

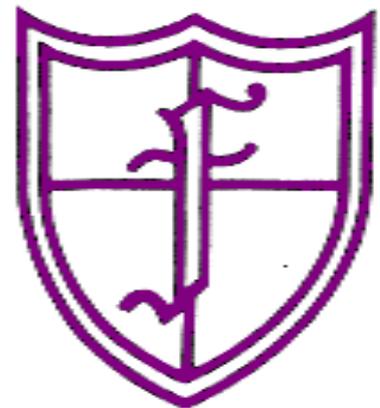


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## Attendance Policy

**Date Written/Reviewed:** January 2019  
**Next Review Date:** January 2020  
**Person Responsible:** Scott Roche



**Signature of Governor / Headteacher /  
Head of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

## **Introduction**

Friars Primary School values all its pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and give appropriate support to resolve any difficulties.

There is a strong correlation between the amount of absence from school and the attainment of pupils. Every lesson in school matters and children who have regular absences tend to find it difficult to catch up. Regular absence can limit a child's future opportunities and set up bad habits for work and life.

## **Legal Framework**

Section 7 of the 1966 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education suitable for their age and ability.

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The education Regulations 2006 requires our school to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning and then again at the start of the afternoon session.

## **Categorising Absences**

- The registers must record whether the pupil was:
- Present
- Absent
- Present at an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Registers must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by the parent/carer. All absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for a pupil's absence has been received.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for reasons such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable. For example:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping trips or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays which have not been agreed in advance

### **Absence Procedures**

Parent/Carers are requested to:

- Contact the school before 9.30am on the first day of illness.

Parents/Carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This may be in the form of an appointment card, prescription or doctor's note etc

### **Leave of Absence**

Current law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child out of school during term time. The Education Regulations 2013 prohibits headteachers from granting any leave of absence during term time unless there are '**exceptional circumstances.**'

Parents/Carers will be asked to complete a '**Leave of Absence Form**' at least one month before any leave is required, with supporting evidence identifying why the leave has been requested.

If leave of absence is requested for a close family wedding, one day will be authorised. In the case of a wedding abroad, three days will be authorised. Any extra days taken will be recorded as unauthorised.

If the leave of absence is not authorised, parents/carers will receive a letter from the Assistant Headteacher (attendance lead), which will include a warning that a penalty notice may be issued if the leave is taken.

### **Penalty Notices can be issued if:**

• **There have been 10 sessions (5 consecutive days) or more of unauthorised absence due to leave taken during an academic year;**

**AND**

• **Attendance is below 90% during the preceding 12 weeks before the leave was taken; OR**

• **The leave was taken during the month of September; OR**

• **The leave was taken during a test week**

The school will contact the Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service Officer who will decide whether to issue a penalty notice. (£60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days).

## **Attendance Interventions**

Pupils with attendance between 95% and 90% attendance:

- Parents/carers will be contacted by the Attendance Leader by telephone or invited to a meeting at school and a target will be set and a review date agreed.

Pupils with attendance less than 90%

- If a pupil has 10% absence or more over a six week period, parents/carers will be invited to attend a meeting in school. An attendance officer from the Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service will also be present.
- Parent Carers will be requested to complete a parenting contract which will state that they agree to comply with specific requirements and that the school and local authority will agree to provide the support needed to enable a parent/carer to comply.
- Parents/Carers will be informed that no further absence will be authorised without supporting medical evidence.
- A personal attendance target will be set and a review date agreed. If this target is not met, the case will be referred to the Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service Officer.
- The Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service will try to resolve the situation by agreement, but if this is unsuccessful, this officer can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or Prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Friars Primary School and Nursery believes that improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parent/carers and the pupils.

As such the Governing Body will:

- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the Governing Body to lead on attendance matters
- Monitor the school's attendance through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence to identify vulnerable groups
- Ensure data is understood and used to devise solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Ensure that a member of the leadership team has the role of Attendance Leader

The Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parent/carers

- Ensure there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy by all staff and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Report school attendance data termly to the Governing Body
- Ensure attendance data is collected and analysed regularly to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure pupils whose attendance falls below the school target have individual targets which are shared with parents/carers.
- Meet regularly with the Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service Officer to discuss concerns regarding a pupil's attendance.
- Attend Pupil Planning Meetings with the Early Help, Family Support & Youth Offending Service with parents/carers to set targets for children with low attendance.

### **Children Missing in Education**

- When children remain absent from school after an authorised absence/leave of absence or without reason, the senior leadership team will carry out reasonable enquiries to establish their whereabouts.
- If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care or the police.
- The local authority will be notified of children who are deemed to be 'Children Missing in Education' in accordance with the September 2016 statutory guidance for local authorities. (Section 436A of the Education Act 1996).

### All Staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Form positive relationships with parents/carers
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend.
- Comply with Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work alongside other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families

### The parents/carers will:

- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences by making appointments outside the school day
- Ask the school for help a child is experiencing difficulties
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing the school bag and uniform the evening before

- Avoid taking the child on holiday during term-time. Where this is unavoidable, before booking the holiday, complete and submit a holiday form to the headteacher, who will consider whether the request should be granted

The pupils will:

- Be punctual for school and be ready to learn.

Friars Primary School and Nursery has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and promote attendance. Equally parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils in the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.