

FOREST PARK PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the EYFS



FOREST PARK
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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Principles

We believe high levels of attendance and a punctual start to the school day are important to all children. Our aim is to ensure that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled and, as a result, 'succeeds and thrives'.

Legal Requirements

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. The law requires all schools to record the attendance of each pupil at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Schools should follow up on absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised

The Government expects

Parents/carers to:

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring their children attend school regularly and arrive at school on time

Schools to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence

Promoting Good Attendance

The school acknowledges that good attendance should be recognised and rewarded. 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 is also used in this way.

The school will:

- Offer a safe and supportive environment, which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability
- Establish clear and effective procedures for administration
- Foster a climate where the school community, teachers, parents/carers, governors and pupils value attendance and punctuality
- Comply with legal requirements
- Ensure any child presenting poor levels of attendance and punctuality is noted and monitored and appropriate action taken
- Keep parents/carers informed about their child's attendance through established procedures
- Support governors in taking an active role in promoting good attendance
- Work in partnerships with parents/carers, the Education Welfare Service, Social Care and other outside agencies

Expectations

The school expects its pupils to:

- Attend regularly and on time
- Be prepared adequately for the school day
- Comply with the school policies and procedures

The school expects its parents/carers to:

- Encourage their children to attend school every day on time
- Contact the school on the first day of absence
- Arrange holidays and medical appointments outside school hours
- Regularly update emergency contact details

Notification of Absences

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 any absence is always required.

Parents/carers should notify the school before 9.00am on the first school day of their child's absence from school. If the reason for absence is sickness and it continues – or is likely to continue for more than a week, medical evidence should be obtained and submitted to the school.

If any child is absent and the school has not been notified, the school office will phone the child's parent/carer. In the event that contact cannot be made, the school office will record this on the register. If there are any child welfare/safety concerns then the matter may be referred to the local authority and/or Social Services.

Registration

The school uses an online cloud based system of registration. The register is a legal document and as such can be used in a court of law (e.g. to establish a pupil's attendance or absence at a particular time on a precise day). The registers are marked at the beginning of each session, morning and afternoon. Registers are marked in the first 10 minutes of the start of the school day. Morning registration period closes at 9.00am and the afternoon period closes at 1.30pm.

School begins at 8.45am prompt. The gate closes at 8.55am.

School finishes:

- Early Years 3.45pm
- Key Stage One and Two 3.45pm

Pupils arriving after the start of the school day must enter the school via the main entrance at the front of the building, where they will be met by admin staff in the main reception. Parents are required to record the pupil's name, time of arrival and reason for lateness in the late book. It is vital that any pupil arriving late is signed in, in order to comply with Health and Safety procedures. Pupils arriving after 8.50am will be marked with a late (L) mark and those arriving after 9.00am will be noted as an unauthorised absence.

We all have a responsibility to encourage punctuality. It is important that every child arrives in school on time as English, phonics and maths are taught at the beginning of the school day and are fundamental to a pupil's educational needs.

Persistent Lateness

The school follows a three-step system for children who are persistently late:

- 1) When a child is considered to be persistently late (this is at the discretion of the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead), then the school will send a letter to the parents/carers informing them of their child's persistent lateness and the school's concerns.
- 2) If a child continues to be persistently late, the school will send a second letter to the parents/carers requesting a meeting to discuss the matter and see if there are any ways in which the school can help.
- 3) The Headteacher will contact parents to arrange a meeting.
- 4) If the matter continues beyond these measures, then the school will refer the situation to Trafford Local Authority for them to investigate. This may involve home visits or even penalty notices being issued.

Categorisation of Absence

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

1. Authorised Absence

Absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Religious observance in accordance with Local Authority guidelines.
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside of school hours. Where possible, parents/carers should try to arrange these appointments for out of school hours
- Special circumstances (authorised by the Headteacher)
- Permanent or fixed-term exclusions

2. Approved Educational Activity

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

This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

In April 2013, the government issued amendments to 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers should not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore, our school will only authorise holidays in line with these regulations. Exceptional circumstances will only be agreed **very rarely**.

Parents should apply by letter if they are considering a holiday in term time, at least 2 weeks before the holiday is planned. The school will consider the request and let parents know in writing whether it has been authorised.

3. Unauthorised absence

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

Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy

- Unexplained absences
- Children who arrive at school after registration closes to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips or holidays in term time not authorised by the school

Patterns of Absence

First day of absence:

If a child is absent from school, the parent/carer should contact the school on 0161 9734835, or can email the school via office@forestparkprep.co.uk. If a parent/carer does not inform the school, the admin staff will ring the parental home on the first day of absence or send an email to ascertain why the child is absent.

The school is aiming to achieve an attendance target of 95%. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and a parent/carer fails to inform school, there is a clear strategy of intervention in place.

Escalation of Intervention

- 1) The SLT will review all absences and the reasons given for children whose attendance falls below 95% in any half term. In most cases, the school will send a letter to the parents/carers informing them of their child's attendance and the school's concerns.
- 2) If a child's attendance level has not improved or has fallen further, at the end of the next half term, the Headteacher or Deputy Head will contact the parent/carer to arrange a meeting. The Headteacher or Deputy Head will liaise with the class teacher and, when necessary, other professionals if the need for support is identified.
- 3) In the event that the child's attendance levels still do not improve, then the school will refer the matter to Trafford Local Authority for further action which may result in a home visit or even a fixed penalty notice being issued.

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