



Fulston Manor School

Attendance Policy

Version Date:

September 2023

Review Date:

September 2024

Member of Staff Responsible:

**Mrs G Davies
Assistant Headteacher**

Aims

Fulston Manor School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students and this is embedded in our ethos of everybody matters, everybody succeeds, everybody helps and our Fulston Family Values. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The governors, headteacher and staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Fulston Manor School. This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts students at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent and everyday thereafter. This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should inform the school when their child is returning.

Students are expected to arrive by 8.40 am. each day and lesson 5 ends at 3.10pm. Between 8.45 am and 9.05 am, if a student arrives late, they should still go to form tutor period and sign in with their Form Tutor. If the student arrives after 9.05 am the student should sign in at the House Office via Main Reception. Persistent lateness will result in sanctions.

Parents should contact our attendance team by 8.30am on the first day of absence and everyday thereafter using the contact information below:

Tel: 01795 412639

Email: attendance@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Students

Students are expected to attend school every day and be on time to each timetabled session. Should there be barriers to attendance, they are encouraged to speak to their Head of House in order to resolve any issues, together with the school.

The Role of the School Staff

At Fulston Manor School there is a whole school responsibility for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The governing board promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos, making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory guidelines. They regularly review data, ensure staff have appropriate training and hold the headteacher to account for implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, monitoring the attendance data and reporting this regularly to governors. They support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students and the impact of implemented strategies. Issue fix-penalty notices, where necessary.

Mrs G Davies, Assistant Headteacher, has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues and having an oversight of data analysis. Providing a clear vision for attendance improvement and devising strategies to address areas of poor attendance.

Tel: 01795 412630

Email: gdavies@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and class teachers complete a register during the afternoon session (Period 5). Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement and our registers remain open for the length of the form tutor time. Teachers mark students present, absent or late in all other lessons throughout the day.

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer and the Pastoral Managers to ensure:

- ❖ Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- ❖ If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call.
- ❖ Where there has been no communication, contact is made to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- ❖ Should students be absent for a period of 10 days, we will complete a welfare call at home (we reserve the right to complete this sooner, should it be deemed necessary).
- ❖ Attendance is looked at weekly and towards the end of term by the Attendance Officer and the Pastoral Managers. Attendance letters will be issued regularly for students with poor attendance.
- ❖ The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see Appendix 1).
- ❖ Parents are informed regularly (via monitoring feedback) of their child's attendance figure.
- ❖ Excellent and improved attendance will be celebrated in celebration assemblies throughout the academic year.

Principles

- ❖ We expect students to attend school every day when the school is open.
- ❖ Students should only be absent if the reason is unavoidable. Allowing a student to be absent without good reason is against the law and parents can be fined substantial sums of money and ultimately prosecuted. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.
- ❖ Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given by the school. This includes keeping students off school for

trivial reasons, truancy and absences, which have never been properly explained. Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not an unavoidable one.

- ❖ Where there are more than 10 sessions or 5 days of unauthorised absence in a 100 session or 50-day period the school may request a Penalty Notice (see Appendix 2).
- ❖ Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children while they are not in the care of their parents.
- ❖ All children whose attendance is irregular will be considered vulnerable.

Attendance Support

We understand that some students may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our attendance and pastoral team are here to provide support and guidance for students and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to your child's House team. Parents should contact the student's Head of House at an early stage in such situations in order that difficulties may be speedily resolved.

Head of Cromer House:

Miss Z Hadok-Quadrio - 01795 412609 / cromer@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Head of Hales House:

Mr H Deeks - 01795 412610 / hales@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Head of Morrison House:

Mr T Westby - 01795 412611 / morrison@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Head of Stanhope House:

Mr C Patey - 01795 412612 / stanhope@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Head of Sixth Form:

Mrs G Davies - 01795 412608 / sixthform@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

- ❖ In cases where the absence persists and further support is required Mrs M Broad, the school's Attendance Support Officer, will provide additional and more intensive support for the family with the aim of resolving difficulties. Mrs Broad can be contacted via e-mail, mbroad@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk.
- ❖ Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school sessions and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school sessions. Access to wider support services will be provided where possible to remove the barriers to attendance.
- ❖ If matters cannot be resolved satisfactorily, they may be referred to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer [SLO]. The SLO will try to resolve the difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, it may be necessary to use a Penalty Notice and/or Court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an education supervision order for the child (see Appendix 2).
- ❖ Should parents wish to contact the **Local Authority School Liaison Officer [SLO]** themselves in order to seek advice, the telephone number is available from the school office.

Procedures

We employ a wide range of strategies to do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students and ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as a priority and we value the process of working together to improve attendance (see Appendix 3).

1. *Illness and other legitimate reasons*

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day via our attendance line and medical evidence should be provided wherever possible. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot take place outside of normal school hours, provided a written explanation is received.

2. *Holidays*

Parents do not have the right to take students out of school for holidays during term-time.

The School will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The School will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Holidays will not be authorised for any student in any circumstances. Any unauthorised absence may be referred to the LEA, who may issue a penalty notice to parents and this process does not require a monitoring period.

3. *Lateness*

Students must arrive on time to be given a mark for a session. Students arriving after the register has been completed will be given a late mark. If lateness occurs on a regular basis without valid reasons being given, the school may put procedures in place to endeavour to combat the persistent lateness and this may again result in the issue of a Penalty Notice by the Local Education Authority.

Authorising Absence

Only the headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised and following 5 days of absence (does not need to be consecutive) all absence will be unauthorised, unless in exceptional circumstances, without medical evidence.

All requests for leave of absence must be in writing to Mrs S Burden, Executive Headteacher (sburden@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk). The headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body. Each case will be judged on its merits and the headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school (See Appendix 2). Absence during term time can only be approved in “exceptional circumstances”. The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- ❖ Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- ❖ Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- ❖ Oversleeping
- ❖ Inadequate clothing/uniform
- ❖ Confusion over school dates
- ❖ Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- ❖ Child’s/family birthday
- ❖ Shopping trip
- ❖ Family holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

Local Authority action may include: -

- ❖ Attendance Improvement Meeting
- ❖ Home visits
- ❖ Liaison with other agencies
- ❖ Fast track to prosecution

Legal Sanctions

The school and local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age (see Appendix 2 for further details).

Summary

The School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures, authorised and unauthorised, both nationally and individually to parents through reports. These figures may be requested as part of any reference for employment or further/higher education. The School also has a duty to promote good attendance. Very good attendance is recognised through the awarding of certificates and other positive reinforcements.

Fulston Manor has a duty to ensure that all students’ time in school is worthwhile and stimulating. Parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. The School is committed to working with parents to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	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

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

Appendix 2

Penalty Notice proceedings for lateness

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from June 2020, when:

- ❖ 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- ❖ The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded.
- ❖ If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period, a Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child).
- ❖ Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

Penalty Notices Proceedings for Poor Attendance

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016 and revised in April 2017.

- ❖ A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of absence for 10 or more half day sessions (five school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions or period of 50 days of schooling – these do not need to be consecutive.
- ❖ A Penalty Notice can also be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- ❖ After the appropriate request for a Penalty Notice is received, the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service will issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded.
- ❖ If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child).

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- ❖ Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- ❖ Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- ❖ The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- ❖ To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- ❖ Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

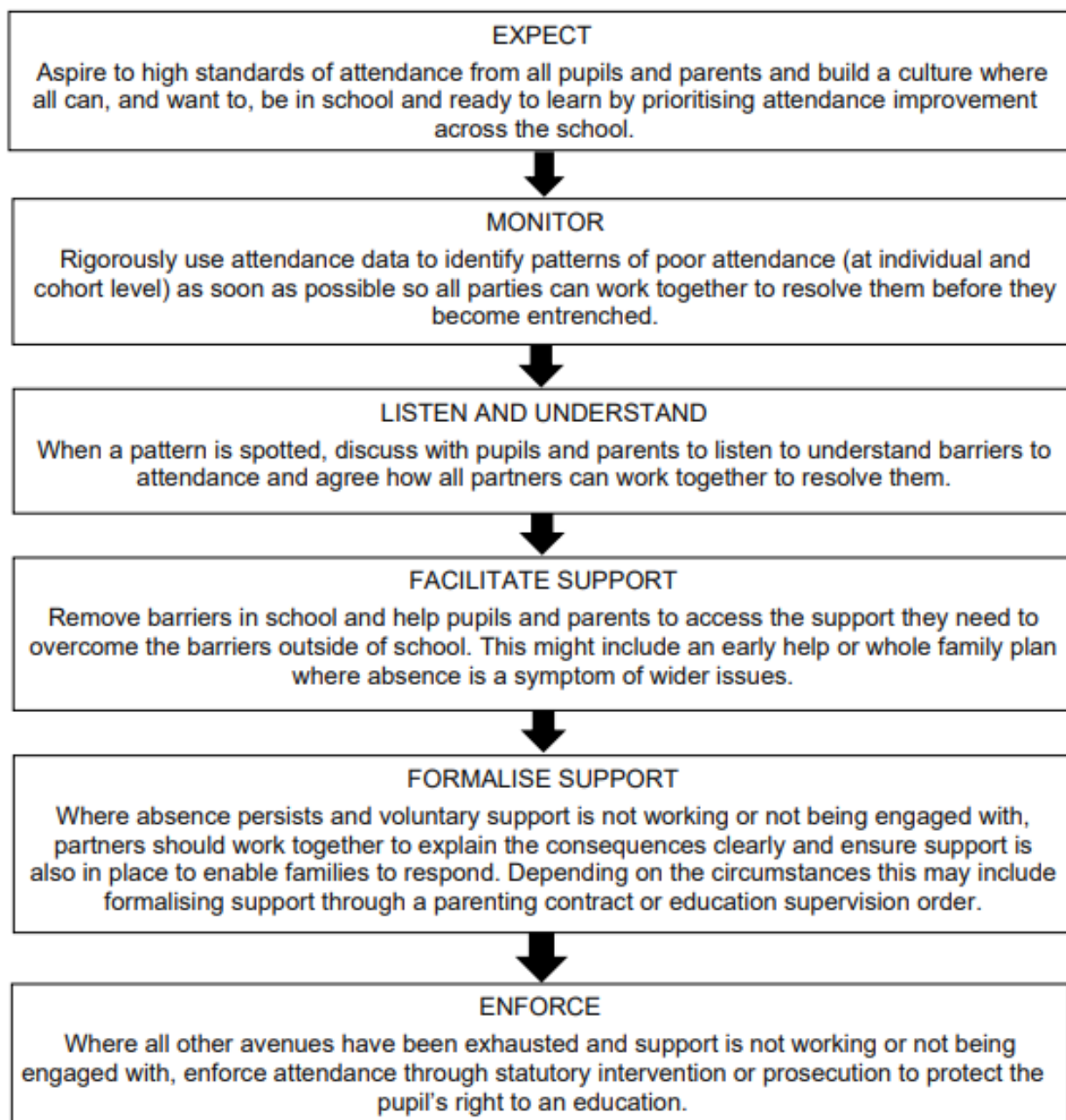
- ❖ with leave (the school has given permission)
- ❖ due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- ❖ religious observance
- ❖ failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

Appendix 3

Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Department for Education – Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022)