



Fallings Park Primary School

Policy and Procedures for Pupil Attendance and Punctuality

2022
(Review September 2023)

Aim: Our aim is to provide a framework which promotes and encourages regular and punctual attendance, in order that pupils may receive full entitlement provided at Fallings Park Primary School.

Objectives:

- To raise the overall school attendance to be at least in line with national and to improve attendance to above the national average
- To reduce the number of persistent absentees
- To promote a culture of punctuality and good attendance
- To improve parental understanding of the school's expectations for attendance and punctuality
- To work with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer), to improve pupil attendance and punctuality
- To closely monitor attendance and punctuality;

These will be achieved by:

- Sharing this policy and procedures with parents and pupils
- Regular meetings with EWO (Education Welfare Officer), Attendance Officer and Head Teacher
- Headteacher, attendance team monitoring attendance and absenteeism and reporting termly to governor.
- Creating a reward system for good attendance and punctuality.
- Whole school staff training to enable all staff to promote attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting good attendance through the WELL Curriculum.
- Seeking the views of all year groups through the school council.

Procedures for Attendance

- Doors open for pupils at 8.30am
- Doors shut for pupils at 8:45am
- Early bird maths begins at 8:45am
- Register taken by the class teacher at 9:00am with pupils sitting down and following class procedures
- Teachers close registers at 9:05am.
- Pupils are either marked present, or absences should be left blank to be completed by the school office.
- Assembly begins at 9:05am in class and 9:10am in the hall.
- Children attending appointments during the school day must be noted on Sims by staff who release the child to their parent.
- Pupils in Early Years and children with needs must be always taken to the classroom by an adult

Procedures for Punctuality

- Late pupils must enter via the Inclusion door.
Pupils who arrive after 8:45am are recorded on the late form [name] [minutes late] and continue to class.
- After 9:15am the Attendance officer can begin updating SIMs using the late form and recording further late arrivals in SIMs [L] [__ min]
- If pupils:
 - Arrive after 10:30am AND *where punctuality is a cause for concern* the pupil is registered in SIMs as [U] [__ min] and the Attendance Officer informs parents by phone that a session has been missed. This does not include medical appointments where proof have been provided.

Monitoring of lateness will be undertaken by the Attendance Team and Head teacher and recurring problems will lead to texts sent to parents or if punctuality continues to be an issue parents will be invited into school to address the concern. (Punctuality letter)

Procedures for Pupil Authorising Absence

- It is the Parents' responsibility to inform school of absence and subsequently, reasons for absence
- Parents are required to contact school before 9:00am on every day of absence to confirm the reason of absence and its likely duration. Parents are able to report absence to school from 7:30am onwards.

NOTE: Parents who routinely fail to make contact with the school will have all absences unauthorised and a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be made.

- If a child is not in school and no reason for absence has been supplied parents are contacted to clarify the reason for absence
- School will commence absence queries by text at 9.30am. If no contact can be made via text a telephone service will be used:

'(Pupil Christian Name) is absent from school (date). Please call 558375 and select attendance.'

- **If parents do not respond to texts the school may undertake a home visit to establish reasons for absence.**
- **This will occur on the first day of unreported absence if a pupil's attendance is below 90%**
- **This will occur on the second day of unreported absence if a pupil's attendance is below 96% or school feel a visit is necessary**

Pupils Who Cause Concern

- Children who have attendance below 96% are identified as causing concern. Attendance will be monitored by the school attendance team along with actions taken and targets for attendance will be set. These will be shared with parents.
- Parents of pupils with attendance below 96% must provide medical evidence when their child returns to school.
- Where pupils' attendance is:

Below 96% Absence concern (A)

- Below 96% and ____ sessions missed and is falling; parents of pupils with unauthorised absences will receive a weekly text stating current attendance.
- Monitoring of attendance is shared with parents by the attendance team including the EWO. Staff can share the information from the attendance tracker.

Below 90% Persistent Absence (PA)

- Below 90% and ____ sessions missed is discussed with the EWO (Attendance team will still support) support may include:
 - Letter
 - Meeting
 - Home visit
- The School also informs the School Nurse if absences are of a medical nature and support maybe required.

- If there is no further improvement in attendance an Early Help Assessment is offered (this would last 6 weeks/half a term). A letter will be sent (appendix A) on behalf of the HT by the EWO to arrange a meeting with School, EWO and the parents.
 - This letter is sent to both Parent/Carer's by post
 - If the EHA is refused or has no response and unauthorised absences continue formal proceedings which could involve some legal referral.
- Regular half termly meetings take place involving the school, EWO and HT to monitor attendance and discuss cases.
 - The Head teacher will update the governors at Curriculum and Standards Meetings with an overview of attendance and formally report to the governing body termly.

Procedures for Monitoring and Promoting Attendance

- Individual pupil attendance is tracked using SIMs
- Cohort Attendance is tracked using SIMs and by the Attendance Team.
- Attendance Team and EWO keeps records for A+ and PA families.
- Attendance Team and EWO promotes the importance of good attendance by attending parents' evenings, the induction meeting for new parents, distributing literature produced by the LA/DfE and by attending our celebration assembly at the end of the school term /year.
- Parents are kept informed about attendance through the school website, school communications, noticeboards, parents evening and pupils' annual report.
- The school council is also briefed on year group attendance.
- Attendance Ladder - classes achieving over **96.4%** attendance in a week move up the school ladder, the class reaching the highest rung at the end of a term win a trophy. The whole school celebrates climbing the attendance ladder during Awards assemblies.
- The class with highest weekly attendance in each of Foundation/Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 is rewarded with a certificate and bear/trophy. The certificate is presented during the key stage award assemblies during the week to which parents are invited. The certificate is displayed in the classroom.
- Classes achieving 100% attendance in a week have additional awards – the class goes up TWO rungs on the attendance ladder
- Attendance tokens are awarded to each class who achieves over 96.4% during the week (silver token worth £2.00)
- 100% attendance is awarded a gold token which is worth £5.00. The class can either save the tokens for a term or year and choose a whole class reward.
- Pupils achieving above 97% attendance for the year will be entered into a prize draw.
- Pupils achieving 98% and above (98%-99.9%) will receive a certificate presented in class (termly). Those achieving 100% attendance for a term are rewarded with a certificate and termly badge presented at a special Award Assembly at the end of each term.
- Pupils who have improved their attendance (this can be seen on the attendance tracker) over a half term will receive a certificate at the end of the half term.
- Pupils achieving 98% and above (98%-99.9%) receive a certificate and 100% attendance for the year receive a certificate and gold badge to celebrate. These are presented at the end of year Awards Assembly.
- School staff who achieve 100% over a term receive recognition for their achievement.

Leave of Absence

The school follows the local authority procedures when parents apply for leave of absence. These procedures are laid out in a local authority leaflet that is available on our school website. All applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and the norm for one application may not be for another.

Application for Leave of Absence

- Parent/carer collects Local Authority Leaflet (appendix B) from school office
- Parent/carer returns completed application form and evidence which is **date stamped** at school office and handed to attendance officer.
- Attendance Team attaches attendance information and forwards application to HT
- Headteacher applies approval criteria and refers to evidence
- Application forwarded to Attendance Team who informs parent of outcome by appropriate text (authorised) or letter (unauthorised) (appendices C)
- Applications are processed within five working days where possible

Leave of absence that is approved – authorised absence

Leave of absence that is not approved – unauthorised absence

As decided by the governors of the school, the Head teacher, apart from highly exceptional cases, can only authorise up to 5 days leave of absence in an academic year. Any further leave of absence in that academic year will not be authorised.

If any further leave of absence exceeds 5 days in succession and your child's attendance is below 90% when he/she returns to school, the school will contact the Education Welfare Service who may serve a penalty notice.

Exceptional Circumstances

The governors and school realise that it is more expensive to go on holiday during the school holiday period than at other times of the year. However, it is the view of the DfE that a child should be in school for the 39 weeks of the academic year and that holidays in term time in whatever form are not considered to be 'exceptional' circumstances.

Holidays are not a good enough reason for taking a child or young person out of school.

The Head teacher and governing body approve leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances such as bereavement, serious illness, and significant events such as a family wedding or cultural/religious reasons.

In such instances, the school will require appropriate evidence that supports the reason for the request in order that it can be processed.

Absence from school under exceptional circumstances is slightly different from taking a holiday in term time. In deciding whether or not to grant a leave of absence for 'exceptional circumstances', the following is considered:

- What is the normal pattern of attendance for the child(ren) whose parent is asking for a leave of absence?
- What is 'exceptional' for one family might be the norm for another family.

If the request for a leave of absence is not approved by the Head Teacher but the parent takes their child away, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. On your child's return from their Leave of Absence the Head Teacher may refer the matter on to the education welfare service. The parent is then at risk of receiving a £60.00 fixed penalty notice per child per week per parent.

Appendix D

Occasionally a parent/adult family member will verbally inform school that they are taking/have taken a child(ren) on holiday. Should this be the case, a letter is sent to the parents of the child(ren) – Appendix D

Non-Return from Leave of Absence

It may occur that a child does not return within the stated period of leave of absence. Initially normal school absence procedures are followed.

If the child has not returned within five days after the stated period of leave of absence the following procedure is followed:

- Case referred to the EWO by the Attendance Officer.
- Home visit undertaken by the Attendance Officer.
- Letter (Appendix E) is sent by post to parent by pupil hub manager on behalf of the Headteacher.

Appendix F

- Pupils not returning from leave of absence, are uncontactable or not engaging with the above procedures are sent a letter to inform them that they will be off registered, and the Local Authority will be informed that the pupil is classed as CME (child missing in education)

Monitoring the Policy for Attendance and Punctuality

- The views of parents and pupils are sought through questionnaires
- LA provides support when reviewing the policy
- The policy is annually updated by the head teacher and shared with the Governors.
- The School Council is a vehicle for seeking ongoing review by pupils.

Review: September2023.