



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Forest Park Primary School part of
Orchard Community Trust



Approved by Governors	Review Date	Review Date
January 2023	January 2024	

'Working together to improve school attendance' (May 22) states that

- Improving attendance is everyone's business
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly
- This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

At Forest Park

- We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents/Carers and pupils play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and Staff of Forest Park Primary School share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.
- Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying and more fun.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school and higher education, employment or training.
- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and low attendance.

Impact of absence and punctuality on attainment

Attendance of pupils Academic year 2021- 2022	% of achievement at greater depth or expected in mathematics KS2 assessment	% of achievement at greater depth or expected in reading KS2 assessment
90% - 100% Up to 25 days off per year	64%	76%
0-89% 26 days of absence per year	50%	54%

The figures above clearly show the impact of absence on a child's academic progress.

Children who have a higher percentage of attendance (90 – 100%) achieved higher marks in mathematics and reading than the children who have lower attendance (0-89%).

LATENESS IS LOST LEARNING (over the academic year)
5 minutes late each day = 3 days of lost learning
10 minutes late each day = 6.5 days of lost learning
15 minutes late each day = 10 days of lost learning

Other impacts of absence

As well as the attainment of children falling below the expected levels, they can also experience other worries and issues. Work may be missed so the following day's/week's work will be difficult to access and understand. They will often find after a period of absence it emotionally and socially difficult to return back to school. Also, pupils having low attendance have more social relationships problems, causing them difficulties in building and maintaining friendships within school and outside of school.

School times

- School breakfast club opens at 8am for parents who have requested a place for their child (If you require a place, please contact the school office or email admin@forestpark.org.uk to see if there any positions available).
- School gates open at 8.35am
- School doors open at 8.40am for all pupils
- The school gate closes and learning starts at 8.45am for all pupils
- All pupils are expected to be in school by 8.45am when the gates close, after this time your child is classed as late on the register.
- Parents/Carers are expected to accompany their child to late gate where they will be asked to sign their child in. This will register your child with a late mark on the register. If your child is persistently late a meeting with parents will be held and support put into place where needed.
- Registers close at 9am, however if your child arrives after 9.15am they are classed as absent for the morning session and the register will be marked as unauthorised. This will have an impact on their attendance and will be discussed with parents through a meeting with Education Welfare and/or Miss Bloor.
- School finishes at 2.50pm for EYFS and KS1, KS2 is 2.55pm.
- If your child is not collected by 3pm, the late collection policy applies.

How to report an absence

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school every day when a school is open and to notify the school as soon as possible if their child is absent for any reason.

We request that all absences are reported to the school office by 9am on the first morning of the absence and then every other day.

Way to reporting the absence:

- By telephoning the school office (01782 234979)
- By email (admin@forestpark.org.uk)
- In person at the school office
- By sharing medical card/ letter/ text with the school office in advance
- By completing a leave of absence request form (available from the school office)

Please **do not** use SEESAW as a method of reporting an absence or sending medical evidence.

Absence codes

Authorised Absence

It is at the Head teacher's discretion for an absence to be authorised. This may be for

- Illness (medical evidence may be requested)
- Funeral – up to 1 day, if more is required please contact the school to discuss
- Wedding – this absence will need to be requested in advance
- Attendance at a religious observance held by a religious body will be granted as authorised absence. The Head teacher should be consulted in advance of the event. It is at the Head teacher's discretion as to how long will be granted as authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is recorded when a child does not attend school for a valid reason or the parent does not contact the school or school cannot contact the parents on the day of absence.

Following the school policy, leave of absence and holidays will not authorised in term time.

Leave of Absence requests

Taking a leave of absence during term time will affect your child the same as other absences. As a school we expect parents to support their child's education by not taking out of school during term time.

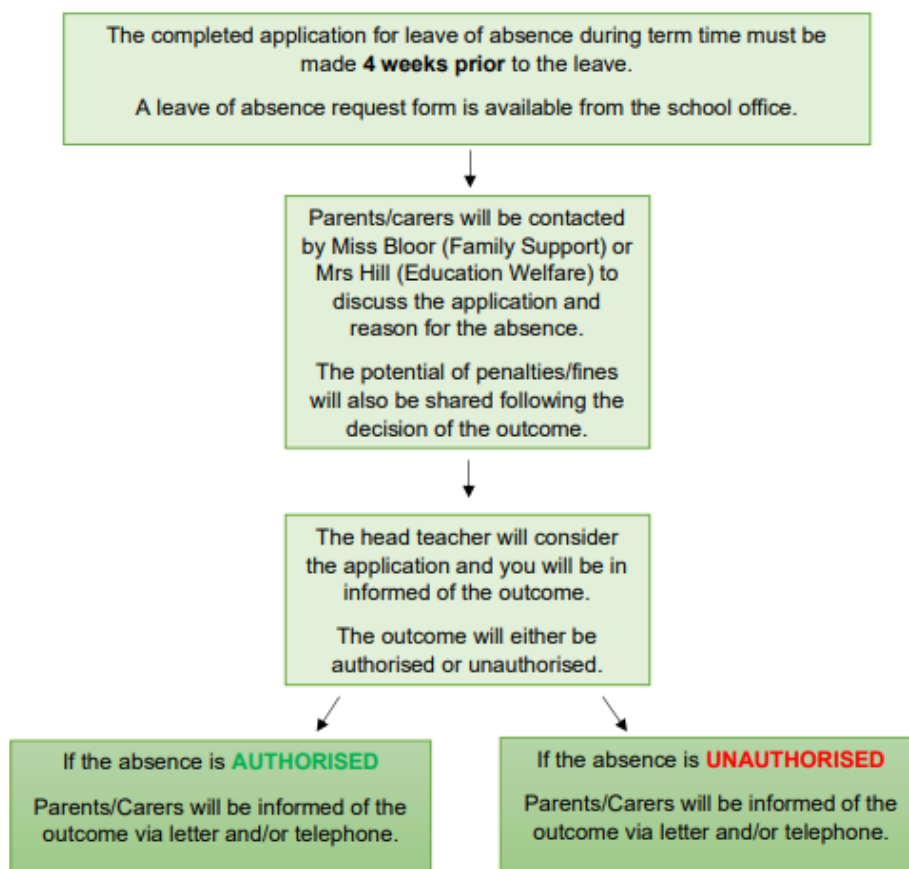
There is no automatic entitlement in law for leave of absence in term time to go on holiday.

Unauthorised absences will be referred to Education Welfare and fines will be issued following these referrals as per Stoke on Trent Local Authority Guidance.

To request a leave of absence

- Parents must request a leave of absence 4 weeks before the planned leave. A request form is available from the school office.
- A meeting will be arranged with Family Support to discuss the reason and length of the absence. During the discussion parents will be informed of the possible outcomes and the process of referrals.
- The request will then be placed with the head teacher, where they have absolute discretion regarding the authorisation or authorisation of the absence.
- Family Support will inform the parents of the outcome of the request by letter and/or telephone.
- Leave in term time is not authorised and will be marked as a 'G' code on the register, this will then be referred in to Education Welfare and a penalty notice will be issued.
- If there is no permission requested, a letter will be sent to the parents asking for a reason of the absence stating if there is no contact made an automatic referral to Education Welfare will be sent. If there is contact a decision will be made by the head teacher and the parent will be informed.
- **If a child is absent from school for 20 consecutive days following the start of the first day of absence, they will be taken off roll at the end of the 20th school day and so will lose their position at Forest Park Primary School and the parent/carer will need to reapply to Forest Park or apply to another educational establishment upon their return.**
- Following the safeguarding procedures within school this will be reported to the local authority as set out in the Stoke-on-Trent Council Promoting Regular School Attendance – Children Missing Education (CME) guidance.

The chart below explains the process



Medical appointments

Where possible, please arrange these out of school hours. When possible we expect children to attend prior and after the appointment. Authorisation of these absences will only occur if medical evidence is provided to school. If a child does attend prior to or after the appointment the session will be authorised and a present with be recorded.

Monitoring Absences

At Forest Park, attendance is monitored on a weekly and half termly basis by Miss Bloor and Education Welfare Officer, Mrs Hill.

As part of daily and weekly monitoring school will:

- Call on the first day of absence, if the absence has not been called in by parents/carers. If there is no contact made via telephone, a text message will sent to the first contact on the child's records. If there is no contact made then an unauthorised absence will be recorded.
- On the second day of absence, if there has been no contact with parents or carers, contact will be tried again with all contacts on the child's records, a text message to contact 1 and Miss Bloor will complete a home visit to ascertain the reason for the child's absence. A calling card will be left at the home address, requesting contact be made with the school.
- On the third day of absence, they may be a home visit from the Education Welfare Officer and / or Miss Bloor. Again a calling card will be left from either professional requesting contact. An email and text will sent to the registered email address and contact 1.
- By Day 5 a CME (Child Missing in Education) referral will be made to the Local Authority. This will state the contact attempts made and the results of these contacts, attendance percentages as well as the last date the children were in school and any other details that may be relevant.
- We will continue to attempt contact via calls, texts, emails and home visits until the 20th day of absence. Upon the 20th day of absence the child will be taken off roll from Forest Park Primary and a new application to either Forest Park Primary or another educational establishment will need to be completed by parents/ carers upon any return.

All parents are informed half termly and annually of their child's overall attendance and their attendance compared to the school average via our text messaging service.

Regular discussions will be held with Miss Bloor, Mrs Hill and parents/carers if their child's attendance falls below 96% and 90% (this is classed as persistent absence). Discussions will include patterns of attendance/absence and supporting families in increasing their child's attendance. A 'Family and Child Support Plan' will be put into place to help to monitor, manage and support this. This may involve other agencies to provide support, guidance and education such as 0-19 team, Social Care/The Local Authority, Housing and Young Carers.

To manage attendance and punctuality, Forest Park will:

- Keep appropriate and accurate records: registers are taken in the morning and the afternoon. From the registers attendance data will be collated and shared with the head teacher and governing body, this will help to inform school of trends in attendance and punctuality so we are able to effectively target attendance and punctuality in school.
- Monitor patterns of attendance: Miss Bloor and Mrs Hill will monitor children's attendance to support families whose children's attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Work Together: Meetings will be held by Family Support and Senior Leadership on a weekly basis to discuss the concerns around attendance. Data collated will support the school in targeting attendance improvements. Parental meetings will also be held with Miss Bloor and Mrs Hill where a concern of attendance has been seen, this will inform the parents of any concerns but also see how we as a school can support and increase attendance.
- Level 1 and 2

In the first instance, where attendance is below 96%, a letter of concern will be sent to the parent and a meeting will be arranged to discuss the absences, this will support any barriers that may be causing the absence of a child to be acknowledged and put into place. Attendance will then be monitored further on a weekly basis,

If the absence continues to fall and attendance or becomes below 90%, a second letter of concern will be sent and a meeting with the education welfare officer and /or Miss Bloor will be arranged, during this meeting extra support and an agreed joint approach for pupils and families will be put into place. If the issues have not

been resolved and attendance continues to fall a Penalty Notice Warning Letter will be issued and may result in a referral to Education Welfare for statutory action.

Parents/ Carers will also be contacted if their child is persistently late to discuss learning lost and the impact on the child. Lateness will also impact on attendance if a children is registered as 'U', following a late arrival to school.

Level 3

Upon receipt of the referral to Education Welfare, the case will be allocated to an Education Welfare Officer for statutory action. Attendance will be monitored weekly, as outlined in the policy, medical evidence and contact with the school will be scrutinised by the Education Welfare Officer.

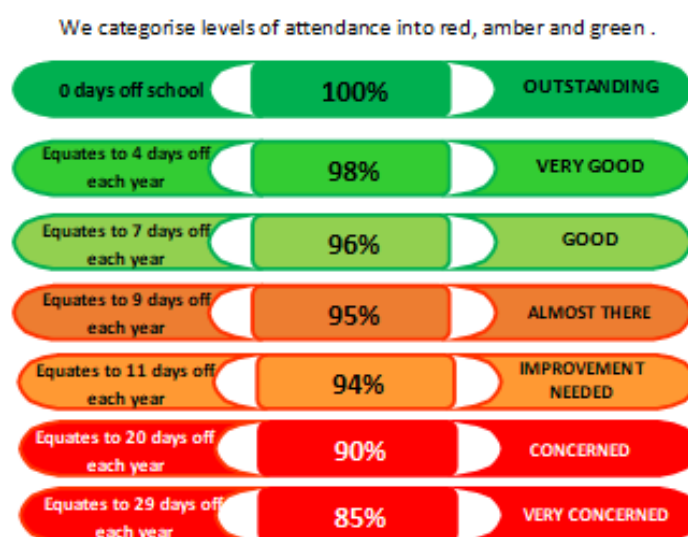
Home visits, telephone call and letters will be actioned. If attendance continues to be unauthorised a penalty notice fine will be issued. The parent/carer has 21 days to pay (£60 per parent, per child), if the fine is not paid after 21 days the fine will double to £120 per parent, per child unless not paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, the matter will proceed to court.

Non-payment of a penalty notice issued in response to leave in term time will proceed for prosecution to the magistrate's court.

Level 4

The matter would move to level 4 if parents/carers have previous convictions for non-school attendance.

A penalty notice warning letter and the final warning letter are then issued. An attendance review meeting is held with the Education Welfare Officer, the EWO manager, the Head of School and parents/carers. The case will proceed to court; this then carries a heavier fine and possible custodial sentence. If a parent/carer is found guilty in any cases that proceed to court, level 3 and 4, it results in a criminal conviction.



Following 'Working together to improve school attendance' (May 22) - where there are safeguarding concerns, Forest Park will intensify support through statutory children's social care when required.

SEND children

Children who have an additional need or Education Health Care Plan are expected to follow the attendance policy. We will work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. However, reasonable adjustments will be made for children who have medical needs and appointments. Advice from the school SENCo, pastoral team, attendance team and external agencies will be taken, shared and implemented when appropriate to support individuals and their attendance.

If you wish to discuss your child's attendance and medical needs, please call and arrange a meeting.

Any evidence of medical appointments/letters should be shared with the school to support your child's absences.

Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality

It is important to remember that the vast majority of children at Forest Park Primary School arrive on time, every day. An important part of our Attendance Policy is that this good practice is commended and applauded publicly. In order to do this, we:

- Publish class attendance figures on a weekly basis in the school using class charts that are located in each classroom, in the entrance foyer and the school hall.
- Share attendance with families through our school newsletter.
- Award a book token and certificate to the class with the highest weekly attendance in school. The Early Years and Key stage 1 class with the highest attendance will be awarded the care of 'Sparkle' and 'Parker' (our school attendance mascots).
- Reward the class with the highest half term attendance a 45 minute 'SPARKLE TIME' session.

The level of attendance and punctuality expected from our pupils is included in our home-school agreement which parents must sign following their child's admission to school.

Children missing in Education (CME)

This policy has been written in accordance to the guidance set out in the Stoke-on-Trent Council Promoting Regular School Attendance – Children Missing Education (CME) which can be on the school website.

- If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a Child Missing in Education (CME) procedure as set down by The Local Authority's Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends and wider family.
- We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 5 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Pupils Moving to a New Address and/or School

- Parents/Carers are required to update school if the family/child are moving to a new address, either by contacting the school via email or completing an update information form from the school office. This is to ensure the safeguarding of all children and the school's admission register is correct.
- If you wish to change school throughout the academic year you must complete an in-year transfer form which is available from any school office, this will then be signed by the current school's head teacher for you to return to the new school where you are applying.

Links to documents

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf