Attendance policy

Felixstowe International College

Approved by:	Rebecca Mainprice	**Date:**	04.03.20
Last reviewed on:	-		
Next review due by:	Sept 2021		

Contents

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for every child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Peer on Peer abuse

 Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry

- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment

- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The register for the first session will be taken between 8.45am and 9am. The register for the second session will be taken between 1pm and 1.15pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Pupils must notify the school of any ill health as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). If lessons are missed without notifying a member of staff, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence.

However, the school will try to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code and dealt with according to the school disciplinary system.

Staff responsible for registration is to search the building to look for any pupil who does not come to register. If the pupil has simply forgotten, he/she will be marked as late. If he/she wither refuses to go to a lesson for any reason or is unwell without having informed a member of staff, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence, using the appropriate code.

Ongoing punctuality issues will be dealt with according to the school disciplinary system.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. Unauthorised absence will be dealt with on a daily basis and any concern will be discussed at the leadership meetings to determine the next course of action.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Report to parents on their child's attendance record will be sent out termly as part of the written end-of-term report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Cultural issues for families returning to their homeland.
- Wedding/Funeral of immediate family member
- Interviews for university applications in home country
- Medical condition that can only be treated in home country

Considerations that are not deemed 'exceptional'

- Cost of the flight/holiday is less in term time
- Prolonged holiday

The school considers each application (Request for exceptional leave of absence form) for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The legal sanctions do not apply to this school as Felixstowe International College is an Independent school. However, the above information is left on this policy to inform the parents the importance of good attendance and the parents' responsibility.

The school has the right to withdraw scholarships if unauthorised absence level goes up above 10% and/or withdraw a pupil for persistent unauthorised absences above 10%.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will monitor pupils' attendance and discuss any concerns at an early stage during the leadership and staff meetings, acknowledge positive improvements at the achievement assembly at the end of every term. The school will work closely with the parents in informing any issues and also supporting those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

6. Attendance monitoring

The deputy principal monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 consecutive days we will inform the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected and stored on the google drive and used for internal purposes to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

7.3 The deputy principal

The deputy principal:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with the leadership team and pastoral staff to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

7.4 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, on the google drive.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to work with the deputy principal in communicating with the parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy and Behaviour policy.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance, altered to suit the school practice.

Code	Definition	Scenario
Present	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
Present	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
Late	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

Code	Definition	Scenario
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day