, and many of these have serious implications when battling virus or bacterial infections. By reducing the likelihood of children catching viruses and infections, they are more likely to keep healthy.

Longer Term Absences

Please contact the school to let us know about your child's circumstances and information relating to this. We sometimes need to let other parents/carers know about illnesses to prevent the spread of viruses and bacterial infections in school.

Authorised Absences is where the school has either given approval in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- illness, medical or dental appointments
- days of religious observance
- family bereavement
- 'exceptional' circumstances (will be determined by the Head teacher on an individual basis)

Unauthorised Absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent/ carer's request. This would be because the school does not consider the absence to be reasonable.

This includes:

- parents/ carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Please be aware that when a parent/carer phone school with information their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration, and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/ carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Persistent Absenteeism pupils are tracked and monitored carefully; they are also made known to the Local Authority. All pupils and their parents/ carers are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: additional support, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

Absence Procedures

If your child is not in school, we need to know where they are and that they are safe. You need to let the school know before **09.00am** on the **first day of absence**

Call the school office on: **01924 326103**

or

Leave a text message on: **07760 863499**

Let us know:

- who is calling
- the name of your child
- the name of the teacher and class
- what is wrong with your child
- when he/she should be back in school

IF YOU DO NOT INFORM US YOUR CHILD IS NOT GOING TO BE IN SCHOOL

- If we have not heard from you by **9.30am** we will call the contact numbers you have given us to find out why your child is not in school
- If none of your contact numbers answer, and you have a social worker, they will be informed to carry out a welfare check
- If you do not have a social worker, and none of your contact numbers answer, school will make a home visit to ensure the wellbeing of your child, and parents / carers
- If we are still not able to verify the welfare of your child the school will notify Children's Services / Police. This is to ensure the welfare of the child absent is known and raise an alarm to ensure their safety

If your child is absent you must:

- contact school before 9am on the day of absence, providing an explanation why your child will be unable to attend school

If your child is regularly absent school will:

- phone you if we have not heard from you by 9.30am
- invite you in to discuss the situation with the Welfare Officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Attendance Officer
- refer the matter to an Attendance Officer if attendance moves below 85%
- work in partnership with the family and involved agencies to support an appropriate phased return to school

The Law Relating to Attendance

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/ carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law, and may result in prosecution.

The Process for Monitoring Attendance

The expected level of attendance is 100% and 'good' attendance is 90% as set out in Government guidelines. If your child's attendance drops below 90% you will maybe notified on how this can be improved.

If your child's attendance does not improve the school will arrange a meeting in school to offer advice on how this can be improved.

Please note that ultimately the Local Authority may take legal action.

Lateness

Being on time is an important skill in politeness. Poor punctuality can lead to disruption to routines and lessons. All pupils must arrive at the main reception entrance, if for any reason pupils arrive late the office staff must be informed so the class registered can be amended. The office will call the class to let them know.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that wherever possible, appointments for doctors and dentists are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in school by **9.15am**.

Parents/Carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to discuss the problem with the Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer. However, you can approach school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Absences during Term Time

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made at least 14 days in advance by the parent/carer on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents/ carers will be informed within 7 days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/ carers to help us by not taking children out of school in term time. There is **no** automatic entitlement to time off in school time to go on holiday. Please note that all holidays are recorded as unauthorised absences.

There are 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend school. There are also approximately 91 days (182 sessions) of school holidays over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period. You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

Attendance Improvement Officer

The Attendance Improvement Officer reviews absences and lateness with the school on a regular basis. Where the school has been unable to improve attendances, they can address matter further.

School Targets

Fairfield School has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum expected level of attendance for this school is 90% and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling. Your first point of contact regarding your child's attendance and/ or punctuality is the school office or your child's class teacher. Alternatively you may speak with the Headteacher to discuss any concerns, or to seek advice or support.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give you details on attendance in our newsletters
- report to you what their attendance and punctuality rate is, and how this relates to their attainment
- celebrate good attendance
- award individual certificates to individual students who have 100% for each half term
- award Bronze and Silver certificates to those children who have had 100% attendance throughout the autumn and spring terms
- award a gold certificate to individual children who get 100% attendance for the whole academic year (September to July)

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote excellent attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible, and that every pupil's welfare and life opportunities are continuously promoted.

Registration Timetable

Time	Registration	Responsibility
8.45 - 9.15am	Morning registration	Class teacher / lead staff
10.00am	Evacuation report	Office
12 - 1.00pm	Afternoon registration	Class teacher / lead staff
1.15pm	Evacuation report completed	Office

Code	Description
-	Attendance not required
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
*	Not yet marked
/	Present
B	Educated off site
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday – unauthorised
H	Family holiday – authorised
I	Illness – NOT medical or dental
J	Interview
L	Late – before registration closes
M	Medical / Dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late – after registration closes
V	Education visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Non compulsory school age absence
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Pupil not on roll