



## FARNWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

### PUPIL ATTENDANCE and LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Recommended by	J. Stillings
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#### CHANGE RECORD FORM

Version	Date of change	Date of release	Changed by	Reason for change
2.1	May 2012	7.2.13	JS	Policy review
3.1	November 2015	1.12.15	JS	Policy review and amalgamation of Attendance policy with Leave of Absence Policy



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This policy is part of a whole school strategy to ensure that all members of our school community are kept safe and that their welfare is a high priority. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Policies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allegations Against Adults Policy</li><li>• Equality</li><li>• eSafety</li><li>• First Aid / Medications Policy</li><li>• Good Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy</li><li>• Intimate Care Policy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safeguarding and Child Protection</li><li>• Safer Recruitment Policy</li><li>• Staff Behaviour / Code of Conduct</li><li>• Use of Physical Intervention / Restraint Policy</li><li>• Whistleblowing Policy</li></ul>

This policy and the procedures will be evaluated and reviewed at least every three years and sooner in response to changes in legislation

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## PART ONE

### PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Farnworth CE Primary School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and believes that good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim.

#### 1. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- set out the way in which we, as a school, monitor and promote the attendance and punctuality of our pupils.
- share the responsibility for promoting school attendance and punctuality amongst all members of the school community: governors, pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- maintain our outstanding attendance record (recognised by Ofsted in 2013).

Absence during term time for any reason interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and may be detrimental to relationships and positive well-being. Parents and carers, by ensuring that children are only kept off school when they are genuinely ill and that holidays are not taken in term time, will enable the above to be achieved.

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## 2. Responsibilities

### ❖ School

This Attendance and Leave of Absence Policy and its implementation is intended to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly and punctually by the implementation of specific measures:

- Registering pupils accurately and efficiently by following the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and associated amendments - 2010, 2011 and 2013)
- The Head Teacher will report to the Governing body on attendance each term.
- Use a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and evaluating attendance related data. Use the data to identify and initiate support and intervention strategies on an individual or whole school level.
- Regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Use and promote systems of rewards, e.g. at the end of each year children with a cumulative 100% / 99 % attendance record will be presented with Attendance Certificates.
- Contacting parents the same day when reasons of absence are unknown or unauthorised.
- Information regarding attendance and action parents are expected to take when their child is absent will be communicated via the school policy document; newsletters; parents' evenings and attendance initiatives.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- Work positively with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies and services.

### ❖ Parents and carers

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have. Parents / Carers are requested to:

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority and aim to ensure that their child has 100% attendance and is punctual to school.
- Contact school on the first day of absence, giving reasons for absence and expected return date.
- Provide a written explanation of reason for absence on their child's return to school.
- Notify school in advance of any planned absence i.e. medical appointment.

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- Be aware of their legal obligation in ensuring their child attends school and appreciate that school and EWS may consider 'Penalty Notices' for unauthorised absences.
- Contact the Head teacher if their child is experiencing difficulty in attending school so school can offer appropriate support.
- Ensure that holidays in term time are avoided.

**NB In line with Health Protection Agency guidelines, a period of 48 hours absence is required for any pupil with vomiting or diarrhoea. Such absence due to illness is authorised.**

### 3. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Categorisation of absence needs to be consistent across the school. It is the Headteacher, not the parent, who authorises the absence. A parent may be asked to provide medical evidence for school non attendance, e.g. when absence falls below 85% in any one term.

### 4. Registration

- Each day legally consists of two sessions, each of which must be registered.
- The class teacher is responsible for correct completion of attendance registers including late arrivals.
- The class teacher can, at any time, request an attendance report for any given period for any child. This might be used to confirm suspicions regarding absence patterns.
- Registers close at 9:30am. Only children arriving after this time should be marked as absent.
- The coding for absence is to be completed in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>C</u>	Authorised other circumstances (family bereavement, parent ill etc)
<u>O</u>	Unauthorised absences
<u>R</u>	Religious observance
<u>L</u>	Late (after 8:55am)
<u>V</u>	Educational visit
<u>H</u>	Holiday (authorised in advance)
<u>M</u>	Medical/Dental
<u>I</u>	Illness
<u>U</u>	Late after registration closed at 9:30 am
<u>G</u>	Unauthorised Holiday
<u>N</u>	Reason for absence not yet provided

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## 5. Procedures to follow up irregular/non attendance

Farnworth CE Primary will follow up irregular/non attendance in the following ways:

- First day response phone calls
- Letters
- Meetings
- Target setting/Parenting contracts
- Referrals to Education Welfare Service when attendance is deteriorating and prior interventions have not brought about positive change

## 6. Referrals

Referrals to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be considered when:

- There is an unexplained absence of more than 10 consecutive days
- Unauthorised absences result in 85% or less attendance at the end of a term
- Patterns in existing intermittent absence
- Truancy is suspected
- Frequent absences are condoned by the parents
- The child refuses to attend
- There is concern over the social/emotional/medical well being of a child

## 7. Re-integration following long term absence

School may use some of the following strategies in respect of long term absence

- Individual case meetings
- Support from key worker
- Phased return (in limited cases ie long term medical absence).

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## PART TWO

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

#### 1. The Law

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

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## 2. Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances Farnworth CE Primary School will consider a request for leave of absence for one period of absence during the academic year.

## 3. Exceptional Circumstances

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher will determine what are considered to be exceptional circumstances.

The following may be examples of exceptional circumstances:

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a leave of absence is deemed appropriate.
- Leave of absence for children of serving members of the Armed Forces.

## 4. Additional Information

Farnworth CE Primary School will ensure that all parents/carers are signposted to this policy and that it is available on the school website. Hard copies can be obtained from the school office upon request.

- Parents/carers will be required to complete a leave of absence request form available from the school office and return it to school (Appendix 3).
- Parents/carers may be required to discuss any request for a leave of absence with the Head Teacher, Mrs Stillings.
- Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for a leave of absence within 10 school days of the date of the application.

If the leave of absence is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'O'. This will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is absent from school without permission of the school, the Local Authority may issue the parent/carer of the pupil with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority may commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

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## Appendix 1

### SAMPLE LETTER 1

Dear Parent/Carer

Regular school attendance is essential to enable your child/children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Interruptions in school attendance means that your child/children may need to catch up on missed work and it can also affect their social life within school.

It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if your child/children attend regularly.

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

### **Additionally**

- All requests for leave of absence in term time must be made in advance in writing on the leave of absence request form available from the school.
- The granting of leave of absence does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency/duration of such leave periods will be considered as factors in any decision.
- Requests will be considered by the Head Teacher.
- The Local Authority will use the full range of sanctions where leave of absence is taken without the permission of the school.

I am sure that you will support the school by ensuring that requests for leave of absence are only made in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact Mrs Stillings, Head Teacher.

Yours sincerely

**J.S. Stillings (Mrs)**  
Head Teacher





## Appendix 2

### SAMPLE LETTER 2

Dear

I regret to inform you that I am unable to agree to your request for a leave of absence in respect of >>

I do not feel that the reasons given by you for requesting a leave of absence indicate exceptional circumstances.

I am sure that you will agree that it is in \_\_\_\_\_ best interest to attend school regularly in order to ensure that he/she achieves his/her full potential.

Whilst I understand that you may be disappointed by my decision, I trust that you understand that it has been taken with \_\_\_\_\_ best interest in mind.

I would remind you that I am required to inform the Education Welfare Service of any periods of unauthorised absence from school. The Education Welfare Service will then consider if any legal action or the issue of a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

Yours sincerely

**J.S. Stillings (Mrs)**  
Head Teacher



Please note that Farnworth CE Primary does not routinely give permission for holidays or time off in term time. Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

Appendix 3



**LEAVE OF ABSENCE / HOLIDAY REQUEST FORM**

Please apply for absences/holiday in term time at least 6 weeks before the intended absence.

Absences will **not** be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Students with 95% and below attendance (over 38 week period) may not be authorised even in exceptional circumstances.

PUPIL DETAILS			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
<b>Class / Teacher</b>			

<b>Dates of requested absence:</b>
<b>No. of days:</b>
<b>Date of return to school:</b>
<b>Reason for leave of absence request:</b>

<b>All Adults with Parental Responsibility in the household (this includes mother, father, step parent or guardian)</b>
<b>Names:</b>
<b>DoB for all with parental responsibility:</b>
<b>Home Address details:</b>
<b>Contact Details:</b>



I/We understand that keeping my/our child(ren) off school if this Leave of Absence Request is not granted will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority for the non-attendance of my/our child(ren) at school.

I/We understand that a Penalty Notice will be issued to each person with parental responsibility and the resulting fine will be £60 per person for each child, rising to £120 per person for each child if the £60 is unpaid.

I/We understand that if the Penalty Notice is not paid in the specified time frame that I/we are at risk of prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Parent/Carer Name (s):.....

Relationship to child(ren): .....

Signature(s): .....  
.....

Date of Request: .....

**Office Use:**

Date Received: .....

**NAME OF CHILD:** .....

Previous leave checked: Y/N

Attendance %: .....

First date of absence: ..... Last date of absence:.....

Expected date of return to school: .....

Authorised: Y/N

Reasons: .....  
.....

Date: ..... Signed: .....

**(Headteacher)**

- Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter



**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:**

1. Head Teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time **unless:**

*A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides*

**AND**

*B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*

2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.

3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

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➤ Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (i.e. home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).

➤ If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).

➤ Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.

➤ Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.

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**Parents:**

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.

2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will be recorded as unauthorised.

3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecuted for unauthorised absence including holidays.

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**We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.**