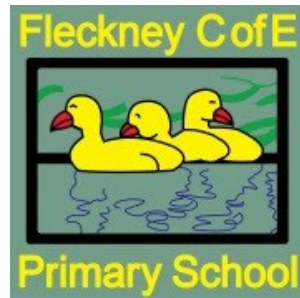


School Policy



Attendance Policy for Pupils

Date approved by or on behalf of Governing Body: 21st March 2023

Relevant Committee: Curriculum

Chair of Governors: Linda Marshall

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Linda Marshall'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light grey rectangular background.

Next Review Date: March 2024

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Attendance Policy for Pupils - The School's aims and vision

Fleckney C of E Primary School expects good attendance from its pupils in order that they can take full advantage of the learning experiences provided for them and aims to support pupils in developing positive attitudes towards punctuality and attendance.

Overwhelming evidence shows that children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Make better progress academically and socially.
- Find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Maintain closer friendships with other children.

Our aim is to:

- Achieve attendance levels of 95% and above across the school.
- Reduce persistent absence.
- Significantly reduce requests for holiday during term time.
- Improve punctuality.
- Maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance and punctuality between home and school.
- Positive measures in place to encourage 100% attendance.

The Law

The Education Act 1996 states "If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence".

Based on the above Act we expect parents to ensure their children attend school regularly. Failure to ensure regular attendance can lead to parents being issued either with a Penalty Notice or Prosecuted through the Magistrates Court.

- A Penalty Notice stands at £60 rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days.
- A Prosecution can result in a fine of up to £2,500 and or 3 months imprisonment.

Parents can only allow their child to miss school if they are either too ill to go into school or if they have advance permission for absence from the school.

Parents will be contacted by the school if their child does not arrive for school, even if they are only absent for one day.

Registration

Registers are a legal document and provide a daily record of the attendance of all pupils on roll at the school. The class teacher is responsible for marking the register at the start of morning and afternoon sessions.

At Fleckney CE Primary School, children in Foundation Stage and KS1 are expected to arrive at school by 8:50am. The register is taken at 8.50am and returned to the office at 9.00am. Children who arrive in school after 8.50am must go directly to the school office where their time of arrival and reason for lateness is noted. They are then marked as late (L) in the register. Arrivals after 9.30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless the Head Teacher accepts the reason given.

Children in KS2 are expected to arrive at school by 8:45am. The register is taken at 8.45am and returned to the office at 8.55am. Children who arrive in school after 8.50am must go directly to the school office where their time of arrival and reason for lateness is noted. They are then marked as late (L) in the register. Arrivals after 9.30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless the Head Teacher accepts the reason given.

School gates open at 8.40am. There is a 5 minute stagger to allow parents to drop off at different entrances. The school gates close at 8.50am.

The register is taken within 10 minutes of the afternoon session beginning.

Absence

When a child is absent from school, the absence is recorded by the school as either authorised or unauthorised.

Parents cannot authorise their children's absence.

Authorised absences

Absence may be authorised for occurrences such as:

- pupil sickness; evidence may be required;
- serious or critical illness of a close relative;
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments; evidence may be required;
- exceptional short term domestic circumstances;
- religious observance;
- bereavement;
- wedding of immediate family member; limited number of days;
- attendance at or in connection with a Child's Hearing or Care Review;
- approved activities for sports and the arts; evidence may be required
- travelling (where ascribed to the Traveller Community).

Unauthorised absences

Absence will not be authorised for events such as:

- shopping trips;
- birthday or other day trips;

- non-medical appointments;
- closure of a sibling's school for training days;
- family holidays.

Please see Appendix A for a full list of authorised and unauthorised absence codes.

Our approach to addressing absence

We expect our pupils to attend school regularly and on time. The following information sets out the school approach to absence.

First Day Calling

If a child is absent from school, parents are expected to call the school on the first day of absence by 9:30am stating a reason. As a school we take our safeguarding duties very seriously. If parents have not contacted the school, we will initiate our "First Day Calling" procedure and phone parents at home or work to ascertain the reason for their child's absence [before 10.00am]. It is therefore vital that parents continually update the school on any changes to their contact details.

If the school is unsuccessful at contacting a parent and still remains concerned about the child's absence, further action may be taken by the school on that day, such as conducting a home visit.

If contact or the home visit remains unsuccessful, we may enlist the help of the police and request a "Safe and Well" check to be conducted on the grounds of safeguarding.

Illness

We expect parents to contact the school on the first morning of their child's illness, giving an explanation and expected date of return. There is no necessity for the parent to ring every day unless the absence lasts 3 days or more, however keeping a child off school for minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable.

Information and advice on whether your child is too ill for school, can be found on the NHS website by clicking here.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school>

In the case of a child with a high level of absences for medical reasons, we may request parents to provide evidence such as a stamped appointment card/compliment slip, prescription or prescribed medicine to support their child's absence. This is so the school can code the absence correctly.

Repeated absence from school for illness will be discussed with and referred to the Leicestershire County Council Attendance Team to address the matter.

Medical Appointments

Parents are asked where possible, to avoid making medical appointments for their children during the school day. Appointment letters and stamped appointment cards will be required for the school to code a child's absence correctly.

Punctuality

Punctuality is important to foster positive attitudes to arriving at school on time. Therefore the expectation is that parents ensure their children arrive at school by 8.45am (KS2) or 8:50am (FS and

KS1) prepared for the school day. Children who arrive late not only miss vital information given at the beginning of lessons, their arrival also disrupts and interferes with that of the teacher and other children in the classroom and can also make the child feel self-conscious.

Children who arrive after the school gates have closed must come into the building via reception, where the time and reason for arriving late will be recorded.

Parents of children who appear to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents will be required to attend a meeting in school to address the issue.

End of the School Day

Parents are responsible for making the proper arrangements to ensure their child/children are collected promptly from school at the end of the school day. Children in KS2 come out at 3.15pm and children in FS and KS1 come out at 3.20pm.

Parents are expected to notify the school as soon as is practical if for any reason they will be late collecting their child/children at the end of the school day or from an after-school club.

Parents are expected to notify the school if a designated adult (one which is not listed on the pupil's profile) will be collecting their child/children with a password to allow safe release of the child/children.

If attending an After School Club/Care, then parents are expected to collect their child/children as soon as the club is finished. The school is not responsible for child/children's supervision once school or after school clubs have finished.

Persistent late collection of children may result in the school informing Leicestershire County Council Children's Social Care on the grounds of safeguarding.

If a child is not picked up and no contact with named individuals has been made, the case will be referred to social care for immediate action.

Leave of Absence or Family Holidays during Term Time

Parents are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday or requesting leave of absence during term time.

A pupil's absence in term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days that they are away, but they are also less well prepared for the lessons building on this when they return.

From 1st September 2013, the amendments to the Education Regulations in relation to absence from school give NO entitlement to parents to take their child/children on holiday during term time.

However, the Headteacher can, in exceptional circumstances, grant a leave of absence. The Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Parents must notify the Headteacher in writing if they wish to apply for leave of absence from school for any reason using the appropriate form (see Appendix B).

Each request will be considered individually, case by case, taking into account the circumstances and the child's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling. The following will not be deemed as exceptional circumstances:

- The availability of cheap holidays or desired accommodation;
- Holidays which overlap the beginning or end of term;
- Holidays booked by a third party.

Parents are strongly discouraged from applying for leave of absence which coincides with the start of the school year, as the first few weeks of the school year are very important for learning routines, establishing relationships and expectations, and building friendships.

The school reserves the right to withdraw authorisation should a child's attendance deteriorate between the leave of absence application and the time when the absence is due to occur.

The school recognises that parents' circumstances (financial position, working commitments etc) vary enormously but the headteacher is nonetheless required to ensure that children only miss school if it is absolutely unavoidable.

Parents of pupils in Year 6 are made aware of the fact that statutory testing takes place annually in May and cannot be taken at any other time. Therefore the Head Teacher is unable to grant Leave of Absence permission for Year 6 pupils during the week of the statutory tests.

Compassionate Leave

The death of a close family member can be a traumatic experience for a child/children and as such the school will deal sympathetically with a parent's request for their child/children to be absent from school to attend a funeral or associated event.

Change of School

If parents decide to move their child/children to another school, they must inform the current school as soon as possible. The child/children will not be removed from the current school roll until the following information has been received:

- The date the child/children will be leaving the current school.
- The date the child/children will be starting the new school.
- The name and address of the new school.
- Confirmation from the new school that they have started. Only then will they be removed from roll and a CTF sent to their new school.
- The family's new home address and phone number, if moving to a new house.

Religious Observance

We will authorise absence on these grounds provided written confirmation is received from the religious body to which the parent belongs stating that the day or days are exclusively set apart for religious observance.

We would appreciate if parents could give advance notice of their religious observance days.

Public Performances

Children from birth to the end of Year 11, who take part in entertainment performances, both professional and amateur, require a “child performance licence” which are issued by the Local Authority where the child lives; this is Legislation. The license is designed to protect the child's health, education and welfare. The licence applies to children performing on licenced premises, if there is a charge for the performance, if the child performs for more than 4 days in a fixed period, for paid sport, photography or modelling and if the child is going to be absent from school.

Should a child be involved in a performance that will fall on a school day, their parent must request permission from the school in writing, with supporting documentation for the child to attend. Your request will be discussed with the Head Teacher after which you will be written to with a decision or the relevant form signed.

We would appreciate it if parents could give advance notice of their child’s performance days.

Children who perform without a license may be breaking the law. This could mean a risk of prosecution for a production company.

For further information, contact the Child Performance and Employment Team:

Phone: 0116 305 7820

Fax: 0116 305 6330

Email: childreninentertainment@leics.gov.uk

Procedures to improve attendance

As part of our strategy to improve attendance, we write to parents if we become concerned about their child’s attendance and punctuality. We have a letter system in place as follows:

Letter 1 – Concern (see Appendix C)

Every half term we will write to parents whose child’s attendance fall below 95%. Our letter will always invite the parent to contact the school or to arrange to come into school to discuss the situation with a view to resolving the matter. We inform parents in our letters or at school meetings that we may request evidence to enable us to authorise their child’s absence.

Letter 1a –Concern, no improvement in attendance (see Appendix C)

Letter 2 – Referral to the Court Team (see Appendix D)

We will send this letter to parents should letter 1 not bring about an improvement in a child’s attendance. This letter states that the matter is being referred to Leicestershire County Council’s Attendance Team who will contact the parent to address the issues which may be preventing their child from attending school regularly.

NB: We ask parents to take note that in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the Attendance Team will initiate legal proceedings against parents should their child’s attendance not improve.

APPENDIX A

School Register - Attendance Codes Present at school:

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

L Late arrival before the register has closed

Authorised:

B Off-site educational activity

C Leave of absence authorised by the school

D Dual registered – at another educational establishment

E Excluded

H Holiday authorised by the school

I Illness (not medical/dental appointments)

J At an interview with prospective employers/or at another educational establishment

M Medical or dental appointment

P Participating in a supervised sporting activity

R Religious observance

S Study leave

T Traveller absence

V Educational visit or trip

W Work experience

Unauthorised:

G Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Head Teacher

N No reason yet provided for absence

O Absent from school without authorisation

U Arrived in school after registration closed

Administrative codes:

X Not required to be in school

Y Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Z Pupil not on the admission register

Planned whole or partial school closure

APPENDIX B

Fleckney C of E Primary School

CHILD'S EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ABSENCE APPLICATION FORM

NAME OF CHILD/CHILDRENCLASS.....CLASS.....	
DATE OF ABSENCE FROM.....TO..... NUMBER OF DAYS	
PLEASE NOTE: - Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances - Any leave taken without prior consultation will be marked as "unauthorised absence."	
Reason why this absence could not take place outside of term time hours (if applicable): 	
SIGNED:	DATE:

Reply from Head Teacher

NAME OF CHILD/CHILDRENCLASS.....CLASS.....	
DATE OF ABSENCE FROM.....TO..... NUMBER OF DAYS	
I am able to give permission for you to take your child/children out of school	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am unable to give permission for you to take your child/children out of school	<input type="checkbox"/>
REASON FOR DAYS NOT AUTHORISED: 	
SIGNED:	DATE:

APPENDIX C

Attendance – concern letter 1

Child _____

Date _____

Dear parents

We notice that your child's current attendance has fallen below _____%.

Please note that regular absence equates to a lot of days of missed education each year:

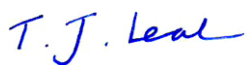
95% attendance	9 days of absence
90% attendance	19 days of absence
85% attendance	28 days of absence
80% attendance	38 days of absence
75% attendance	46 days of absence

Poor attendance obviously impacts negatively on your child's learning.

Please could you do what you can to improve your child's attendance over this next term.

If you wish to contact me to discuss your child's attendance, please do so through the school office.

Yours sincerely



Mr T Leah

Attendance - concern letter 1a

Child _____

Date _____


Dear parents

We notice that your child's current attendance has fallen below _____%.

I contacted you at the end of last half term to notify you that we were concerned about your child's level of attendance. Since then, your child's attendance has unfortunately not improved.

Please could you make an appointment to come and see me to discuss this issue further.

Yours sincerely



Mr T Leah

APPENDIX D

Attendance – concern letter 2

Child _____

Date _____

Dear parents

We notice that there has been no improvement in your child's attendance since we last wrote to you.

Your child's attendance is currently _____.

The matter is now being referred to the Leicestershire County Council Attendance Team.

They will contact you to address the issues that may be preventing your child from attending school regularly.

The Attendance Team may initiate legal proceedings against you in accordance with the 1996 Education Act, should your child's attendance not improve.

Yours sincerely

Mr T Leah