



Attendance Policy for Students

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SIGNATURES:

Headteacher	The hardcopy on file has been signed
Chair of Governors	The hardcopy on file has been signed

Farringdon Community Academy believes that missing school is missing out. Without excellent levels of attendance students will be prevented from reaching their personal and academic potential. FCA will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance.

FCA employs resources including time, key staff, support services and attendance data to encourage maximum attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns.

Roles, routines and responsibilities are clearly identified and consistently applied.

Regular school attendance is extremely important. Without regular attendance the efforts of teachers and school will come to nothing. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

What to do if your child has to be away?

If a child is unfit for school, the parent or carer is required to contact the school on the first day of absence in person or by telephone. It is expected that parents or carers contact the school on each subsequent day of absence unless we are informed on the initial phone call that the absence will be of a specific length. This is our only way of knowing that a child has not gone missing since leaving home. If a parent fails to contact school by 9:00 a.m. they should expect a text message from the Academy Attendance Team during the morning of the first absence and each subsequent day unless a specific timescale has been given. This decision has been made to ensure the safety of the children. Parents will also receive a telephone call from their child's Head of Year should we not be informed of the reason for the child's absence.

Absence for reasons other than illness must be discussed with the school each time. Leave of absence may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments that are unavoidable in school time, providing a written explanation is received.

If a child does not want to attend a school for any reason, it is important that parents and carers do not collude with the child by stating sickness as a reason of absence. Parents and carers must discuss the problem with the school at the first opportunity. The school will assess the situation and if necessary seek the support of appropriate agencies to resolve any difficulties.

What constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences?

Authorised absences are those which the school agree are unavoidable, e.g. illness, family bereavement, visits or interviews, dates of religious observance etc and absence for which leave has been given, e.g. agreed holidays in exceptional circumstances, medical appointments etc.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school considers unreasonable, e.g. holidays taken in term time where there are no exceptional circumstances, truancy, excessive lateness, shopping, theatre visits, staying at home because brother/sister is ill etc. An absence is unauthorised until an acceptable written or verbal explanation is received. If no acceptable explanation is received in writing within one week of the absence, this absence will remain unauthorised.

It is for the school, not the parent or carer to decide whether the absence should be recorded as authorised or unauthorised on receipt of note. The submission of a note does not automatically register the absence as authorised. Where FCA has concerns over the amount of illness absence a child has, the parent or carer may be asked to provide medical evidence in order for FCA to authorise the absence. If this is the case, the parent or carer will be informed of this decision in writing.

Statutory Attendance Responsibilities

There is a legal responsibility to have a morning and an afternoon registration.

The Academy will:

- Record and monitor attendance and absence. Legally we are required to do this twice each day;
- Use an electronic registration system to record and monitor attendance of all lessons during the school day to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils;
- Record and monitor the punctuality of all students and, where necessary, inform parents of persistent lateness and apply appropriate consequences. Pupils arriving after registers are closed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U);
- Only authorise pupil absence in exceptional circumstances;
- Maintain strong home-school liaison to inform and support parents with their child's attendance. The Academy's Attendance Officer will follow up daily absences;
- Work closely with appropriate agencies where there are concerns regarding attendance;
- Help to investigate, identify and resolve any issues with children and their families which prevent full attendance at FCA and will do everything possible to help return students to full attendance;
- Promote the importance of attendance through weekly assemblies.

Parents should:

- Ensure their children arrive on time to the Academy with the correct equipment and full uniform;
- Be aware that any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance;
- Understand that a parent can offer an explanation for their child's absence but the law clearly states that it is the Head Teacher's decision as to whether it is felt the explanation offered by a parent for an absence is justified;
- Ensure that they are fully aware of school procedures.

Attendance Stages

FCA use an online attendance monitoring system called A Star Attendance to monitor students' attendance to school. This system automatically detects when a student's attendance has dropped to a level which would cause concern. The attendance intervention levels are as follows:

Stage 1

Criteria:

1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 96% or below;
2. Student has had an absence in the previous ten school days.

The student will be monitored for the next 10 school days before moving to Stage 2 if they meet the criteria. If deemed appropriate, Stage 2 may be initiated before the end of the 10 day monitoring period.

Stage 2

Criteria:

1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 96% or below;
2. Student has absence in the previous ten school days and has previously been issued Stage 1.

The student will be monitored for the next 10 school days before moving to Stage 3 if improvement criteria is not met. If deemed appropriate, Stage 3 may be initiated before the end of the 10 day monitoring period.

Stage 3

Criteria:

1. Student currently has an attendance percentage of 96% or below
2. Student has unauthorised absence codes in the previous ten school days and has previously been issued Stage 2.

Parent/s will be issued with an Attendance Action Plan.. The student's attendance will be monitored for twenty school days. If the pupil has further instances of unauthorised absence within the monitoring period, the student will be escalated to Stage 4. If no further unauthorised absences are recorded within the monitoring period, then the student will remain at Stage 3. If they have not had unauthorised absences during the twenty school days monitoring period, then the student will be de-escalated to Stage 2 and the above criteria for the suggested stage two table will be followed.

Stage 4

Where attendance remains unsatisfactory, at 90% or below with at least 10 unauthorised sessions in the last 6 weeks a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for consideration for enforcement action and legal proceedings will commence.

Please see the Appendix A for further details on the letters that may be sent in relation to your child's attendance.

Truancy

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Head of Year if their child has been identified as truanting from the Academy. Persistent cases may be referred to the LA Attendance Team who will issue a Penalty Notice.

- Students out of lessons without authorisation will be considered as truanting. Parents will receive a telephone call from the Head of Year or Attendance Team. It is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure that their children attend full time education and therefore attend all lessons.
- A detention will be set for all instances of truancy.
- Teachers who suspect truancy from lesson(s) should phone the Main Office immediately and alert the Attendance Team.
- In cases of confirmed/suspected truancy from lessons the Main Office will alert the Head of Year.
- Telephone calls will be made to inform parents/carers in cases of confirmed truancy.
- The Head of Year or Attendance Team will notify police in cases of off-site truancy where a young person is considered to be at risk of harm.
- If truancy continues to persist the Attendance Officer will refer the student to LA Attendance Team who will instigating legal procedures.

Welfare Checks

Where a child is absent from school for an extended period of time or is receiving home tuition on behalf of the Local Authority we will arrange for the child to be seen by someone from the Pastoral Team on either a weekly or fortnightly basis depending on the reason for absence. This is to give the child the opportunity to check in with someone from the Academy, for the Academy to monitor the support in place still meets the child's needs, to offer further support if necessary and to check on the child's wellbeing.

Appointments

Appointments – GP, dentist etc. that have to be made during school time should be notified to the school in writing, in advance. Where possible appointment cards should be brought into school and handed to the School Office. Appointment cards/texts can also be photographed and emailed directly to the Attendance Team at the following email address attendance@farringdonca.onmicrosoft.com. Wherever possible, appointments should be made outside of school hours. It is expected that wherever possible, the child attends school either side of the appointment time.

Special occasions/holidays

In line with Government guidelines, students are not granted leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any such absences are at the discretion of the Head Teacher. If parents wish for their child to have a leave of absence, they must complete a form giving details of the reason for the leave of absence and the length of time they will be absent for. This meeting must be arranged with the Attendance Team in advance of the required date. Please see Appendix B for the Leave of Absence Request form.

Elective Home Education

Where a parent or carer elects for the child/children in their care to be home schooled, FCA. will follow the procedures set out by the Local Authority. School will follow the EST checklist for parents considering to home educate and then make a referral to the LA within 10 days. If the child is subject to a Care or Protection Plan Children's Services Social Care Team will be informed.

Off-Site Students

A number of students are educated at other provisions during the school day. Arrangements are made with the provider to ensure that attendance is notified to the Academy's Attendance Team as early as possible within the session. If a student is transported to a provision from the Academy, the Academy will register their presence and it then is confirmed to FCA upon the students arrival at the provision. Students who have temporary or permanent placements at alternative education provisions and are classed as dual registered will be registered daily at the provision and confirmation of their attendance is given verbally by telephone or emailed to the Attendance Team either daily or at the end of the week. The provisions are asked to immediately contact parents and carers or use their own attendance officers to chase up any absence from the first day. e.g. Beacon of Light, The Link School. If a student is absent from a work placement, organised by the school, the employer is asked to notify the Attendance Team as soon as the absence is known. If the absence is known to the school, parents are contacted immediately via text message.

Children Missing from Education

Should a child leave a Sunderland school without the school being advised (by the parent/carer) as to which new school the child is transferring to, the school will immediately notify the Attendance Team using the CME referral form. The Principal Inclusion Officer (Behaviour) co-ordinates, the identification, referral, tracking and engagement of children missing from education, through multi-agency working.

If a staff member is concerned that a child is missing from education, they must approach a Head of House, Attendance Officer or Deputy Headteacher who will complete the Children Missing from Education referral form and send it to cme@sunderland.gov.uk. Please see the Child Missing in Education Policy for further information. This is available on Academy's website.

The Law

The law states that it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure that a child attends school regularly and on time. FCA work closely with the Local Authority and utilises all its sanctions to address unacceptable levels of attendance.

Attendance Officer

FCA employ their own Attendance Officers who are employed directly by the Academy. The Attendance Officers are based at Farringdon Community Academy and work with the feeder primary schools. The Attendance Officers are identifiable by name badge and are contactable through the direct line or via the email attendance@farringdonca.onmicrosoft.com. Parents are to expect home visits, phone calls and letters in relation to attendance concerns. The Academy's Attendance Team will be completing home visits of absent students both authorised and unauthorised absences. FCA also has a service level agreement with Early Help through Together for Children for support with attendance concerns. Our named officer is Mr Denis Godfrey. He will have appropriate identification from both FCA and Together for Children.

Fixed Penalty Notices

FCA will utilise Fixed Penalty Notices where a student has unauthorised absences and/or where unauthorised holidays have been taken in term time (i.e. more than 10 consecutive days in an academic year). A Fixed Penalty Notice currently requires payment of £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days, and will result in prosecution in a Magistrates Court if unpaid.

Attendance Rewards

At FCA we recognise children who have excellent attendance and will reward them for . This will form part of the end of term celebration assemblies.

This policy will be reviewed in July 2022 or sooner should any changes occur.

Appendices

Appendix A

Stage One Letter

Date

XXXX

XXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXX

XXXXXX

Name:

Class:

Initial Attendance Concerns

Attendance Period:

Dear

As you are aware Farringdon Community Academy uses the traffic light initiative to monitor the attendance of pupils. As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we formally monitor attendance to identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first letter to register our concern with parents/carers.



Red – Danger Zone - **Below 91%**

Amber – At Risk Zone – **92% - 96%**

Green Zone – Safety Zone –**97% and Above**

During this routine monitoring of attendance, we have noticed that Name's attendance is currently XX%. This is below the expected level of attendance.

At Farringdon Community Academy we value and reward good attendance as research shows that your child is more likely to achieve their academic attainment if they have a good attendance record. The information below illustrates the impact that poor attendance can have on your child's educational success.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year

Pupils in this group will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 days absence a year

Pupils in this group are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 10-day holiday during term time every year can only ever achieve 95% attendance.

92%: 15 days absence a year

Pupils in this group are missing three weeks of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. The school may consider referring pupils with this level of attendance to the Local Authority.

90%: 19 days absence a year

The Government classifies pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees" and it will be almost impossible for them to keep up with work. Parents of pupils in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

Please ensure that over the coming weeks your child's attendance improves to meet the minimum expected level of 97%.

We can support you and your child around any attendance issues you may have therefore please do not hesitate to contact the Attendance Team on 0191 9171500, ext 290 or 291 should you wish to discuss this further.

Thank you for your cooperation and support with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr N. Holder
Headteacher

Stage Two Letter

Date

XXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXX

Name:

Class:

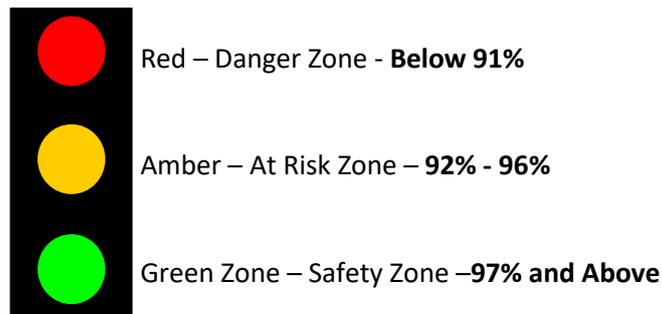
Ongoing Attendance Concerns

Attendance Period:

Dear

As you are aware Farringdon Community Academy uses the traffic light initiative to monitor the attendance of pupils. Since we wrote to you, Name's attendance has failed to improve significantly and is now XX%, this includes XX occasions of unauthorised absence.

This is below the minimum expectation and is having an impact on your child's education. To put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year.



Authorised absence means that school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away from school or that the explanation offered afterwards by a parent/carer has been accepted. Decisions regarding the authorisation of absences are the responsibility of the Head Teacher. Unauthorised absences on your child's attendance record may mean that you are liable to incur a Fixed Penalty Notice or could face prosecution.

Due to the current level of absence please note that any future absences relating to illness and/or medical reasons will not be authorised without some additional assurances that the absences are unavoidable. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes etc. If this evidence is not supplied, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence.

Only in exceptional circumstances will low attending students not get monitored, these would-be children with medical conditions requiring repeat treatment or who have had a stay in hospital.

To support you and your child a parent survey has been attached to this letter. Please use this form as an opportunity to provide any further information that may help to understand your child's absence.

Please complete and return to the School Office as soon as possible.

We would appreciate your support to make sure your child's attendance improves. We will continue to monitor the situation and will be in touch again if it does not improve and this may lead to a referral to the Attendance Team.

We can support you and your child around any attendance issues you may have therefore please do not hesitate to contact the Attendance Team on 0191 9171500, ext 290 or 291 should you wish to discuss this further.

Thank you for your cooperation and support with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr N. Holder
Headteacher

Appendix C

Stage 3 Letter

DATE

XXXX

XXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXX

XXXXXX

Name:

Class:

Serious Attendance Concerns

Attendance Period:

Dear XXXX,

As a parent/carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly. As your child NAME has an unsatisfactory level of attendance, which is XX% and there have been XX sessions of unauthorised absence to date, attendance will be monitored for four school weeks from DATE to DATE.

During this monitoring period attendance and punctuality will be recorded daily. All Pupils will be expected to have 100% attendance unless medical evidence is provided.

All children of compulsory school age who are registered pupils at a school must attend regularly and punctually. It is your responsibility as a parent to ensure this. Should your child fail to attend regularly and punctually the school may consider referral to the local authority.

The local authority has a duty to ensure that you fulfil your statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance. You may be invited to answer questions under caution in accordance to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The local Authority will then decide whether to take legal action against you which could mean applying for an Educational Supervision Order, issuing you with a penalty notice which is a fixed penalty fine or prosecuting you under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If you were found guilty, the maximum fine for the offence is £2,500 or up to 3 months' imprisonment.

If your child is experiencing any difficulties affecting attendance at school or you have any queries, please contact the Attendance Team on 0191 9171500, ext 290 or 291 to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Mr N. Holder
Headteacher

Farringdon Community Academy

Attendance Action Plan

Name of Child:	
Address:	
Name of Parent/Carer:	
Name of school:	Farringdon Community Academy

Current Attendance:	
Date:	

Target Attendance:	
Monitoring period:	

Additional information:	
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Signature on behalf of school:		Parent/Carer Signature:	
Name:	Mr N. Holder	Name:	
Date:	13/01/2022	Date:	

Parent Feedback form: Ongoing Attendance Concerns

Name of Pupil:

Class:

Comments: (Please advise of any further details regarding the absence of your child from school. This information will help to review your child's current attendance.)

**Would you like a follow up call from school?
(please state best time available)**

Y/N

Name of Parent/Carer:**Date:****Contact Details:**

Farringdon Community Academy

Please complete and return this form to the school office.

Appendix D

Referral Letter

DATE

XXXXX

XXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXX

XXXXXX

Dear

RE: REFERRAL TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE TEAM

As you are aware under the 1996 Education Act, all parents are required to ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have. It is with extreme disappointment that I must contact you once again about NAME's attendance. We have for some time tried to support you to improve NAME's attendance in accordance with our school policy by way of letters, telephone contact, Meetings etc.

Unfortunately, NAME's school attendance is still causing concern. At the date of writing NAME's attendance is XX% and has attended school on XXX occasions out of a possible XXX when the school was open for instruction under the Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2006; XX of these absences were considered to be unauthorised. As we have explained to you in the past a parent can offer an explanation for their child's absence but the law clearly states that it is the Head teacher's decision as to whether it is felt the explanation offered by a parent for an absence is justified. Our [Attendance Policy](#) outlines the procedures for dealing with a pupil's absence and is available to parents via the school website.

As NAME's attendance has not improved I have no other alternative but to refer this matter to the Local Authority's Attendance Team. This Team has a statutory duty to investigate matters of on-going poor school attendance and to consider formal statutory action.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a criminal offence is committed if a registered pupil does not attend school regularly. The Attendance Service can issue a Penalty Notice to parents if a child has missed 20 or more sessions without permission from the school, the Local Authority Attendance Team can also instigate criminal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

I would strongly recommend you cooperate and work with the Local Authority Attendance Service to prevent the need for legal action. If you wish to discuss the content of this letter further, please contact the Attendance Team on 0191 9171500, ext 290 or 291.

Yours sincerely

Mr N. Holder
Headteacher

Appendix B

Leave of Absence Request

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION FOR TERM TIME HOLIDAY

NAME OF CHILD.....

TUTOR GROUP.....

The above named child will be absent from Farringdon Community Academy
from.....to.....for a holiday during term time.

Please state the total number of school days absent:.....

If travelling abroad please state country/ countries you are visiting
.....

From 1st September 2013 under new regulations schools are no longer allowed to authorise leave of absence for family holidays. The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence for students during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Below is the reference to the Government website where this is outlined:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

Please give details if you consider this term time leave qualifies as exceptional circumstances:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Signature of Parent/Carer:..... Date:.....

Name:.....