


Foreland Fields School

Attendance Policy

This policy has been developed by KCC for use in all schools in Kent.



Governing Body Approval and Categories

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| Date of Last Review / Scrutiny | 1 st April 2019 |
| Date (Month / Year) of Next Review /Scrutiny | April 2022 |
| Date Policy was Ratified | 15 th May 2019 |
| Category of the Policy | General |
| Named Lead for Writing the Policy | Headteacher |
| Named Governor for Scrutiny | Chair of Learning and Development |
| Approval Body | Strategy Team |
| Display on Main Web Site | Yes |
| NOTE: IF THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SCRUTINISED BY A DIFFERENT LEAD GOVERNOR OR BEEN RATIFIED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNING TEAM PLEASE STATE WHICH TEAM | Ratified by Full Governing Body |
| Signed – Chair of Governors  | 22 - 5.19 |

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Foreland Fields School is a Rights Respecting School thereby this policy ensures that the following rights are acknowledged:



Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child.

Article 19 – Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 11 – To stop children being taken out of their own country illegally.

Signed (Chair of Governors):



Date: 22 - 5.19



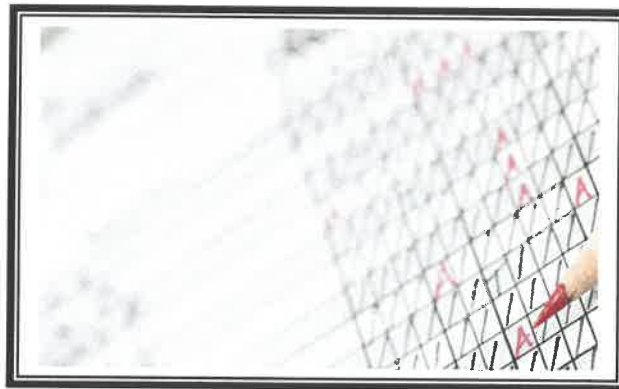
Kent County Council Inclusion and Attendance Service

Model Attendance Policy



Foreland Fields School

April 2019



Revised in April 2017

Signed (Chair of Governors):

Date: 22-5-19

Related School Policies

This Attendance Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Working with Parents Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Statement of Intent

Foreland Fields School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and actively promote good attendance and punctuality.

As a school we appreciate that many of our pupils have medical conditions which can impact on their school attendance. We encourage parents/carers to discuss issues related to attendance with pupils' class teachers, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers and/or the Family Liaison Officer in order to ensure we are aware of any issues, and can plan accordingly.

The Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Foreland Fields School.

Parental Responsibility

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents/carers responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that each child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents/carers should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.45am. All pupils that arrive late must report, with their parent (when possible) to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded.

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The Role of the School Staff

At Foreland Fields School there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

Marilyn Smalley (Receptionist) has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues along with Sharon Bremner (Family Liaison Officer).

Class teachers or form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher notifies Marilyn/Sharon or the Headteacher of children whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of Marilyn Smalley or Sue Finnerty (Receptionists) to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see National Attendance Codes)
- Parents/carers are informed termly of the child's attendance figure.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

- 95 - 100% attendance – the class teacher or form tutor to investigate and notify Marilyn or Sue if concerns regarding attendance arise. Marilyn or Sue to contact parent if appropriate. The school will always ring on the first day of absence if a child has not been reported absent by parents/carers.
- 90 - 95% attendance - school intervention including letters/meeting with parents/carers unless there is a known reason for the absence, usually related to a medical condition or other health related issue.
- Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door on KELSI.
- If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice (Michelle Slater – 03000 414932).
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make a Front Door referral on KELSI.

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below:-

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Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Lateness

At Foreland Fields School the register is taken at 8.45am and 1pm (lower school) 1.30pm (upper school). Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L').

The register will close at 9.00am and 1.15pm (lower school) or 1.45pm (upper school). Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents/carers and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016, as revised in April 2017, when:

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded.
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period, a Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child).
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings.

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents/carers will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

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Absence (for example leave for holidays) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell (unless related to specific condition)
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays (with some rare exceptions).

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents/carers will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents/carers and minutes of any meetings **need to** be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information.

Local Authority Action may include:-

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution.

Penalty Notices Proceedings for Poor Attendance

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016 and revised in April 2017.

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of absence for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions or period of 50 days of schooling – these do not need to be consecutive.
- A Penalty Notice can also be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- After the appropriate request for a Penalty Notice is received, the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service will issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded.
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child).

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Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents/carers are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport.

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

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Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Appendices (Found on KLZ Sharepoint – Procedure (Attendance))

Attend 01 Late letter (Code L)

Attend 02 Late letter (Code U)

Attend 03 Absence Letter

Attend 04 School Attendance Meeting Letter

Attend 05 School Letter Warning re: Penalty Notice Referral

Attend 06 Unauthorised absence confirmation of PN request

Attend 07a Response to Leave Request (Not Authorising)

Attend 07b Response to Leave Request submitted retrospectively (Not Authorising)

Attend 08 Unauthorised leave confirmation of PN request

Attend 09 School letter where they believe a holiday was taken

Attend 10 Traveller Attendance letter

Attend 11 Traveller Absence due to travelling

Attend 12 School Referral Pathway

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