



Findern Primary School

Attendance Policy

1. General Principles

The aim of this policy is to promote regular school attendance of Findern Primary School pupils. We are committed to working with, and supporting parents/carers and our pupils to ensure that every child achieves the highest level of attendance at school.

We believe all children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs they may have. Here at Findern Primary School, we have a responsibility to monitor and promote regular attendance of pupils.

This policy seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a quality full-time education which maximises opportunities for every pupil to reach their full potential. Consistent attendance at school allows children to experience continuity in their learning, enables them to make a good level of progress and allows children to develop stable friendship groups within school.

2. Legal Requirements

Absence from school is a legal matter. It is the duty of those with parental responsibility of a child of school age to ensure he/she receives the appropriate full-time education. Parents whose children are on the school register have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and on time. If parents fail to do so, they can be taken to court for not fulfilling their legal responsibilities and this may result in a fine if the parent is found guilty. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the head teacher. However, it is the role of the local authority to encourage and enforce the law on school attendance. Therefore, the local authority can instigate legal action.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Parent and carers

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually.

What is expected of parents and carers with regard to attendance?

Parents and carers will:

- Keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum;
- Provide a reason for their child's absence, preferably before or on the first day of absence (before 8:55am)
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn.
- Offer a reason for any lateness.
- Work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may prevent their child from attending school regularly.
- Take family holidays during school holiday periods.

- Be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant regarding attendance during important academic times such as SATs or other curriculum testing periods.

3.2 School

Findern Primary School has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils for both morning and afternoon sessions.

What is expected school with regard to attendance?

Findern Primary School will:

- Create a school ethos that pupils want to be a part of.
- Meet the legal requirements as set out by the government and Local Authority. *(See appendix 1).*
- Give a high priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the law.
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- Establish, encourage and maintain open communication between school and home.
- Establish and develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees.
- Develop procedures for formal referrals.
- To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

3.3 The Local Authority

Derbyshire Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children.

The Education Welfare Service, on behalf of the authority, seeks to help parents resolve poor attendance. Parents are asked to seek early advice from the school or the Education Welfare Service if their child is beginning to experience difficulty in attending school. Help at an early stage is usually most effective.

4. Policy Implementation

4.1 Attendance Registers

Each class uses an electronic attendance register which is completed at the beginning of the morning session at 8:55am and the afternoon session at 1:00pm for EY/KS1 and 1:15pm for KS2. As part of Safeguarding procedures, attendance is monitored daily with phone calls made to understand unreported absences.

4.2 Recording Absences

Parents are required to notify the school to offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence before 8:55am. Parents should contact school by phone, letter or verbally. If the reason for absence is not known when the register is closed, the register should be recorded as 'unauthorised' until the reason can be established. Once established, a record of the reason for the absence should be recorded on the electronic register. Each child's annual report will

show the total possible sessions the child could have attended in the year and how many authorised and unauthorised absences the child has had in the period.

4.3 Recording Lateness

The children are able to come onto the school playground from 8:30am ready for the bell at 8:45am where they will make their way to classrooms. The morning register is opened at 8:55am and closes at 9:00am. Pupils who are not present at the start of the school day will initially be recorded as '**N**' (*reason for absence not yet provided*). If they arrive after 8:55am, this will be changed to '**L**' (*present, but late*). Lateness for any pupil will require a parental explanation in the late arrivals register at the main entrance. The school will keep this record and use it to monitor lateness.

4.4 Monitoring Attendance

Findern Primary School will review the attendance of all the school's pupils on a regular basis and:

- Parents of children whose attendance falls below 96% will be notified by letter informing them of the school's concerns and will a copy of their child's attendance record.
- Where attendance is at or below 90% the school will then inform the Education Welfare Officer.
- Requests for time off of school will be made by parents using the forms provided by the school office. However, requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

4.5 Monitoring Punctuality

Findern Primary School will review late arrivals of all of the school's pupils on a regular basis and:

- Parents of pupils who arrive late after the register closes will be asked to sign their child into school and provide a reason for their lateness, they will be reminded by the school of the expectation to be here for the start of school at 8:55am. If a pupil arrives late on a regular basis, their parents will be inform by the school.

5. Promoting good attendance and punctuality

5.1 Strategies

Here at Findern Primary School we use a variety of strategies to encourage attendance, including:

- Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they have and can succeed.
- Pupil awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in helping them to access their right to education will be discussed regularly in assemblies and in class.
- Parents will be reminded regularly in newsletters about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

5.2 Incentives

- Individual pupils will receive certificates at the end of the year for attendance.
- Each Friday the class with the best attendance and punctuality for that week will receive the Attendance/Punctuality Trophy and Mascot to keep in their classroom throughout the following week. They will move up the attendance board in the main hall and the class with furthest along the board at the end of each term will receive a treat afternoon.

6. Unauthorised leave of absence during term time

- From September 2017 Findern Primary School will issues a fine for any unauthorised leave of absence. This is in line with Derbyshire Local Authority guidelines - *From 1 September 2017, we*

will consider the issue of a penalty notice for any period of holiday absence which has not been authorised by the headteacher regardless of a child's wider school attendance.

- Parents will be informed of this in a letter when they make a request for leave of absence. The school will then complete the relevant paperwork to ensure a penalty notice is issued.

Appendix 1 – attendance expectations

Above 97%	<i>Less than 6 days absence a year: Excellent attendance! Pupils with this attendance should achieve the best grades they can, leading to the best possible start in their education.</i>
95%	<i>Less than 10 days absence in a year: Pupils with this attendance are likely to achieve their target grades and will be well prepared for starting their education.</i>
90%	<i>19 days absence over the year: Pupils with this attendance are missing a month of school per year and may fall behind in Maths and English; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. Parents of children's who's attendance dips below 90% can expect to be contacted by the head teacher and possibly have the circumstances surrounding their absence investigated by a member of the local authority.</i>
85%	<i>29 days absence in a year: These pupils are missing 6 weeks of school a year, it will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best.</i>
80%	<i>Pupils with this attendance are missing a day for every week of school. It will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of pupils with this level of attendance could be issued with a Penalty Notice.</i>

Signed:

Date: September 2016

This policy will be reviewed in September 2017