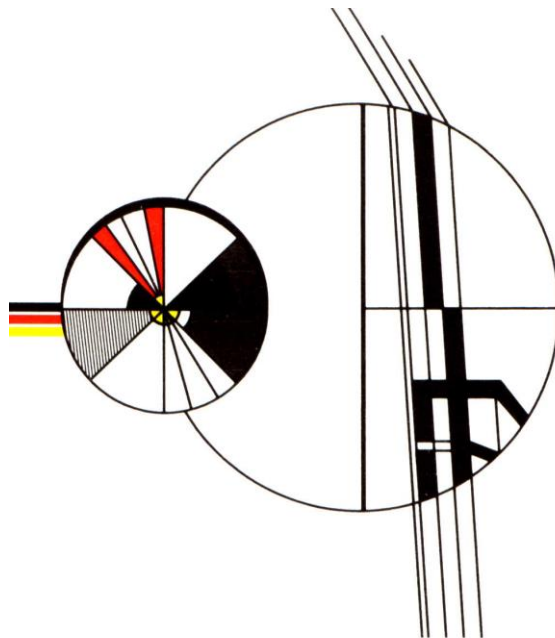


Fairmeadows Foundation Primary School

‘Sharing, caring, learning and growing
together to make a difference.’



Attendance Policy

Rationale

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

- All children should be ready to come into school at **8.30am**. The morning register is taken at **8.40am**. The afternoon register is taken at **12.30pm** for Key Stage 1 and **1pm** for Key Stage 2. A day counts as 2 attendances.
- Morning registration ends at 8.40am. If a child arrives after the registration period, he / she will be marked in as Late. After 9.10am this will become an Unauthorised Absence.
- It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent / guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in / out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

ILLNESS AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- The school office should be informed on the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, if appropriate, for the duration of the absence.

DEFINITIONS

Authorised Absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian, for example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.
- **Illness** - Where children have had absences due to illnesses on more than one occasion within a half term, a letter will be issued to parents offering the support of the School Nurse and asking if there is anything that school can do to help meet the child's needs within school. This may be done as part of an Attendance Review.
- **Circumstances** - Extenuating circumstances may be grounds for authorised absence. This must be done at the discretion of the headteacher and will only be used in situations where absence was absolutely unavoidable.

Unauthorised Absence - An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

IF A CHILD IS ABSENT

- When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.
- Parents are, however, expected to telephone, text or e-mail the school by 9.00a.m. on the morning of the day of absence to inform the school that their child will be absent. They are asked to state a reason.
- The school office will endeavour to contact the parent or guardian, if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

THE EDUCATION (PUPIL REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS 2006

(Section 8(1) "Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school". Section 8(3) of this act gives the school discretionary powers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of annual holiday during term time.

Holidays in term time are not an entitlement and are strongly discouraged by the Government, Local Authority, the Governors and the school.

Amendments which came into place on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases it is the Headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

HOLIDAYS AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. Parents are therefore strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday in term time. Only in very exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher, may the Headteacher choose to grant leave of absence during the school year.

- *All holiday requests should be made to the Headteacher before any bookings are made.*
- *No requests for Leave of Absence during term time will be granted retrospectively.*

LONG TERM ABSENCE

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

REPEATED UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- Unauthorised absences remain on the child's record and may be reported to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Attendance and punctuality are monitored by the school and the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences,

the parents and guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem, as part of an Attendance Review Meeting

- The EWO may also visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- The Local Authority has the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

CELEBRATING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The school promotes good attendance with all its stakeholders. A graph is also displayed in the entrance area of the school and a poster displaying summary information about attendance and punctuality is displayed in other key areas. A school trophy for the class with the highest percentage of children achieving 100% attendance for that week. This information is shared in the Weekly Newsletter so that parents are kept up to date.

As individuals, all children who have close to or achieve 100% attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded in assembly. There are special certificates for any child who has 100% for a whole year which will be awarded in the final assembly of the Summer Term.

MONITORING PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Children's individual attendance will be tracked every half term (6 times a year) using a Traffic Light Monitoring System:

Green: Above 95% attendance
Amber: Between 85% – 95% attendance
Red: Below 85% attendance

Green Attenders will have a text message sent home congratulating the child on their 'Awesome Attendance'.

Amber Attenders will have an information letter sent home reminding them of the importance of good attendance, and stating that we hope to see an improvement in the coming term.

Red Attenders will have a letter of concern sent home, and will be invited to come in and discuss how the school and other agencies might support the family to improve the child's attendance. It will also concern a strong message about the potential involvement of the school's EWO.

ATTENDANCE TARGETS

The school sets a challenging attendance target each year. These targets are agreed by the senior staff, the Chair of Governors and the LA School Improvement Partner at the annual target-setting meeting. The Headteacher will report on attendance percentages in the termly report to the Governing Body.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance.
- The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out.
- The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- Termly monitoring will look at the attendance of the whole school, of each class, and of different groups of pupils.
- Individuals who are below 90% are monitored closely, and any pupils with attendance of less than 85% in a term are the subject of an Attendance Review with the Headteacher and their parents/carers, and if necessary, the EWO. Following this, an action plan is drawn up, and a review done after a further 6 weeks. Immediate referral to the EWO then takes place if no improvement or effort to improve is seen.