



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

The Florence Nightingale Academy recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within School to support learning and development.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 96%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 96% or above.***

The Florence Nightingale Academy believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Pupils, and all members of the school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve.

Aims

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at The Florence Nightingale Academy.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the White Hills Park Trust, Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). Please see reference to the legislation and guidance listed on page 92 of on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

1. Promoting regular attendance at The Florence

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils. To help us all focus on this, school will ensure:

- School has a named Senior Attendance Champion in place to support parents and monitor attendance.

- Appropriate interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
 - An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
 - The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
 - Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes the school and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
 - Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
 - Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
 - Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular incentives.
 - Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with pupils in class and at assemblies.
 - Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

2. Expectations of parent/carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers' legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. The Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) sets out the expectations for attendance at school. A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday, the 1996 Education act states parents must ensure that their child receives full time education by regular attendance at an educational setting. The local authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time. School gates open at 8:45am. Nursery starts at 8:45am or 12:15pm
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- If late for school, your child needs to be brought into the school office, a valid reason for lateness needs to be communicated.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- Contact school by 9:30am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact a member of the senior leadership team if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided)
- Appointment cards/slips will be provided by parents as proof if there is no alternative but to book in school time, e.g. if a specific clinic runs in school hours.

- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. An absence request needs to be emailed into the school office.

If a child is absent, we will:

- Telephone and text the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9:30 am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised a member of school staff will send a safe and well text message. If no response within an hour a home visit will be carried out. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited to meet the class teacher in the first instance, followed by a meeting with a member of SMT.
- If absences persist the Head Teacher and Senior Attendance Champion will discuss appropriate actions and support, this may include fining.

3. Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents/carers provide a satisfactory explanation for the absence. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupils/family member's birthday
- Shopping
- Haircut
- Closure of a siblings school
- Holidays taken without authorization
- A parent/carer appointment or illness

4. Children missing in education

There are many reasons why a child may become missing in education. Although not exhaustive, the most common being:

- Pupils at risk of harm/ neglect – for children who are in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care and the police, if appropriate;
 - Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families;
 - Children of Service Personnel;
 - Missing children and runaways;
 - Children who cease to attend school;
 - Children of new migrant families.
- Taken from CME 2016

Schools' responsibility:

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. School will return a form to the Local Authority, detailing information on the child. Schools have a safeguarding duty in

respect of their pupils, therefore must closely monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register.

As part of this, it is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority. (CME 2016)

New Register codes:

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting

		where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)

E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Deletions from the register:

School will seek to make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child, jointly with the local authority. The local authority should be notified in advance of the deletion, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made. School must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the grounds set out in the CME 2016 guidance – see Appendix A. When removing a pupil's name, the local authority must be notified of:

- The full name of the pupil;
- The full name and address of the parent with whom the child normally resides;
- At least one telephone number of the parent;
- The pupil's future address and destination school (if known);
- The reason(s) why the pupil's name has been removed from the admission register.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive

full-time education.

Under section 436A of the Education Act 1996:

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days following an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies where the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. (CME 2016).

School Policy:

Following guidelines, School has a strict policy regarding absence when School has not been notified of absence and/or cannot contact parent/ guardian.

Day 1 – Absence text and email to main contact held on Bromcom

Day 2 – Phone call to main contact held on Bromcom

Day 3/4 – Home visit, carried out by SLT

Day 5 – Request for welfare check

Day 10 – Notification to Local Authority

5. Home Educated Children

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school. On receipt of written notification to home educate, school will inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. School will not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home. However, if parent/ guardian fails/ refuses to provide notification, a referral will be made to the Local Authority with immediate effect.

(6 Section 7 of the Education Act 1996).

6. Child relocates

When a child moves, attempts will be made by School to contact local schools to provide a setting for the child where they will be educated. If no provision is available, support will be offered to complete a transfer request. The Local Authority will be notified to ensure suitable support can be offered to provide education. When a child transfers both into and out of School, a form must be filled in and returned to the Local Authority notifying the pupil movement.

7. Exclusion and Permanent Exclusion

School must arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. If a permanent exclusion has been put in place, the Trust will be notified with immediate effect.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

At The Florence we believe that improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community. As such,

the Governing Body and the White Hills Park Trust will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
 - Bi-annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
 - Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters.
 - Agree school attendance targets with the Headteacher and the Trust.
 - Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
 - Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority and DFE as required and on time.
 - Ensure that there is a named senior attendance champion to lead on attendance
 - Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
 - Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
 - Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
 - Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:

1. The importance of good attendance
2. That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
3. The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
4. The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
 - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
 - Academy trust local governing boards only: Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across school

The Headteacher and Leadership Team will be responsible for:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed bi-annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address

attendance issues.

- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, DFE statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and attendance related legislation is complied with.
 - Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
 - Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
 - Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through close liaison with their Virtual School Head.
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- Ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion and allocate sufficient time and resources.
 - Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the DFE as required and on time.
 - Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
 - Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
 - Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
 - Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
 - Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
 - Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Teachers, support staff and office staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Be responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Request that Parents and Carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their

child's work and educational progress.

- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties and communicate with the Senior Attendance Champion.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's Attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, send an email for request of leave, to the Head Teacher in advance of booking the holiday.

9. Using attendance data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Trust and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every week The Attendance Administrator will provide children and class teachers with attendance data for the previous week for their class. This information is shared via whole school assemblies and in a whole school display. Each term this information is provided for each pupil within their class. These are also shared with parents (for their child) twice yearly during parents evening and with end of year reports. The attendance administrator, Senior Attendance Champion and the Headteacher will analyse the data at the end of each week and follow the attendance procedure flow chart, which highlights the level of intervention required. (See appendix A)

10. Support Systems

We recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Referrals to support agencies
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Support plans
- Friendship groups

- PSHE
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion units
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child centered and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, School will consider the use of legal sanctions.

Pupils who have more than 4 broken weeks of illness during one term will be required to provide medical proof of illness before any further illness absence can be authorised. Medical proof can be in the form of a medical appointment card or a prescription in the child's name.

11. Legal Sanctions

Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority and Trust will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education. Please see [Fines for parents for taking children out of school: What you need to know – The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#) and [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) for more information.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence. This is also reflected in [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#).

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Support plans are a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance. The plan will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly. The support plan can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

Penalty Notices [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days and for fewer days where this has happened before.

10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10-week period

- Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period.

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days of the date the Notice was issued.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at The Florence Nightingale work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. The procedures below are followed to ensure that this happens. Attendance is monitored weekly by the admin staff and the Headteacher.

Appendix

