



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Review Date	Sept 2024
Approved	Governors
Ratified	Full Governors
To be Reviewed	September 2025
Policy Lead	K Dobrowolski

Fir Vale School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

This policy identifies and highlights the procedures that are in place to ensure that our pupils are accounted for and safe.

Reducing absence and persistent absence is a vital and integral part of schools and the local authorities' work to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school

DfE policy (Last updated 2024)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance__applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

Roles & Responsibility

- SLT link to Attendance & Punctuality – Kieran Dobrowolski
- Attendance and Welfare Manager - vacant post
- Attendance Support Worker
- Attendance Administration Assistant
- Local Authority Attendance Team & FIS
- Pastoral team raise attendance concerns at Year Inclusion meetings and intervene through weekly meetings and workshops
- DSL/Deputy DSL – use attendance & punctuality data with case load (safeguarding)
- Tutors raise the profile of attendance & punctuality and challenge their tutees if standards are not met
- Teachers – Assist by supervising pupils in punctuality detentions at the end of the school day and discuss absence with individual students.

Registration Procedures

- Tutor Time starts at 8:45am
- Tutors input the AM attendance mark within the first 15 minutes of the lesson. Pupils involved in examinations or trips to be inputted by the Attendance Team and Pastoral Team
- After P1 mark input – text message sent for unexplained absence
- Attendance Administration Assistant contacts home throughout the day to collect reasons for absence
- Feedback from parents – codes updated in Classcharts (ongoing)
- Staff who have not taken their register will be prompted by a Classcharts alert and then by The Attendance Administration Assistant
- New staff and Supply staff have induction to logging on and using Classcharts
- Teacher inputs all register marks on Classcharts in the first 15 minutes of every lesson
- Teacher inputs P4 register – this is the legal PM registration

First day absence Procedure

- The absence line is checked for messages regarding absence
- No response leads to contact home from the Attendance Team
- Home visit as appropriate

Categorisation and Absence

- An absence may be authorised if a parent has made contact with school giving a genuine reason for absence and the pupil's attendance level is above school target (95%). Prolonged illness and medical issues/appointments will require medical evidence
- If absence continues to be unauthorised, procedures will be followed towards a Penalty Notice Warning
- Staff that are responsible for authorising these codes are SLT and the Attendance Team

Reduced Timetable

- Pupils to sign in and out using the InVentry system in reception at the agreed time
- Information to be shared with front office Admin Team
- All staff to be updated with a list of pupil start/finish times
- Reduced timetables will be revised regularly

Alternative Provision

- Some placement providers register the attendance of the pupil on-line. This is checked daily by the Attendance Team and contact is made with the remaining providers on a daily basis. A weekly email is received from select providers confirming the weekly attendance
- Absences are reported to the Head of Year and Attendance Team for follow up
- Feedback is given at the Year Inclusion meeting and at SLT line management meetings

Off Site Direction

- Occasionally, as an alternative to suspension, a Step Out (Off Site Direction) is used as a sanction. Communication between Fir Vale and the receiving school takes place in the morning to monitor attendance. Attendance is coded "D".

Children Missing from Education

- If a child does not arrive at Fir Vale School on entry in September or as a mid-year admission, contact is made to the School Admissions Team
- If there is no reply over a number of days the school will conduct a home visit
- If the pupil is absent for 20 days they will be reported to CME (communication has been unsuccessful with the family)
- A pupil is removed on the 20th day of absence or in the event of a deregistration notification being received from the CME team

Truancy

- A mark for every pupil should be inputted every lesson (in the timetabled lesson or not). The Attendance Team monitors register input. Staff who do not take a register are alerted via Classcharts and may be spoken to by SLT/Behaviour Support/Attendance Team
- Internal truancy - teachers record on Classcharts if a pupil does not arrive at the lesson but is marked present in the previous lessons. Parents are notified when a pupil is missing from their lesson without explanation
- External truancy – parent meeting with Pastoral team (relevant sanction and targets)

Suspensions

- Only the Headteacher can suspend and the Deputy Headteacher in the Headteacher's absence
- Parental contact is made with the decision to suspend and a letter is sent to confirm length of suspension
- Pupil is isolated until contact is made with parent
- School provides work for pupils and it should be returned to school for assessment
- Spreadsheet kept for each term with details of pupil and reason for suspension
- Details of suspension kept on SIMS
- External – coded 'E'

Punctuality

- Registers open at 8:45am and close at 9:15
- Warning notifications are delivered via walkie-talkie at 8:40am for pupils to make their way to their Tutor rooms and at 8.45am pupils are deemed as 'late'
- Tutors use the facility in Classcharts to code 'L' for lateness and are expected to enter the number of 'minutes late'
- Students arriving after tutor time will be given a U code

- The dining room is staffed between 8.45 – 9am by the Pastoral Team who challenge the late arrivers.
- Pupils who arrive through the school gates 9am onwards are directed to lessons through reception.
- From 9.20am onwards, students are signed in late at reception and are issues a sanction unless they have a legitimate reason for lateness.

Interventions & Sanctions for lateness involve:

- Letters are sent home for persistently late pupils
- A same day 45 minute detention is issued for 1 or more late marks in a day. The teacher is responsible for checking the Classcharts register for their class and inputting detentions during the school day. The pastoral team will log morning late detentions.
- Attendance and punctuality monitoring by Pastoral/SLT/Tutors/Attendance Team
- Parents are identified to be spoken to at Parents' Evenings by Pastoral/SLT/ Form tutor/Attendance Team
- Progress reports sent to parents after every data input every term includes attendance & punctuality information (Admin/Data Team)
- Parents receive their child's attendance data with their child's written report at the annual Parents' Evening (Data)
- Repeated incidents of poor attendance are escalated to receive more severe sanctions

Referral to FIS

- Pupils with <90% attendance and/or have known truancy/regular unauthorised absence, who require more specialist intervention may be referred to FIS or the Attendance and Inclusion Officer
- Intervention workers are to be kept informed of visits and updates
- Attendance Team issues attendance reports to Intervention workers and visits are made
- Attendance tracker is updated (Attendance Team)
- Attendance Team and FIS Attendance and Inclusion Officer meet to review cases

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority's FIS Attendance and Inclusion Team. They will work with the school to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court may be used.

Term Time Leave

- There is a zero tolerance to 'unapproved' term time leave – no days will be authorised without the Headteacher's approval
- Parents to contact school with the term time leave request
- A 'Term Time Leave' form to be completed and returned to the Headteacher for consideration.
- Parent to bring the travel details to school for a copy to be made for pupil file
- The Attendance Team will only contact parents when if the request is authorised. If communication has not been received the parent should assume permission has been denied.
- If unauthorised term time leave is taken for 5 days or more the LA will issue a penalty notice
- Unauthorised term-time leave will be coded as 'G'
- Term time leave of 20 days or more may result in removal from school roll

Incentives and Rewards

- Daily attendance data can be viewed using Classcharts Attendance analysis
- Each half term in the Year Group Recognition Assembly, recognition is given for pupils who have 100% attendance
- Regular reward trips are dependent on good attendance and punctuality
- A 'Fantastic Attendance' Cup competition for tutor groups
- A tutor group league competition

Attendance Intervention and Measures Taken to reduce Persistent Absence

The stages are managed by the relevant staff, and progress is measured. Pupils are recognised if they succeed or move onto the next stage for further support and intervention in line with DfE document "Working together to improve attendance". We aim to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

In cases where attendance is below 95%, and there is no improvement, there is a 'staged response from school that can lead to a Local Authority Penalty Fine.

Stage 1

- Stage 1 Letter sent
- Attendance monitored
- Student/parent sign an attendance pledge

If there is no improvement seen move this will move to stage 2

Stage 2

- Stage 2 Letter sent
- Attendance monitored
- Student/parent sign an attendance contract

If there is no improvement seen move this will move to stage 3

Stage 3

- Stage 3 notice to improve
- Attendance monitored
- 3rd party involvement from the Local Authority

If there is no improvement after this then the case may be put forward for a Penalty Fine from the Local Authority