



Policy Attendance

This policy has been written with regard to the guidance 'Working together to safeguard children', 'Keeping children safe in education' and the 'Special Education Needs Code of Practice', which places Special Education Needs and Disabilities together and abbreviated to SEND. A copy can be seen in the Headteacher's Office.

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy, in line with the Equality Act 2010, is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Title	Attendance
Date of Issue	June 2019
Review Date	June 2022
Prepared by	Headteacher
To be reviewed by	Headteacher and Governors
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Leave of Absence During Term Time Appendix 2 - Request for Leave of Absence from School During Term Time.
Supply / distribution	Available as a read-only document on the Fynamore school website and one hardcopy in the school office.
Other relevant approved documents	Home School Agreement Policy
Authorised by	Headteacher and Governors

At Fynamore we believe regular attendance at school benefits pupils both socially and academically.

We aim to:

- Ensure that children and young people make the best use of their educational opportunities by attending regularly, punctually and in a state of readiness for learning.
- Emphasise a commitment to promoting excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that everyone within the school community understands the issues and procedures for attendance.
- Fulfil the statutory duties in relation to school attendance.
- To encourage, recognise and reward good attendance.
- Equal opportunities and access for all pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

Legal requirements.

Parents, schools and LAs share responsibilities in respect of attendance.

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, **parents** must ensure their children are educated. For most parents this means registering their child at a school and ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the issue of a penalty notice or prosecution.

By law, **schools** are required to:

- aim to meet the annual attendance target set by DfE to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.
- report to the **LA**, pupils who are absent for more than 10 sessions (i.e. five school days) unauthorised holiday, so that the LA can issue a Penalty Notice.
- monitor pupils' attendance closely, particularly where attendance is less than 90%.
- The Educational Welfare Officer is responsible for discharging duties of the LA.
- By law **the register** must show whether a pupil's absence is authorised or unauthorised. **Authorised** absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for the absence. All other absences are **unauthorised**.
- Government circular 'Social Inclusion: Pupil Support' emphasises the responsibility that **schools** have in supporting and promoting good attendance and taking seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance.

School's Role

Class teachers will maintain accurate registers and follow-up unauthorised absences, keeping notes and informing Head of any concerns.

- Punctuality and attendance are closely monitored and targets are set annually.
- Attendance certificates are awarded for good attendance.
- School office staff will record absences electronically and collate absence data for analysis.
- The Headteacher will promote good attendance through assemblies, attendance certificates, monitoring registration procedures and liaising with Education Welfare Officer.
- The school has adopted the LA's Fast Track procedures.
- Full Governing Body will monitor attendance against targets via Headteacher's Report

Parent/Child's Role

- To ensure their child arrives on time, appropriately dressed and in a 'condition to learn' (i.e. not too tired or too hungry).
- To work in partnership with the school to help their child/children gain an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- To work in partnership with the school to take an active interest in their child's education.
- To work in partnership with the school and other agencies (as appropriate) to resolve problems relating to non-attendance or which may have a negative impact on their child's attendance.

Pupils can also have a responsibility to make sure they follow school procedures made known to them for receiving their registration mark, in particular when arriving late.

Procedures

Normally, the registers are taken and recorded directly on SIMS by the teacher. Paper copies are kept securely near the office, for use by supply cover teachers, or on occasions when SIMS is not accessible. Paper registers must be returned to the school office immediately after completion. Daily registers are checked by office staff and then printed out. One copy is left in the office and one copy is placed in the red wall-hanger in the Year 6 cloakroom. In the event of an emergency, staff will take both sets of registers out to the playgrounds (one to KS1 and one to Year 5/6).

Registers will be marked in accordance with the LA attendance register code.

Registers will be marked: Morning 8.55 am
Afternoon 1.00 pm

After 8.55 am pupils will be marked absent in the register. NO gaps should be left. Pupils arriving after 8.55 am and 1.00 pm must be sent to the office for registration.

Attendance registers are legal documents. They are the subject of regular screening by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and OFSTED and may be referred to during a financial audit. Please ensure you complete them in a manner which reflects their importance.

On the first day of absence the school should be informed by a parent or guardian of the reason of absence. Letters, telephone calls, texts, e-mails and verbal messages are all acceptable. The preferred method is by absence text line (07537 438427, starting the message with Fyn and then name of child and reason).

The school has adopted a ringing/texting on the first day of absence policy, if no contact is made by parents. Class teachers are not responsible for pursuing unauthorised absences and must inform the office of any concerns. Unauthorised absences are recorded on the pupil's annual school report. Leave of absence for pupils during term time may only be taken in exceptional circumstances (Appendix 1). Parents must apply for holiday absence in advance using the 'Request for Leave of Absence from School during Term-time' form (Appendix 2). Parents will be issued with Penalty Notices by Wiltshire Council if pupils take 10 or more sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised holiday during term-time.

Parents should notify the class teacher/office of medical appointments resulting in late attendance.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be informed of any concerns regarding individual attendance. This may involve arrangements such as part-time attendance of pupils who have had sustained periods of absence from school.

Attendance summary panels on the SIMS homepage are monitored daily by staff to keep a constant check on attendance levels.

A class attendance printout is given to the teachers each month, so that they can identify any patterns of attendance and absence and report these back to the office staff, who also scrutinise the print-outs (see example attached).

Termly attendance statistics are produced. These are reported to the Board of Governors on a termly basis in the Headteacher's Report (see example attached).

Persistent absentees are identified each half term (or more regularly if there is a known concern). Those with attendance under 90% are identified and closely monitored.

If a child's absence level is high, without good cause, a letter is sent to the parents. If absence levels continue to be a concern, a second letter is sent to parents calling them in for a School Attendance Meeting (SAM) with the Headteacher.

Parents are also referred to the Parent Support Adviser (PSA), who is in school one day a week. The PSA works with parents to help support them to get their child to school more regularly. The ELSA and Play Therapist also work with children on the Pupil Premium Register with low attendance.

The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) is contacted about persistent absentees, and we liaise closely with the EWO on an on-going basis, when required. We hold regular 'Low Attender Surgeries', where we invite the parents of persistent absentees to a 10 minute surgery meeting with the Headteacher and the EWO. If there is then no subsequent improvement in attendance, we invite the parents to a Local Authority Attendance Meeting (LAAM) with the EWO and the Headteacher present.

Persistent lateness is also monitored (using the late book and SIMS reports on total minutes late).

Parents of regularly late children are contacted and are called for meetings/referred to the PSA and EWO if required.

The school collates attendance statistics to send to the DfF annually. Pupils will be deleted from registers only in accordance with the LA's Attendance Policy.

Monitoring

The Governing Body will monitor and review this policy every 3 years.



**PENALTY NOTICES
FOR UNAUTHORISED LEAVE OF
ABSENCE DURING
TERM TIME**

**s444A and s444B Education Act 1996
&
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations
2006**

Information for Parents and Carers

September 2017

What are s444A and s444B of the Education Act 1996?

Section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996 give powers to the Local Authority (LA) to issue Penalty Notices where the parent/carer is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.

Why are these powers available?

Reducing absence from school is a key priority at both national and local level. Missing school reduces a pupil's educational attainment and life chances.

What is a Penalty Notice?

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and is used to try and secure an improvement in a pupil's school attendance without the need to appear in Court. As long as the penalty is paid the Penalty Notice enables parents or carers to discharge their potential liability for prosecution for the period covered by the Penalty Notice.

What are the costs?

Payment of £120 is required within 28 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice; this sum is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within 28 days the LA is required to commence proceedings in the Magistrates' Court for the original offence of your child's poor school attendance. If you plead guilty or are found guilty the Courts have a wider range of options which could include a maximum fine of £1000. In addition a Parenting Order could be imposed.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child and payment is required for each Penalty Notice issued.

Who issues them?

The Local Authority through the Education Welfare Service.

How are they issued?

By post to your home.

Can I be prosecuted if I pay the penalty but my child is still missing school?

Yes. You will not be prosecuted for the period included in the Penalty Notice – payment discharges your liability in this respect. However, legal proceedings might be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the Penalty Notice, depending upon the circumstances.

When are they issued for unauthorised Leave of Absence

Penalty Notices are issued for absence taken during term time where the leave of absence has not been authorised by the school or an absence has not been requested in advance and pupil will have had a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised leave of absence during the previous six months up to and including the day the Education Welfare Service is notified.

What is unauthorised Leave of Absence?

- A parent has made a request for leave of absence in term time and this has not been agreed by the school;
- A parent has not applied for leave of absence in advance of the absence (the regulations do not allow retrospective approval); or
- If the parents keep the child away from school for longer than was agreed, the extra time is recorded as unauthorised

When can Leave of Absence be authorised?

Amendments made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.

Why have I received this leaflet?

This leaflet is sent to parents in Wiltshire to inform them of the extended use of Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence or for parents who have requested leave of absence during term time.

If the leave of absence you have requested is not agreed by the school and your child's total unauthorised leave of absence amounts to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year the Education Welfare Service will be notified. The six months includes all unauthorised leave of absence up to the day the Education Welfare Service is notified.

Following this notification from a school that a parental request for a leave of absence in term time has not been authorised and the leave of absence is taken the Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child.

What can I do now?

If the leave of absence that you have requested is not authorised you are advised not to take your child out of school.

Who can I discuss this with?

In the first instance talk to your child's school; otherwise the Penalty Notice Officer can be contacted on:

Tel: 01722 438123 Email: PNLO@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendix 2

FYNAMORE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher in **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances. Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority after a decision has been made by the Headteacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the exceptional circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence. **Please read the attached Local Authority leaflet which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised Leave of Absence during term time.**

Name(s) of Child(ren):	
Date(s) of Birth:	
Class Teacher(s):	
Date of First Day of Absence:	
Date of Return to School:	
Number of School Days Absence Requested:	
Sibling(s) at other school(s) and name of school(s):	

Exceptional circumstances (reason) for Leave of Absence during term time:
(please attach further details if required)

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Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Carer name: _____

For school use only:

Name:			
Attendance %:			
Total sessions pupil absent this academic year:			
Total unauthorised absence this year:			

Request authorised: Yes / No

Signed: _____ Headteacher Date: _____