



Feltham Hill Infant & Nursery School

Attendance Policy

Leaders must ensure that all pupils including vulnerable ones attend school regularly.

Good attendance is essential to support pupils' well-being and learning.

September 2023

Prepared by: HT Sept 2023

Agreed with: Strategy team Sept 2023

Agreed with: All school staff (Sept 2023)

Agreed with governors: Chair governors/named attendance governor: Sept 2023

And Full governing body (FGB): (Nov 2023)

To be reviewed and updated: Sept 2024

Aims

Leaders are committed to meeting school's obligation with regards to school attendance through a whole school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence (PA) and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

Leaders will also promote and support punctuality when attending school.

Legislation and statutory 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](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Reviewing and challenging attendance data during FGB.
- Alongside the Headteacher, making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- School has a named governor for attendance, the Chair of governors – Jane Kendall-Nicholas.
- This governor meets with the Headteacher, termly to monitor and discuss attendance.
- The Headteacher prepares a report for this.
- The named governor, then feeds this back to the FGB, termly.



The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy.
- Monitoring school level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Preparing an attendance data table, termly.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of their class including individual pupils.
- Including naming those with attendance issues/concerns.
- Celebrating attendance during birthday assembly.
- Reporting attendance, weekly in the newsletter.
- Monitoring and managing PA, alongside the Receptionist/attendance officer.
- Ensuring the school's absence procedures are adhered to.
- Noting when a fixed-penalty notice has been issued by the local authority.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Headteacher is also the designated senior leader for attendance.

The designated school leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school alongside the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Having a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring attendance expectations and absence processes each term.
- Having an oversight of data analysis each term.
- Supporting the attendance officer to build relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Celebrating attendance during birthday assembly with parents/carers including:
awarding class stars for classes with 95% attendance or above,
awarding attendance bears and pupils wearing own clothes (the following Friday), for the 2 classes with the highest attendance.
- Helping teachers to identify and support named pupils.

The Receptionist/attendance officer

Jane Sargeant, is the school's Receptionist/attendance officer.

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring daily attendance data across the school, including at an individual pupil level.
- Making daily calls with parents/carers when necessary, to see if an absence can be authorised and also to encourage parents to bring their child to school.
- Printing weekly attendance for birthday assemblies and the newsletter.

- Leading the school's procedures for absences including: issuing warning letters, setting a first attendance target, setting a second attendance target, referring to the school attendance support officer (SASO).
- Working with and referring to the SASO, to address persistent and severe absences including having meetings with parents.
- Advising the Headteacher when these absence procedures are followed, a referral is made to the SASO, a fixed-penalty notice has been issued.
- Reporting attendance/safeguarding concerns immediately, to the Headteacher/designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- Completing a child missing in education (CME) referral, on Hounslow's online safeguarding portal, alongside the DSL when required.
- Referring to SASO when a family have taken a holiday.
- Providing termly attendance data to the Headteacher, prior to governors' focus visits.

Class teachers & teaching support staff

- Class teachers, teaching assistants (TAs) and early years practitioners (EYPs) are responsible for recording attendance, on a twice daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- They will also encourage good attendance by celebrating with the class stars and attendance bears following birthday assembly.
- Inform their class when they are allowed to wear their own clothes, the following Friday.
- They will report to the Headteacher and attendance officer any pupils they have concerns about.
- This could be: a pupil always arriving late, missing certain days in a week, as well as, low attendance, so high Persistent Absence.

School Office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system, using student information management system (SIMS).
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance officer, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Report a safeguarding concern related to attendance on the school's safeguarding reporting system, Myconcern.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am, on the first day of the absence and leave a message reporting this absence.
- Call the school, each subsequent day of absence, and advise when their child is expected to return.

- Provide medical evidence, so the absence can be authorised.
- Medical evidence could be: seeing a medical appointment, copy of a medical appointment, prescription, copy of medication prescribed, record from a walk-in centre.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Provide evidence, so appointments can be authorised.
- Provide the school with 2 or more emergency contact numbers for their child.

Pupils

Our pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day.
- Arrive on time with their parents.

Recording attendance

Attendance register

Leaders will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

- This is the role of the Receptionist/attendance officer, alongside the school business manager (SBM).
- Leaders will ensure that teachers or support teaching staff, take the attendance register, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Teachers or support staff will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present

Office staff will then mark whether a pupils is:

- Absent and add the absence codes and the reason if known.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity.

They will make any amendment to the attendance register too.

This will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.
(See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes).

Office staff will also record:

(For our pupils of compulsory school age).

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.

Leaders will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am, so that the register can be taken at 8.50am.

- If pupils arrive after 8.50am, they will be marked, late.
- The register will also open for 5 minutes in the afternoon session.

Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.15am, or as soon as, practically possible.
- There is an option on the school's phone system for parents to select and then record a message or parents can email the school office.
- Leaders will mark absence due to physical or mental illness, as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 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 in advance. This absence will be marked, as authorised due to illness, as long as, some medical evidence has been seen.
- This could be: notification of a GP appointment, prescription, appointment card, pupil's name on medication, record of visit from walk-in centre.
- Any parent of a pupil without notification of their absence is called by the Attendance officer.
- She will ascertain the reason for absence and inform the parents of the proof needed for it be authorised.
- If the school hasn't be informed about a pupil's absence, after 3 days, there will be a CME referral made to SASO using Hounslow's online safeguarding portal, by the attendance officer and Headteacher/DSL.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised, as long as, the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides medical evidence.
- This could be: a record of a GP or dentist appointment with an appointment letter/card or online text notification.
- However, leaders encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.
- Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Leaders expect a child to be in school before and after a planned appointment.
- The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence, as far in advance as possible, of the requested absence.

- Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorised.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, by the office using the appropriate code **L**
- After the register has closed, they will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code **U**
- Parents/carers of pupils who are continually late will be monitored and reminded the importance of arriving on time.

Following up unexplained absence

If a pupil who is expected to attend school, does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the attendance officer will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Inform parents/carers that absence will only be authorised with medical proof.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it, as soon as, the reason for absence is ascertained.

If contact cannot be made, the attendance officer will:

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Try to contact any of the pupil's emergency contacts.
- Complete a CME, referral after 3 days.

In addition:

- The attendance officer will speak to the SASO and update them.
- Sometimes, the SASO will call parents or make a, home visit, to ensure contact has been made and pupils are safe.

Reporting to parents

The DFE expects leaders to regularly update parents/carers of their child's attendance and absence levels.

- A pupil's percentage attendance and percentage persistent absence will be recorded on their annual report which is sent at the end of the academic year.
- Also, any parents/carers of children with PA or severe absence, will have been notified of their child's attendance in a warning letter and then subsequent attendance targets.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term-time, if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.



- A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.
- Leaders define 'exceptional circumstances' as: a family emergency, serious illness, family member dying, attending a family members funeral etc.
- The Headteacher considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account: previous requests, the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- Any request should be submitted, as soon as, possible, by emailing the office.
- The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments with proof.
- Religious observance where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes.
This covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers.
Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Other authorised absences could involve: social care meetings, housing issues or education off site.

The Headteacher cannot authorise holidays.

Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

- If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.
The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- Holidays taken in term time which cannot be authorised.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

The Headteacher is responsible for promoting and improving attendance, alongside the SLT and teachers. So will:

- Measure attendance data weekly.
- Ensure all staff know that school is aiming for 95% or above.
- Celebrate attendance in birthday assembly, in front of parents, with classes 95% and above, being awarded a class star.
- Award the 2 classes with the highest attendance, an attendance bear for the following week. They can wear their own clothes on the following Friday.
- Ensure photos are taken which goes into the golden achievement book.

The Headteacher will also:

- Publish the weekly attendance, in the newsletter, as a reminder to send their children to school.
- Celebrate the two classes who have won the attendance bears.
- Remind on punctuality where necessary.
- Discuss the need for 95% attendance at every induction meeting for new Reception and Nursery parent/carers. As well as, new parents information meetings throughout the school.

Attendance monitoring

Monitoring attendance

The Headteacher will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data termly and yearly, across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

Analysing attendance data

The Headteacher alongside the attendance officer will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify individual pupils that need additional support with their attendance.
- Provide targeted support to their parent/carers to get their children into school.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
For example, calling known families, allowing them to come in late, providing free uniform.



Using data to improve attendance

The attendance officer will:

- Provide regular attendance reports (every 4 weeks), to facilitate discussions with parents/carers.
- Use this data to monitor improvement in attendance and reduction in PA.

Reducing persistent absence (PA) and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The attendance officer alongside the Headteacher will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services for example, school nurse, to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Refer to the SASO, to meet with/engage with parents/carers too.
- The SASO may advise school to set another target or begin their process.
- The SASO will speak to parents/carers and say attendance must be improved.
- They will set a target and if that is achieved after 4 weeks, will inform the school.
- However, if a pupil's attendance continues to fall, the SASO will issue a Fixed Penalty Warning Notice. Then ultimately a fine.



Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Strategy team and safeguarding governor, annually.

At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This attendance policy is linked to:

Child Protection & safeguarding

Behaviour including anti-bullying and statement of behaviour principles

Health & safety policy

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
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
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
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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