



## Attendance Policy

<b>Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:-</b>	<b>Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School</b>
<b>On:-</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> December 2022</b>
<b>Date of next review:-</b>	<b>See Policy Log</b>

# Whole School Attendance Policy

## Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School

### Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021** It is due for review on **[insert date]**.

Signature

Headteacher

Date:

Signature

Chair of Governors

Date:

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## **1. Introduction/Aim**

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a wide range of evidence as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance;
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences;
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

## **2. Legal Framework**

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;

- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- and act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School, we believe that improving school attendance is everyone's business. That it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
<b>Senior Attendance Lead</b>	<b>Daniel Farthing</b>	<b>01553 774666</b>
<b>School Secretary</b>	<b>Tracey Harris</b>	<b>01553 774666</b>
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	<b>Joanne Uttin</b>	<b>01553 774666</b>
<b>Named Governor/Trustee for Attendance</b>	<b>Vicky Etheridge</b>	<b>01553 774666</b>

The Local Governing Board of Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and work effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.

- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Senior Management Team at Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half-termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance.

All staff at Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

The attendance officer will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The attendance officer will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of a parenting contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.

- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

## **4. Categorising Absence and Attendance**

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

### **4.1 Leave of Absence**

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances'. At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School leave of



absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave (see Appendix 2). If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will treat each application individually and discuss with you the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as **unauthorised**. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

## **4.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness**

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must ensure they have sign their child out on Inventory. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend school-led Attendance Support Panel as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the 5-19 Healthy Child Programme team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.<sup>1</sup>

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Norfolk County Council policies via the [Medical Needs Service](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

### **4.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance**

Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

### **4.4 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils**

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school. There are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. Schools and Local Authorities can make a big difference to their life chances through:

- Clear high expectation of all pupils, regardless of their background
- An inclusive culture that welcomes all communities
- Strong engagement from parents

In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because:

- the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,
- that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and

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<sup>1</sup> This is in accordance with the NSCP [Joint Protocol between Health Services & Schools in respect of the management of pupil absence from school when medical reasons are cited](#)

- if the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted

This provision applies *only* when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Norfolk, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

## **4.5 Unauthorised Absence**

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

## 5. Our Procedures

### 5.1 Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we are required by law to call attendance registers twice daily – once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session. Morning registers will take place at the start of school at 8:45am. The registers will remain open until 9:25am and any pupils arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an

acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In considering attendance levels, the register is of paramount importance. Registers are legal documents. Should the parent/carers of a persistent non-attender be prosecuted by the Norfolk Local Authority, then the information which the register contains will be the main source of evidence presented to the court. The regulatory requirements placed on schools with regard to the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.

## **5.2 Late Arrival at School**

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. Classroom doors will be open from **8:35am** and the school day begins at **8:45am**. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. The school register will be taken at **8:45am**. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents, who will be expected to sign their child in on Inventory and provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before **9:25am** it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at **9:25am**. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

## **5.3 Expected absence procedure for parents:**

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at **9:25am** and where no reason for absence is known.
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned

- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out
- School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission

In certain circumstances the School may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance, and advice
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through [Children Missing Education procedures](#)
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.

## 5.4 Attendance Rewards & Interventions

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School our whole school attendance target is 96%. In order to achieve this we have several rewards and interventions.

### Weekly

- **In the school foyer our attendance board will show our weekly attendance percentages for each class, along with weekly winners.**
- **Each Friday the Attendance officers will award the class with the best attendance for that week with attendance stickers.**

### Half termly

- **At the end of each half term, one child with 100% attendance for that half term from EYFS and KS1 and one child with 100% attendance for that half term from KS2 will be randomly selected and rewarded with a voucher for a local supermarket.**

### Termly

- **The class with the best overall attendance for that term will be rewarded with a movie and popcorn afternoon on the last day of that term.**
- **Every child that has 100% attendance figure for the term (allowing for authorised absences due to religious observance) will receive an attendance badge (1 term = bronze, 2 terms = silver, 3 terms = gold).**

## **RAG Letters**

Parents will receive a letter at the end of every term informing them of their child's attendance level for that term. They will receive either a red, amber, green or white letter depending on their child's attendance level.

Red – under 90%

Amber – 90%-95%

Green – 96% - 99%

White – 100%

## **Use of Data**

**At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School our whole school attendance target is 96%. This is monitored by our MIS (Scholarpack).**

All staff are responsibly for children's attendance. Attendance is shared with parents in the form of phone calls, letters, supportive meetings, termly attendance reports (RAG) and rewards. Attendance is shared with children in the form of certificates, stickers, movie and popcorn afternoons and vouchers. Weekly class attendance percentages are displayed in the office foyer for the whole school community to see. Staff are made aware of attendance via daily use of Scholarpack where the dashboard highlights who is absent on that day. A review is also completed and analysed by vulnerable group every half term.

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

“Severe absence” (SA) as:

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

## **Supportive attendance meetings**

If a child's attendance starts to drop a supportive meeting will be arranged with the attendance officer. This is an opportunity for the parent to discuss any barriers that are prohibited their child from attending school, any concerns they may have and support that school can offer. A plan will then be produced stating actions to help improve attendance, an attendance target and a review date set. A review meeting will be arranged and at this meeting the action plan and attendance will be reviewed. If attendance has not improved then Fast Track procedures will begin. If the attendance target is met, no further action is required but the school will continue to monitor the attendance of your child.

## **Fast Track to attendance meetings**

The purpose of the Fast Track to Attendance Panel meeting is for you and your child to meet with school and relevant agency members to identify the reasons for absence and to work together to improve attendance. During the meeting, the reasons for absence will be identified and different strategies to improve attendance will be considered. A plan will be agreed and an attendance target will be set.

A review Fast Track to Attendance Panel meeting will be arranged and at this meeting the action plan and attendance will be reviewed. A new action plan will be agreed. If the attendance target is met, the Review Panel will recommend that no further action is required. However, the school will continue to monitor the attendance of your child. If the attendance target is not met, the Review Panel will recommend to the Local Authority for consideration to prosecute.

Whilst the intention of the Fast Track to Attendance Panel meeting is that attendance will improve, consideration will be made to legal action if attendance target has not met with further unauthorised absence meeting prosecution threshold, the school will recommend to refer to the Local Authority for consideration to prosecute.

## **5.5 Support Systems**

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- Supportive meetings
- Sticker charts
- Check ins
- Breakfast club
- Home visits

Additional supportive measures can be implemented on case-by-case circumstances.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular



attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

## **5.6 Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice for parentally condoned absence, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

## **5.7 Reduced timetables**

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so. We will not use a reduced timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carers and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family

In line with Norfolk County Council [guidance](#), we will notify the Attendance Team of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

## **6. Deletions from the Register**

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we will add and will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils leaving our school; this will be

planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School we will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Norfolk County Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will inform the Children Missing Education Team of all removals from our school roll no later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Norfolk County Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above. We will also inform Norfolk County Council's Services to Home Educators Team by completing a referral form.

Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School will follow Norfolk County Council's [Children Missing Education procedures](#) when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Norfolk County Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

## **7. Related Policies**

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- medical needs
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

## **8. Statutory Framework**

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(September 2022\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2022\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2018\)](#)

## 9. Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

***What has been included is by no means an exhaustive list and schools are encouraged to include copies of their own template letters/advice documents.***

## Appendix 1: Fixed penalty notice whole school warning letter



*Fairstead Community Primary*

*and Nursery School*

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School, we nurture and invest in our relationships. We identify each individual's potential and work as a team to create a safe environment for everyone to grow and succeed.

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Attendance at school and legal intervention

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Fairstead Community Primary & Nursery School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The DfE policy document entitled, 'Working together to improve school attendance' states:

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the head teacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during 6 school weeks.

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Fairstead Community Primary & Nursery School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the

Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued, the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from unauthorised absence. When penalty notices are issued each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than 1 child who has been absent. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. In some circumstances, the Norfolk County Council Attendance Team may choose not to issue a further penalty notice in the same academic year and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr Farthing**

## Appendix 2: Application for pupil leave of absence

### APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

#### Important Information for Parents

- Head teachers comply with the 2013 amendment to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (2006) Regulations 2013** which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the Head teacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not
- Head teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed
- If leave of absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time
- Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised

***Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.***

#### I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Full name of child/ren.....

Address.....  
.....  
.....

From (1<sup>st</sup> day of absence) .....To (last day of absence)  
.....

Total number of school days.....Expected date of return to school.....

Reason for proposed absence - please provide reasons to support the application including evidence:

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

Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:

*I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time, and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I undertake to make sure my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.*

Signature of parent(s)/carer (s).....

Date:

Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been:

Agreed ☐

Days agreed

Parent meeting ☐

Not agreed ☐

Evidence required ☐

.....

Signature of Head

Teacher.....

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Attendance at school and legal intervention

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

In the DfE policy document entitled, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' it states, '*Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. **The application must be made in advance** and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. **A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion***'.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the last 6 school weeks

The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any pupil at Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the receipt of the Notice. The Fixed Penalty Notice is per parent per child. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

**Daniel Farthing**

Head Teacher



## Appendix 3: School Attendance Data



### Fairstead Primary School Attendance Data

Contextual Information	Year – 2021-2022 Dates: 06/09/21 – 22/07/22
Number On Roll (F2-Y6):	
No. Absence Requests this half term:	No. Absence Requests this year:
No of penalty notices submitted (half term):	No of penalty notices submitted (this year):
Lates (this half term):	Lates (this year):

### Group attendances Yrs 1 - 6

Group	% Attendance 2021-2022
All	
Boys	
Girls	
PP	
Non PP	
EAL	
Non EAL	
SEN	

### PAs (Y1-6)

School		Overall PA figure to date	Breakdown of PA% into 4 main categories			
Autumn 1	No of pupils		Medical PA= seen regularly by Dr/specialist/ ongoing condition	Exclusion PA	Long absence PA= holiday/visit to family abroad	Other PA: including general illness, chicken pox, odd days absence and unauthorised absence
	%					
Autumn 2	No of pupils					
	%					
Spring 1	No of pupils					
	%					
Spring 2	No of pupils					
	%					
Sum 1	No of pupils					
	%					

Sum 2	No of pupils					
	%					

**Attendance by year group**

Year	% attendance
F2	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

## Appendix 4: Minutes Late Letter



***Fairstead Community Primary  
and Nursery School***

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

Telephone: 01553 774666

Fax: 01553 764354

Email: [office@fairstead.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:office@fairstead.norfolk.sch.uk)

date

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Punctuality to School Warning Letter

Following a register audit this week/half term, it has come to our attention that \_\_\_\_\_ has arrived late to school on \_\_\_\_ occasions and missed \_\_\_\_ minutes of school time due to lateness. Their actual minutes late during this half term totalled \_\_\_\_ minutes.

This equates to \_\_\_\_ whole lesson lost. Additional information regarding how much education children lose through lateness can be found on the reverse of this letter.

School starts at 8.45am, and all children are expected to be here on time. Late arrival causes difficulty for the class teacher and the other children as it interrupts the beginning of the day, so we do need to see an improvement in the coming term, and we will be monitoring the situation accordingly.

If you would like to speak to a senior member of our team regarding your circumstances, then please feel free to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs Uttin**

Attendance and Safeguarding Officer

## Appendix 5: RAG White



*Fairstead Community Primary*

*and Nursery School*

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School, we nurture and invest in our relationships. We identify each individual's potential and work as a team to create a safe environment for everyone to grow and succeed.

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Termly Attendance Letter – Your Child Has Excellent Attendance.**

Well done, your child has achieved 100% attendance. Good attendance promotes good outcomes for children and those who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve their full potential.

Keep up the good work.

**Mr Farthing**

Head Teacher

## Appendix 6: RAG Green



*Fairstead Community Primary*

*and Nursery School*

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

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Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Termly Attendance Letter – Your Child Has Good Attendance.**

The nationally accepted attendance percentage for a child at primary school level is 96%, and I am pleased to advise that at present your child's attendance is at 96% or above.

Good attendance promotes good outcomes for children and those who attend regularly are more likely to achieve their full potential.

If you would like to discuss your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Farthing**

Head Teacher

## Appendix 7: RAG Amber



*Fairstead Community Primary*

*and Nursery School*

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

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Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Termly Attendance Letter: Your child's attendance requires improvement.**

I am writing to bring to your attention the current attendance level of your child. The nationally accepted percentage for a child at primary school level is 96%. Unfortunately, your child's attendance is below 96% and requires improvement.

Our Attendance Officer will monitor your child's attendance, and if there is no imminent improvement you will be invited to attend a Supportive Attendance meeting.

If you would like to discuss your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Farthing**

Head Teacher

## Appendix 7: RAG Red



*Fairstead Community Primary  
and Nursery School*  
William Booth Road, King's Lynn  
Norfolk PE30 4RR

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School, we nurture and invest in our relationships. We identify each individual's potential and work as a team to create a safe environment for everyone to grow and succeed.

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Termly Attendance Letter - Your child's attendance is a cause for concern**

The nationally accepted percentage for a child at primary school level is 96%. Unfortunately, your child's attendance is at 90% or below and they are classed as a persistent absentee.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored and if it doesn't improve imminently our Attendance Officer will seek advice from the Local Authority, which may result in prosecution. Future absences will not be authorised without medical evidence, and you must notify the school office if your child will be absent.

If you would like to discuss your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Farthing**

Head Teacher

## Appendix 8: Pre intervention warning letter



**Fairstead Community Primary**

**and Nursery School**

William Booth Road, King's Lynn

Norfolk PE30 4RR

At Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School, we nurture and invest in our relationships. We identify each individual's potential and work as a team to create a safe environment for everyone to grow and succeed.

[Parent name and address]

DATE:

Dear PARENTS NAME,

### **Attendance Concerns re: CHILD NAME DOB XX/XX/XXXX**

Regular school attendance allows your child to improve their life chances by taking full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. Our records show that CHILD NAME's attendance is only xx% and that they have missed XX days of school so far, this academic year.

We are very concerned with how this amount of absence will have an adverse impact on CHILDS NAME progress. We firmly believe that poor attendance has a significant negative effect on the personal and social development of the individual.

It is vital that CHILDS NAME attendance shows clear and quick improvement, or that you can provide a reason for your child's poor attendance that allows us to authorise the absence.

We will monitor things at school over the next three weeks, however, if we do not see an improvement, we will contact you for a meeting to discuss the persistent absence. Should things still not improve we will need to consider more formal proceedings and the use of legal interventions to ensure CHILDS NAME regular school attendance. We are very keen to work with you in supporting an improvement in attendance.

Please contact the school office if you require any support with ensuring [CHILDS NAME] regular school attendance.

I hope that we can work together to ensure that [CHILDS NAME] attendance improves.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Uttin  
HLTA Attendance and Safeguarding Officer