

FRONT STREET COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY



September 2024

Front Street Primary School aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

Introduction

In order for a child to fulfil their potential in education they need to attend school regularly and punctually. The legislation states that: **'Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'** (Section 7 Education Act 1996).

It is a government legal requirement that all children attend school for 190 days. It is a government requirement that we monitor attendance and apply the legal requirement.

Front Street Primary School is striving to achieve our goal of 96% attendance; it is our policy that no child's attendance should fall below 96% in order for this happen.

Front Street Primary School recognises that good attendance is central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- Support pupils and their parents/carers in our establishment of the highest possible level of attendance and punctuality;
- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- Ensure every pupil has access to a full time education which they are entitled to;
- Ensure that pupils succeed and realise their full potential whilst at school;
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.

School Life

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents, carers and school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and ensuring that all children have a full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school we will encourage parents/carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents it is their responsibility that their child arrives at school and returns home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day;
- Attend school punctually;
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day (ie; pe kit, reading packs, etc).

We expect that parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school daily of any absence, before 9.20am (please note that emails may not be checked before this time so should not be relied upon for initial communication);

- Notify school immediately of any changes to emergency contact details.

We expect the school will:

- Provide a welcome atmosphere;
- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality; monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition;
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils;
- Inform parents / carers via a series of letters regarding their child's punctuality and poor attendance. (Copies of all letters are enclosed at the back of the policy).

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

From 8:40am staff will be on the yard, ready to welcome children into school and at this point the school doors will open. School starts at 8:45 for registration this is a legal requirement.

A child arriving after 8.45am but before 9.05am will need to be accompanied by a parent or carer to school the main office. The child's name and registration class will then be logged in a late book along with the reason and time; your child will then receive an L code, which means your child has received a late mark for that session. Should your child arrive after 9.05am your child will receive a U code, this equates to an unauthorised absence for that session and will affect your child's annual attendance.

Other reasons for absence

From time to time children need to be absent from school for other reasons such as medical appointments. Such absences usually **only take up part of a day**. School should be informed of such absences in writing in advance, with accompanying documents and children should be brought in to school for morning registration and back to school straight after the appointment. Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and or legal proceedings.

- Parents / carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Truancy before or during the school day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.

Whilst any child may be off school because of illness, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regards attendance are best sorted out between the school, parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We as a school monitor all absences and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will seek to take action immediately.

Non school attendance in Term Time

The Department of Education state that parents have no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances by completing an application for leave of absence form, which can be obtained from the school office.

The Head Teacher along with the Governors will meet to discuss any application and decide if it warrants exceptional circumstance. Parents will be fined by means of Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Courts by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9.05a.m.
- or can call into school and report to reception.

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- invite you in to discuss the situation with Head Teacher when absence reaches 90%
- allow our Family Support Worker to work alongside families in order to provide solutions and aim to improve attendance
- refer the matter to the Legal Intervention Team if attendance moves below 87% and school with parents support have exhausted alternatives to improve attendance.

Legal Intervention:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Legal Intervention Team from the Local Authority. They will monitor the situation but if the child's attendance has failed to improve and unauthorised absences persist sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court will be used. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Local Authority themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Celebrating Achievements

All children achieving 100% attendance at the end of each term will be rewarded for their valuable efforts. They will each receive a certificate signed by the Head Teacher. If a child receives 100% attendance for the year they receive an attendance medal or certificate.

Action	Person Responsible	Frequency	Comments
Registration procedures clear and consistent.	Class teacher	Start of each school session	Individual queries directed to admin staff.
Parent contacts school before start of session if pupil is to be absent.	Parent/carer	First day of pupils absence	Note is made of call/email and placed in register.
First day absence calling is in operation.	Admin. staff	First day of pupil absence if parent has not made contact.	Note of outcome placed in attendance book. If parent is not contactable, absence will not be authorised.
Attendance data is monitored regularly.	Head Teacher	Half termly	Note is made of pupils achieving full attendance and those whose attendance may be cause for concern. A staged procedure is followed.
Pupils achieving full attendance are publicly recognised and rewarded.	Head teacher and class teachers	Termly	Assemblies/displays/certificates/special awards are regular aspects of school life.
Parents of pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern are contacted to identify reasons for absence, and to provide support to improve attendance.	Head teacher Class teacher	Half termly or when class teacher is concerned about a pupil's attendance/punctuality.	Contact will be informal wherever possible, and will offer support and guidance. Individual attendance targets may be set if appropriate.
Patterns of attendance for each pupil are identified.	Class teacher	As becomes obvious	Concerns about unusual patterns are passed on to Head Teacher
Late book is in operation.	Admin staff	Daily	Reason for lateness and time of arrival or collection are noted.
Parents of pupils whose punctuality are giving cause	Head teacher	As required	Parents are contacted when there is a cause for concern

for concern are contacted to identify reasons and provide support to improve punctuality.			Individual punctuality targets may be set if appropriate.
The taking of holiday in term-time is not allowed.	All staff	As holiday leave is applied for.	Parents are made aware of the consequences to pupil education of holiday leave in term time. New Government regulations no longer allow this.
Referral to external agencies may be made to support pupil attendance/punctuality including Legal Intervention involvement, parental involvement from Non-Attendance Panel and including legal processes.	Head teacher	As considered appropriate	External agencies may be able to provide additional/short term support to families to help improve pupil attendance.