

FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

Policy Version Control	
Board approved	December 2022
Policy reviewed by	Ann Dixon, Headteacher
Last review date	September 2023
Review date	September 2024

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.

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. (Annexe A).

Any request will only be authorised 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.

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 (Annexe B)
- 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 the headteacher and/or Inclusion Officer 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

To reward good attendance and punctuality, we have introduced the following for children from Year 1 to Year 6:

- Every child who records 97%+ (with no unauthorised absences) in either/both of the Autumn and Spring terms will receive a £5.00 book token to spend at our book fayres – end of December and beginning of April.
- At the end of the school year, every child with 97%+ attendance (with no unauthorised absences) and good punctuality will receive a £10.00 book token.

Registration Routine

08.20am	Breakfast Club - Children who attend the Breakfast Club may do so from 8.20am. Breakfast club attendance is arranged via our booking system
08.45am	Children from Reception to Y6 to arrive for lessons
09.00am	Children in Nursery to arrive for lessons
09.00 am	Children arriving after this time are officially recorded as late in the school register. Their punctuality will be closely monitored by the Inclusion Officer.
09.00am	Registers are checked and absences are noted. The inclusion Officer will contact parents/carers to clarify why the children are not in school
09.30 am	Any child arriving after 9.30 am will be signed in and an unauthorised absence mark will be recorded

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

Annexe A

FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ingleby Moor Crescent
Darlington

Application for leave of absence during term time

Child's/children's name/s
.....

Class/Classes

From..... to
(1st day of absence from school) (last day of absence from school)

Makingschool days **(insert number of school days being missed)**

Reason for leave of absence in term time:

.....
.....
.....

Signed (parent/carer)

Date.....

This is to confirm that the leave of absence request for

(name/s).....
.....

is authorised ☐ unauthorised ☐

Mrs Dixon

Head Teacher Date

Comments

Annexe B

Key:

CIAT - Children's Initial Advice Team
ESW - Education Support worker
CME- Child Missing Education
CTF – Common Transfer File
S2S – School 2 School
CEG – child exploitation group
CEVT – Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker Meeting

Reasonable checks - Schools

First day telephone calls, texting messaging

Make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details;
Home visit(s), if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s), relatives and emergency contacts. Letters to family home

Check with agencies known to be involved with family;

Check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;

Check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved;

Check with the local authority where the now child lives.

Continue to complete daily calls and reasonable checks alongside CME Officer, Early Help and Children's Social Care.

Child does not return to school

Day 1 - 5 School make first day call, no response

Child protection concerns - school to contact CIAT or named Social Worker immediately.

Day 1 - 5 School to continue make contact by completing reasonable checks.

Day 5 – 10 School pass evidence of reasonable checks to Children's Initial Advice Team via **Multi- agency referral form**

CIAT Team to request welfare check via Early Help.

Education Support Workers to undertake home visit and reasonable checks.

Education Support Worker / CME Officer to checks with partner agencies.

School to continue to complete daily calls and reasonable checks.

Local Authority checks – Home visit, make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours.

Check local databases within the local authority; Check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems; follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other agencies - housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC; Check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force;

Check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;

Check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved; check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is;

in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).

CME Officer to be informed and log child as potential CME. Children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions referred to CEG or the CEVT meetings to be discussed, if appropriate
School complete CTF via S2S - enter as missing pupil.

Unable to locate child

CME Officer to complete checks with other LAs. School remove child's name from school roll on date of last attendance after 20 days if steps above have been carried out. School Inform LA Admissions Team, legal requirement. Child recorded as CME and checks continued to locate child.

Locate child and return to school

Education Support Worker plan with family and school how to address underlying issues and support return to school.

Locate child – not returning to school

Child remains on school roll. Education Support Worker completes legal work if appropriate or School to offer and complete an Early Help Assessment.

Child located in other LA and attending school

Original school recreates CTF and removes child from Lost Pupil Database. Records shared with new school if possible. CME Officer to be informed of new school details and start date.

Child located in other LA and not attending school

CME Officer liaises with out of authority services to support school place application. Child remains on CME data base till new school details and start date received. School removes from Lost Pupil Database.