



THE FOUNTAINS HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Multi-Academy Trust

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INTRODUCTION

Fountains High School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel happy to come to school.

For a child or young person 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 as many students as possible. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

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.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will fulfil a legal duty to promote attendance and to publish absence figures.

The school will review its' systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is using appropriate strategies to support achieving set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Any student who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as directed by the Staffordshire C.C. Attendance Policy on Integrus. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. Office staff completing the register will make follow up calls and texts, after the completion of the registers, to the parents/carers of any student who is absent with no reason given. Classroom staff will liaise with office staff to communicate any known absences.

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. Additionally, the school will promote good attendance by celebrating those students who make efforts to have a good attendance record.



PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Parent/carers are expected to notify the school on the first day of absence giving a reason for the absence. Any parent experiencing difficulties with their child's attendance should contact the school at the earliest opportunity via the school office. Parent/carers need to be aware that it is their responsibility to ensure that their child attends school and is on time.

LATENESS

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any student 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.

Students arriving 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.

Afternoon registration takes place at 1.00pm. Registers close at 1.05am.

FIRST DAY ABSENCE

Parents/carers must contact the school office to inform the school of the reason for absence. This may be done verbally or via a transport escort who has actually spoken to the parent. The parents/ carers of any student for whom there is no reason for absence will be telephoned by the registration administrator in the school office.

NOTIFICATION OF REASON FOR ABSENCE

Notification received from parents explaining a student's absence is recorded in Integris. Any absence where the school has not been given a reason will be considered an unauthorised absence until a reason is provided. Follow up letters will be sent out to parents or carers to request the information required.

CONTINUING ABSENCE

Any student with continuing absence that is of any concern to staff should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Head with responsibility for Behaviour and Attitudes to consider whether further action is needed.



FREQUENT ABSENCE

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents or carers. Students whose attendance for the year falls below 90% will be monitored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Any parent or carer of a student for whom attendance is considered to be an ongoing issue will be invited to an attendance clinic in order to make plans for a way forward. Referral to the Early Help Team will be made. Parents or carers may also request support from an Education Welfare Worker and details of how to do this will be provided by the school.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE AND PROSECUTION

For any student who has for unauthorised absence of 20 plus sessions of within a 12-week period excluding school holidays, the school will review their attendance and a decision will be made regarding the issuing of a fixed penalty notice. If all ways of promoting attendance have failed, a final warning letter will be sent to the parents or carers of the child or young person. Details of the unauthorised absences and the measures taken by the school to support the family to improve the attendance of the student will be passed to the Educational Welfare Worker along with a request for statutory action. The Education Welfare Worker has the authority to issue a Penalty Notice or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Fixed penalty notices can also be issued for students who have 10 plus sessions of 'late marks' within a 12-week school period. See:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Code-of-Conduct-From-1.1.2018.pdf>

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

The school adheres to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The school has in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Emergency contact numbers are requested from the parent with whom the child or young person normally resides. Updates regarding these contact details are requested regularly and school holds emergency contact numbers for more than one person wherever possible.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether



welfare concerns should be escalated. Any concerns will be referred to the safeguarding team, and escalated to First Response if appropriate.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

It is important that on return from an absence that all students are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Holidays during term time are subject to the guidance found in appendix 2 at the end of this policy.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Two days leave of absence will be authorised for religious observance per academic year.

ATTENDANCE TARGETS

The school will set attendance targets each year. Performance towards the targets will be monitored monthly and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for overseeing this work.

THE REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The school will use Integris for keeping the official school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Off-site educational activity (NOT dual registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Leave of absence



D	Dual registration	Pupil attending other establishment
E	Excluded	No alternative provision made
G	Family holiday (NOT authorised by school <u>or</u> days in excess of the period determined by the head teacher)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved education activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical or dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved education activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school	Not counted in possible attendances



Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances

***Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census) This code was used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from the United Kingdom Health and Safety Agency (UKHSA) or the Department of Health and Social Care¹²
- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

In line with our transition to living with COVID-19 and the latest public health advice, schools are no longer required to record pupils who are not attending school because of COVID-19 using Code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus).

However, this register code was used until May 2022.

Authorised absences include reasons such as illness or medical appointments.

Unauthorised absences may include students who refuse to come to school without good reason, parents keeping pupils at home unnecessarily or taking holiday without prior agreed approval of the head teacher.

REGISTER SECURITY

A monthly printout of the school's computer register will be kept locked in the school office.

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and filed.

Electronic back-ups are made daily. These also need preserving for at least three year.

MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY



Annually (or when the need arises) the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the co-ordinator, the Executive Head Teacher and the nominated governor and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.

APPENDIX 1 - GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARENTS REQUESTING LEAVE IN TERM TIME

1. The Department of Education make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
2. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, request a leave of absence form from the school office and send it to the head teacher. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered well before the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Head teachers cannot authorize any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects, they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the exceptional circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - the overall attendance pattern of the child
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent made the request in advance
 - students on examination courses or due to take SATS will not normally be granted leave of absence.
6. Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision



based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.

7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. Once a decision has been made by the head teacher parent/carer will then receive a letter to state whether the request for leave of absence has been authorised or unauthorised. If you choose to take the unauthorised leave of absence then you may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice from Staffordshire County Council. Once the penalty notice is issued parents have 28 days to pay the Penalty Notice. Parents/carers of the child/ren will have up to 21 days to pay £60 per parent per child, however this amount doubles to £120 for the remainder 7 days, giving the individual parent/carer a total of 28 days to pay the penalty notice. This is in line with the Staffordshire Code of Conduct.
9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

*Generally, the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.