

Fulford School

Attendance Policy



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Responsible: Assistant Headteacher Attendance

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Introduction

It is the school aim that at Fulford, pupils and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and achievements of pupils and staff.

The policy has the following further intentions:

- To enhance achievement levels and external examination results;
- To carry out the school's legal responsibilities efficiently to report annually to parents;
- To clarify the responsibilities of different concerned parties;
- To identify tactics that will be effective in the achievement of the above.

These fit in to the broader school ethos, and the HEART core values – honesty, empathy, ambition, respect and tolerance.

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from their education is it vital they attend regularly, on time and every day the school is open. Pupils should only be absent if it is completely unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absences seriously affects their learning.

Fostering good attendance is shared responsibility of school, the parent, and the Local Authority. Parents have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education and are responsible for their child attending school.

In detailing the strategies, the school will undertake to ensure improved levels of attendance the importance of the following factors which encourage high levels of attendance must be kept in mind:

- delivering a curriculum, which is relevant, motivating and differentiated to the needs of the pupils;
- maintaining high expectations (communicated by staff in a variety of ways including punctuality, homework, marking, and extra-curricular activities);
- employing the school's systems of reward for achievement, personal as well as academic;
- using sympathetic re-integration strategies for long-term absentees.
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Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 2.2 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

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Attendance Data

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. AM registration being from 8:50 - 9:15 am. PM registration is managed through period 5.

- A pupil is late when they arrive after 8:50 am. Form tutors are responsible for marking the pupils late until 9:15am.
- Pupils arriving after 9.00am must sign in late at the Pupil Support Unit (PSU).
- Pupils are registered at the start of every lesson of the day. It is important that the class teacher enters late arrivals and re-saves the register. A culture of challenging pupils missing from previous lessons enables pupils to see the effectiveness of lesson monitoring.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence codes (see Appendix 1)
- The attendance team will work closely with the Head of Year. Suitable sanctions and interventions for pupils who have ongoing lateness over time concerns will be issued.
- AM registers close at 10:20 any pupil arriving after this point will not receive a morning registration mark.
- PM registers close at 13:20 pupil leaving school before this point will not receive an afternoon registration mark.
- Any pupil with permission to leave school during the day must sign out with the attendance team in the PSU.

Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the school's attendance practices and interventions.

- Individual pupil data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention. Attendance is shared with pupils on a weekly basis.
- Patterns of absences and lateness, and the identification of trends will be analysed.

As of September 2022, the local authority automatically collects York Schools attendance data at the end of every school day. As a school we also have a requirement to inform the Local Authority of the names of all pupils who have:

- 10 days or more unauthorised absence in one month, either consecutive or accumulative days.
- 15 days of absence due to illness in one month, either consecutive or accumulative days.

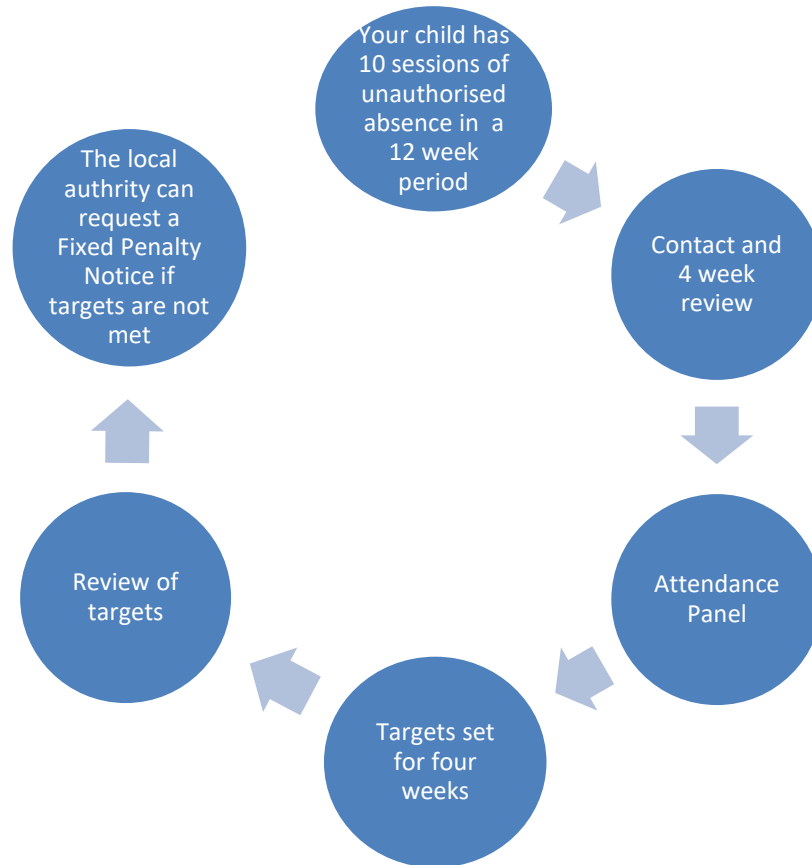
For pupils with absence due to illness or medical reasons of 10 days or more consecutively in one month, home visits will be arranged for wellbeing and safeguarding reasons, these will occur every 10 days of continued absence unless there are other professionals involved such as the specialist teaching team or medical professionals who have contact on a regular basis with the pupil.

Attendance Monitoring System

The procedures we use to monitor attendance will follow:

- Weekly attendance data will be emailed to form tutors (FT), Head of Years (HOY) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Pupils will record their weekly and cumulative attendance in their planners each week. Attendance will be discussed with FT, and any trends should be passed to the HOY.
- On the first day of absence contact will be made with the parents when there has been no absence reported. The Attendance Intervention Lead will contact home for pupils on pupil attendance monitoring (SAM) and any pupil that has a record of truancy should the absence be unexplained.
- SAM is the early intervention system for pupils who have trends in their attendance and it falls below the school target of 96%. The FT and HOY will work closely with the pupil to discuss any issues or problems that can be addressed to help improve their attendance.
- A letter may be sent home raising the concerns, and informing parents that they will be monitored on SAM.
- If pupil attendance drops below 90% and becomes persistently absent a fast-track letter may be sent home. Attendance will be monitored for 20 days and any further absence will only be authorised if medical evidence is provided. This could include a prescription, GP appointment card or a letter from a GP or Hospital Consultant.
- If the attendance has not improved parents will be formally invited to attend a school attendance panel (SAP) meeting with relevant members of staff. This will include either member of the Senior Leadership team or a school Governor. Provision will be discussed and targets set for raising the attendance. Failure to provide an acceptable explanation for the absences may result in a penalty warning letter being issued immediately following the meeting.
- After a further monitoring period, if the targets are met a letter will be sent home to congratulate the pupil and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until the attendance stabilises. If the targets are not met, it will be referred to the local authority Attendance Officer and could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority

Fast Track Process



Staff Managing Attendance

At times staff in school may be required to contact you or organise meetings to discuss a pupils absence or patterns of absence, staff involved in these processes may be:

- Headteacher
- Associate Headteacher (DSL)
- Assistant Headteacher (Attendance and Behaviour)
- Attendance Intervention Lead
- Attendance support coordinator
- Head of Year
- Assistant head of Year
- School Social Worker
- School Nurse
- School Governors

Absence procedures

Minor illnesses such as headache, period pains, colds and sore throats are not a reason for absence from school. If your child is still unwell enough for school after administering any appropriate pain relief/medication at home, then contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and every subsequent day, using either:

- Attendance telephone: 01904 666417
- Email: attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

If a child has prescribed medication in school, it can be stored for them in the PSU and it can be accessed outside of lesson times. The School Nurse will be involved in communication with parents / carers regarding any medication issued during school hours.

If your child is absent for a prolonged period of time, over 4 days, please provide any medical evidence that you have for our records. This could be a prescription or GP appointment card.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupils parent / carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctors note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents / carers will be notified of this.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may: Contact the parent/carer at work.
- Phone other contacts available
- Make a home visit
- Contact the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- School may make unannounced home visits if communication with home is not regular and pupils' absences are not recorded with reasons.

Medical appointments

As far as possible parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment, unless in exceptional circumstances. If the appointment is unavoidable your child should come to school before and after the appointment where possible. Pupils must sign in and out at the PSU.

Contact Information

It is vital that parent details are correct. There are times when we need to contact parents/carers to discuss absence or more importantly to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any changes in personal contact details.

Definitions

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised absence. An authorised absence requires a verbal or written communication from the parent/carer.

Authorised absence are mornings or afternoons away from the school for a good reason like genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absence are those the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. Unacceptable reasons for absence include:

- Truancy
- Looking after younger siblings
- Shopping
- No school uniform
- To do homework/coursework
- Lateness
- Holidays in term time
- Birthdays

Lateness and Truancy

Persistent lateness and truancy are often a significant indicator of under-achievement. Persistent lateness and truancy will be dealt with immediately and consistently across the school.

Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will be challenged. Pupils need to be on school site by 8:50 am, and will then be expected in form time. If pupils arrive after 8:50am they will receive a late mark. The gates will be shut at this time. Pupils will then have to enter through the pupil entrance and register their lateness with the attendance team in the PSU.

Pupils who are late to school will be issued with a same day lunch detention. Pupils who are late to lessons receive a late negative on class charts; these contribute to the schools set detention tariffs. Persistent lateness will be reviewed and sanctions escalated.

The register for the morning mark stays open until the start of period 2, 10:20, and pupils that arrive after this time without an authorized reason will receive a mark of absence. They will receive a mark to show they are on site but will count as an absent mark.

Truancy means any absence of part, or all of, or one or more days from school during which the school has not been notified of this absence. All pupils are expected to be in their classes between 8:50am and 3:20pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.

Pupils who truant internally (do not attend lessons) will be issued with after school detentions the following day, one after school detention will be issued for each period of absence. Persistent truancy will be reviewed and sanctions escalated.

Rewards

The importance of high attendance should be regularly promoted by every member of staff. Good and improved attendance will be rewarded by the school with various incentives for individual pupils, form groups and whole school. These include communication with home, certificates, prize draws, rewards activities in school and trips and visits.

School trips and events are a privilege. Pupils must ensure they have a good attendance to take part. Where a pupils' attendance drops below 90% the privileges may be taken away unless absence is authorised and medical evidence provided.

Attendance at the Year 11 prom requires a minimum of 90% attendance during their Year 11 academic year, unless absence is authorised and medical evidence is provided.

Absence requests

In order to improve pupil's life chances and due to Government legislation parents must observe the school holidays as prescribed. Absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example, exceptional significant family events or circumstances.

The Head Teacher will consider every request individually, the following will not meet the criteria:

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays

If you submit an absence request and it is not approved your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please be aware in most circumstances parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the head teacher. A fixed penalty notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

Parents and Carers

- You must always fill in a form to request pupil absence for exceptional circumstances. This can be found on the school website.
- You should do this before you consider arranging any time for the pupil to be away from school – there should be exceptional reasons.
- Absence requests should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of proposed absence.
- If your child has at least ten sessions which do not need to be consecutive (five school days) of unauthorised absence within one term. Following a warning letter being sent, an invite to a school attendance panel and a monitoring period (setting a period of 15 school days in which to affect the improvement) then you may:
 - I. Receive a Fixed Penalty Notice (you may be prosecuted if you do not pay the fine), per parent per child OR
 - II. Be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court for your child's nonattendance at School. You can be fined up to £2500 or imprisoned.

The Importance of Excellent Attendance

Two weeks absence in every school year would mean your child missed four terms of education during their school life. This could seriously affect your child's progress.

- 90% attendance is the equivalent of 1/2-day absence per week.
- 80% attendance is the equivalent of missing six extra weeks of schooling over a year
- Your child will find it difficult to settle in if they miss school at the start of a new term or when they are moving to a new school or class.
- Your child may miss important educational experiences. It can be very difficult to catch up.
- Preparation and revision for exams and tests may be affected.
- Your child may think that you do not see school as important.

In 2022 the Fulford Year 11 results highlighted the importance of having excellent attendance.

- Pupils who had an attendance of 95% or more achieved on average 1.1 grade higher in each subject than equivalent pupils in other schools with the same Key Stage 2 outcomes.
- Pupils with attendance greater than 90% achieved +0.6 in Maths and +0.8 in English.

Children missing from education

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Bullying policy
- Staff Code of conduct
- SEND policy
- Suspensions and Exclusion policy

The school policies can be found on the school website. <https://fulford.york.sch.uk/policies-forms-documents/>

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	<i>Authorised leave of absence</i>	<i>Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances</i>
E	<i>Excluded</i>	<i>Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made</i>
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day