



FULFEN
Primary School

Leading the way
to a brighter future

Love of Learning... Encouraging... Adaptable... Determination...

Attendance Policy

Date Written:

Nov 2022

Review Date:

Nov 2024

Love of Learning...

- dream big, have a
thirst for learning and
achieve your ambitions...

Encouraging...

- to be supportive of
yourself and others and
value everyone's ideas...

Adaptable...

- being versatile,
creative and being
prepared to take risks...

Determination...

- being resilient when
the going gets tough...

Attendance Policy

Principles

The school recognises the importance of regular attendance and this can only be achieved with the efforts of everyone concerned. Good attendance at Fulfen is considered to be 95% or above.

We see maintenance of good attendance as one of our key tasks. Poor attendance can be for a variety of reasons, some of them beyond our control, but this should not discourage us from actively pursuing the goal of regular attendance.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately through merit assemblies. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Teachers will report attendance rates at parent's evenings to ensure that parents understand that this is an important factor in the rates of progress of their children.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.



Attendance Policy

The Government expects:

- Schools and local authorities to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, with a particular focus on persistent absentees:
 - Ensure every student has access to full time education to which they are entitled.
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parent/carers to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All students to be punctual to their lessons.

School Responsibilities:

- We will promote positive behaviour and attendance through the use of curriculum and learning materials and will recognise good attendance appropriately.
- We will work with parents/carers to resolve problems and investigate barriers that may affect a child's attendance and we will involve representatives of other agencies that work in the school such as School Nurses or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Worker (EWW's) where required, in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.
- We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all pupils through ensuring parent/carers and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern.
- We will report to the Governors regarding school attendance data, policy and procedures half-termly.

Parents or Carers Responsibilities:

- Parent/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away when your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day.
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance.
- Encourage good routines at home, which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep.
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness.
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.



Attendance Policy

School Doors are open at 8.45am

School Doors close at 8.55am

Morning Registration starts at	8.55am	Your child is late if they are not in school by 9.00am	L Code
Morning Registers close at	9.10am	Your child is unauthorised late if they arrive at 9.10am	U Code

If your child is persistently late you will be informed of the concern initially via letter. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any barriers to punctuality and the support we can offer you. If your child receives 5 late codes in a half term then we will write to parents to inform you of our concerns over your child's late arrival. If it continues, we will send another letter before setting up a meeting to discuss the situation with you and to find solutions to support you.

All lateness is recorded daily. The time of arrival and the reason for lateness, if known, will also be recorded. This information can be made available to the courts and to the Local Authority in the form of a report should a Penalty Notice or prosecution be the outcome of repeated lateness after the registers have closed.

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school may be required to share these concerns with other agencies.

Supporting and encouraging your child's school attendance

All children can sometimes be reluctant to attend school; however, it is never good to cover up their absence or to give in to the pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence by the parent.

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems.

First Day Contact/Absence Procedures

Parents and carers are expected to inform school by 9.30am of the reason for absence each day their child is not in. If notification by the parent/carer is not received by 10am on the first day of absence, a telephone call is made to the parent/carer to determine the reason for non-attendance. In cases where the school is unable to ascertain a reason for absence, the session will be recorded as unauthorised (O). Where children are absent for a second day (this does not have to be consecutive) and there has been no contact from parents/carers, school will attempt to make contact via telephone or letter. The process is also the same for all third day absences. On the fourth day of absence with no contact regarding reason the school may have to contact the PCSO to organise a Safe and Well check. School will phone and write to parents/carers inviting them in for a meeting to discuss their child's attendance. If parent/carers do not attend this meeting and the child has a further period of unauthorised absence a referral to the Education Welfare Worker will be made. Parent/carers will be notified of the possibility of this in writing by head teacher.

Please note that the power to authorise a child's absence rests entirely with the head teacher of the school. Parents/carers cannot authorise absence.



Attendance Policy

Registration Procedures

Registers are computerised and marked morning and afternoon. Children arriving after the start time (8.55am) will be marked as 'Late' (L), children arriving after 9.10am will be marked as 'Late after the Registers Closed' (U), this is an unauthorised absence mark.

Children will enter school **between 8.45am and 8.55am**. The school bell sounds at **8.45am** to indicate the opening of doors into school. Doors will then close at **8.55am**, children arriving after the doors have closed **MUST** enter via the school office, **and no child will be allowed to enter via the classroom door after 8.55am as classroom registers are then closed.**

All children arriving at school after 8.55am **MUST** enter via the school office.

What we class as good attendance

100% attendance	0 days absent	Outstanding attendance	Gives a child the very best chance of success
95% attendance	9.5 days absent	Satisfactory Attendance	Few interruptions to learning – a good chance of success
93% attendance	13.3 days absent	Worrying attendance	Your child has missed almost 3 weeks of learning (around 67 hrs of learning)
90% attendance	19 days absent (or more)	Serious concerns. Persistent absence.	This is equivalent to one day absent every fortnight (almost 4 weeks off school, around 95 hours or more of learning missed)
80% attendance	38 days absent (or more)	Serious concerns. Persistent absence.	This is almost 8 weeks of school missed (around 190 hours or more of learning missed)
70% attendance	57 days absent	Serious concerns. Persistent absence.	This is more than 11 weeks of school missed (around 285 hours or more of learning missed)
50% attendance	95 days absent	Very Serious concerns. Persistent absence.	This is 19 weeks or more of school missed (around 475 hours or more of learning missed)

The above number of days and hours of learning missed relate to your child's percentage attendance over a whole academic year. This is just a guide.

Note: all cases of school attendance are personal and will be considered on an individual basis to accommodate the individual needs of the pupil and the family.

Parents will be informed of their child's attendance on a regular basis via letters, parents' evenings and the end of year school report. If parents have any queries regarding their child's attendance, or would like to request support, then please contact the child's class teacher to discuss this further.



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Rewards:

At Fulfen Primary School we are keen to reward children whose attendance is good (95% or above). Each term those children who have achieved 98% attendance will receive a certificate during the last day assembly; those who have achieved 100% attendance at the end of the year receive a certificate and a small prize. We will announce the best class attendance every week during our celebration assembly, and if the school reaches its school attendance target of 96% for the year we will give a special treat to the whole school.

Promotion of School Attendance

School attendance is integral to learning and achieving. We promote attendance and punctuality throughout the school through school assemblies, letters to parents/carers, newsletter attendance information and attendance rewards.

Regular data analysis ensures that we act upon any incidents of absence concerns at the time of occurrence, so the promotion of school attendance is timely and personalised.

Leave of absence during term time

As of the 1st September 2013, **the law gave no entitlement to parent/carers to take their child on holiday during term time.** Any application for leave must only be in **exceptional** circumstances and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are **exceptional** and warrant the granting of leave. **Head teachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.** Parent/carers can receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

Applications for leave of absence during term time must be made in writing at least 3 weeks in advance and the school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion and is not a parental right.

Persistent Absentees

A child whose attendance is below 90% is classified as a persistent absentee. This is seen as an important indicator because young people who are persistently absent are classed as vulnerable in a number of ways in addition to the impact this has on their academic achievements and emotional wellbeing. As such the school and the Education Welfare Worker (EWW) will closely monitor the situation and if the attendance does not improve and/or absence is unauthorised, statutory action in the form of fixed term penalties may result. Unauthorised absence is where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Good Timekeeping

Good time keeping is as important as good attendance. It is essential that students arrive punctually so as not to miss out on essential learning time. Children arriving late for school must report to the school office, where parent/carers will be asked to complete a late arrival slip. School will undertake regular checks of the late logs on SIMS and may contact parents/carers via telephone or letter where a child appears four or more times within 3 weeks. If children continue to be late, parents/carers will be invited into school for a meeting to try and resolve any problems. Persistent lateness will not be tolerated and may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Worker. If a child is persistently late arriving at school i.e. after the register has closed – **"Persistent"** means at least 10 sessions of late arrival (after the register has closed) in a period of 12 weeks, excluding school holidays, then school will consider applying for a Fixed Penalty to be issued.



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Medical Appointments

Missing school for a medical appointment is counted as an authorised absence; however, parents/carers should try to make these out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for a minimum amount of time necessary with appointments being made at the beginning or end of the day to minimise disruption to the school day.

Medical Evidence

For children who are classified as persistently absent (attendance below 90%) and have received a Medical Evidence letter the school will no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by one of the following:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional
- Medical note/ Print screen of medical notes
- Medication prescribed by a GP/Copy of prescription
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

Illness at school

In cases where a student is unwell at school, parents/carers will be contacted, who should then make arrangements for the child to be collected from school.

Missing Children

If a child is absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more without school's permission, we have to notify the Local Authority. School will involve the Local Support Team and take due regard of safeguarding procedures where absence of a particular child is less than 10 days but presents a cause for concern. EWW or PCSO will make a home visit to establish the whereabouts and safety of the child.

Elective Home Education

If school receives written notification from parent/carers that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority via Entrust at enquiries@entrust-ed.co.uk of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parent/carers from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will we seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

Statutory Action

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered the parent/carers may be guilty of an offence and be prosecuted by the local authority.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are fines imposed on parent/carers. They are an alternative to the prosecution of parent/carers for failing to ensure that their child regularly attends the school where they are registered. Penalty notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:



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- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions (10 school days) of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher. (E.g, family holiday).
- Persistent late arrival at school (i.e., after the register has closed). "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

Please note that there is no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year. In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child. Use of a Penalty notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absences/lateness will be restricted to one notice/warning per parent/carer of a pupil per academic year. Continued poor attendance in the same academic year can be addressed by other statutory actions available to the Local Authority under the Education Act 1996.

Where a Penalty Notice is issued a fine of £60 per child per parent applies, if this is not paid within 21 days the fine increases to £120. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice within 28 days can result in the council prosecuting parents/carers under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. This will lead to a hearing in the Magistrates Court and may result in a fine of up to £1000. The above is in accordance with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices which came into effect in January 2018.

Safeguarding procedures relating to school attendance.

Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Local Authority Safeguarding team / Education Welfare Worker.

Our first day contact procedures ensure that by contacting parents to establish the reason for your child's absence, parents are made aware that the child is absent from school and school can confirm with the parent that the child is safe.

If we as a school do not receive communication from a parent regarding their child's absence, and if we as a school are unsuccessful in contacting the parent, we will consider this to be a safeguarding concern. This is why our system of requesting parents contact our school on each day of absence, prior to 8:55am is of the paramount importance.

Our school will also encourage parents to provide a minimum of two emergency contact details for their child.

Equality act 2010 / un convention on the rights of the child

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations are set for all our pupils, this attendance policy does take into account that certain pupils and pupil cohorts will have specific needs. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but we will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.



Attendance Policy

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment

Regular school attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

(This information is from the DFE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' – May 2022.)

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