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Fritwell Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

“Growing and learning together with God.”

Children at Fritwell Church of England School are confident and inspired. They achieve personal success and show love and respect for all.

Fritwell CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including e.g. newsletters and on our website.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Aims

To develop good attendance and punctuality, so that children can fully benefit from the education offered to them.

Objectives

To inform parents of the law regarding attendance

To set out school procedures regarding attendance and punctuality

The Law

See Appendix

Holidays in term time

Holidays in term time are not permitted for any reason and the Headteacher is not able to authorise any term time holiday. This reflects the DFE regulations (Sept 2013), which state:

“Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.”



A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the Headteacher and if absenteeism continues a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and school to try and help resolve any issues. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Attendance and Engagement Officer and could also be referred to them and if, necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including: parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

School Procedures

Fritwell Church of England Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all, hence we will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff who has been given authorisation by the Headteacher can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

First Day Absence

Parents are asked to contact the School Office by 9am if their child is going to be absent due to illness or a medical appointment. Parents are asked to leave a message on the school absence Line (Tel. 01869 345283, Option 1) or e-mail office.3065@fritwell.oxon.sch.uk. Each morning we check every class register to account for all our children and, if we have not been advised of a reason for an absence, then we telephone home. Any information is passed on to the Headteacher and class teachers and the office transfer the information to registers. If we are unable to contact parents by telephone a text message is sent and if there is still no contact the Headteacher or a senior leader in her absence is informed. We will continue to try until contact is made. If there is any concern for the welfare of the child/children the Local Authority or police will be informed.

Monitoring

The Headteacher monitors class and individual attendance weekly and informs parents when attendance drops below 90%.

Attendance figures are reported termly to the Full Governing Body.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at 8.50 a.m. and all pupils are expected to be in their classrooms at this time. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil 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 cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm. The registers will close at 1.30pm.

Pupils arriving into class after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.



Medical Appointments

When making medical appointments, unless an emergency these should be made outside of school hours. However, we do acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the class teachers to be aware of and to bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. This will be done by informing the Headteacher. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the Headteacher will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. The Headteacher will liaise with the Local Authority to ensure the necessary action is taken when incidents of poor attendance and/or punctuality are identified.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring, parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward. At this point a parenting contract might be advisable, and will be drawn up in consultation with the Local Authority.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school will ask the Attendance and Engagement Service to issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the Attendance and Engagement Service will issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/ Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period
- they allow their child to take holiday in term time
- they fail to return their child to school on an agreed date after leave for "exceptional circumstances"
- their child persistently arrives late for school after the registration is closed

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School Agreement, newsletters and the website are used to remind parents.

Requests for absence for extra-curricular activities, employment and other exceptional circumstances (not holidays)

Requests will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the individual pupil and their progress, behaviour and attendance. If there is evidence of a negative impact on the child's performance after absences of this kind then no further authorised absences can be granted specifically for employment or extra-curricular activities.



The school will only grant authorised leave of this kind if there is considered to be no negative impact on the child's educational performance and that there is no evidence of under attainment or limited progress.

Celebrating Attendance

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

1. Each week the class with the highest attendance will be presented with "Attendance Ted" to keep in their classroom for the week.
2. The class with the highest attendance will also be presented with a certificate, which will be displayed in the School Hall for the remainder of the term.

Registers

- Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.
- Entries in paper registers must be in ink.
- All corrections must be visible.

Registers will be returned to the School Office after registration and by 9:00am in the mornings and 1:30pm in the afternoons.

Approved October 2017

Chair of Governors _____

To be reviewed October 2018



Appendix

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason and for holidays in term time.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities



- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration
- Visits to secondary schools
- Visits to other schools that the pupil is considering moving to

