

FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

Date policy approved	October 2020
Review frequency	Bi-Annual
Review date	October 2022

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies within the school. Other related policies are:

Behaviour Policy
 Single Equality Policy
 Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

Introduction

The best-planned, resourced and taught lessons can do little to raise achievement if children are not there to receive them or regularly arrive late.

At Firthmoor Primary School we believe that good habits of regular attendance and punctuality are vital for effective learning to take place and are important disciplines for future life. We recognise the disruption that absence and lateness cause both to the education of the individual and the effect that it can have on the rest of the class. We also accept that the main responsibility for ensuring regular, punctual attendance rests with parents and not the children themselves.

There is a wealth of evidence, including school self-analysis, which highlights that there is a clear link between good attendance and high attainment.

Our policy and procedures are, therefore, concerned with clear communication between parents and school and the avoidance of sanctions towards the child.

Aims

- To encourage regular, punctual attendance by all children.
- To ensure a consistent approach to the recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality.
- To clarify procedures for dealing with poor attendees and regular latecomers.

Attendance Procedures

The class teacher has initial responsibility for monitoring attendance. An accurate register must be maintained for all morning and afternoon sessions.

When a child is absent it will be expected that:

- **A written or verbal message has been received from a responsible adult giving an appropriate reason for the absence. This message must be received either prior to the absence (such as a hospital appointment) or at the beginning of the school day. Failure to do this will result in the school spending a great deal of time at a very busy part of the day making telephone calls to parents. Verbal messages from children or written by them are not acceptable.**
- Verbal messages from parents are noted
- The school office will complete the reasons for absence sheet using the appropriate codes and then discard the messages.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The law does not give parents any entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Fixed penalty fines may be issued for unauthorised absence.

Any request for leave of absence must be provided in writing and in advance of the requested leave dates. Any request must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the leave of absence.

Examples of authorised absence include:

- Visiting a doctor/dentist, hospital etc. for treatment/check ups for appointment time only and not the whole day (every effort should be made to secure appointments after school or at weekends when appropriate to do so).
- Illness verified by a responsible adult.
- Bereavement of family members
- Visiting parents in custodial situations.

If the request for leave is not authorised by the headteacher and the pupil goes on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- Absence without prior notification or subsequent explanation.
- Trivial reasons given such as "shopping for new shoes" "slept in" etc.
- Family holidays - unless under exceptional circumstances and must be authorised in advance by the headteacher

Headteachers are able to use discretion within these guidelines depending upon individual family circumstances for example: if a child is to visit a parent who is rarely seen due to separation etc.

Absent without reason

- The school follows the 'Children Missing from Education (CME)' procedure.
- If a child is absent from school and school staff have no prior knowledge of a reason for non-attendance then,
 - Day 1** - the Inclusion Officer will make a first day call to parents and then phone relatives, friends and neighbours using known contact details. The IO may complete a home visit if this is felt necessary. **If there are Child Protection concerns, the school will contact CIAT (Children's Initial Advice Team) or Named Social Worker immediately for advice**
 - Day 2 – 5** School to continue to contact family by completing reasonable checks by phone and letter **which includes completing a home visit.**
 - Day 5 – 10** – School to share evidence of reasonable checks with CIAT via **multi agency referral form**, to request a welfare check.

Regular Absence

The class teacher may notice that particular children are regularly absent whether authorised or not and report their concerns to the Inclusion Officer or Headteacher who will then liaise with parents.

In addition, the Inclusion Officer and HT will monitor the percentage attendance weekly paying particular attention to those who fall below 90%.

Parents will be contacted in writing explaining the school's concern and that detailed monitoring of their child's attendance will continue. If no immediate improvement is noticed a further contact will be made inviting parents to discuss attendance with Governors responsible for attendance and how the school may help in improving the situation. Targets for improvement will be set.

Depending on the outcome of the meeting or a lack of improvement demonstrated a referral may be made to the Education Support Worker.

Good Attendance

Firthmoor Primary School is an exempt charity. It is a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (Registered no: 8028789) whose registered office is at Ingleby Moor Crescent, **Darlington**, DL1 4RW

Children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of each term are rewarded with an invite to a special celebratory meal.

Children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of an academic year are taken out for a celebration lunch.

The class with the highest percentage attendance each week will be recognised and praised in a weekly assembly. Any class which achieves 100% attendance for one week will receive special recognition in front of the whole school. The class with the best overall attendance each half-term receives £50.00 to spend on class treats/resources.

Registration Routine

8.45 am	Children should not arrive at school before 8.45 am. Children who attend the Breakfast Club may do so from 8.15 am
8.55 am and 12.55 pm	Bell goes for start of session. Children line up and enter school accompanied by members of staff.
9.00 am and 1.00 pm	Registration by class teacher.
9.10 am - 9.30 am	Children arriving during this time report to the office and are officially recorded as late in the school register as well as being entered into the 'late book' and their punctuality is then closely monitored by the Inclusion Officer.
9.30 am – 10.00 am	Registers are checked by the Inclusion Officer and phone calls or home visits made to clarify why children are not in school.

Regular Lateness

Records are kept of all late arrivals. These will be monitored in the same way as regular absence, and the same steps taken where there is a cause for concern, leading ultimately to referral to the Education Support Worker if improvements are not made.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary