Fairfield
Prep School

Attendance Policy

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Distribution

All parents, guardians, governors teaching and school Office staff to be made aware of this policy. Parents should be made aware via Fairfield Prep School 'Essential Guides.'

This policy is available on the website, and it is stored on the school's dashboard under 'policies'.

Other Policies and Procedures to be Read in Conjunction with this Policy:

- Admissions Policy
- Promoting Good Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (inc. Children Missing Education)
- Missing Pupil Policy
- Special Education Needs and Disability Policy
- Pupil Serious Disciplinary Policy
- EYFS Policy
- LSF Leaver's Process

Other Documents to be read in Conjunction with this Policy:

- Government Guidance: Children Missing Education
- Government Guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026
- Government Guidance: Mental Health Affecting a Pupils Attendance
- Government Guidance: 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance, July 2026'.

Introduction

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Attendance is the essential foundation for positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school.

In May 2022, the School's Bill introduced significant updates to the 1996 Education Bill, with a specific focus on attendance at school. Subsequently, the Department for Education updated its statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' in July 2026, providing further clarification on attendance expectations, attendance analysis, illness-related absence, leave of absence requests and the limited use of remote education. This guidance aims to enhance attendance levels in schools and provides clear roles and responsibilities for various stakeholders, including parents, schools, governing bodies, and local authorities.

It is recognised that better attendance at school enhances educational outcomes and improves the safeguarding of young people. Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns from the outset.

Pupils at Fairfield Prep School (FFD) are encouraged to take full advantage of their educational opportunities through maximum attendance and are expected to attend all prescribed lessons and activities. LSF research shows that participation in school is positively

correlated with pupil's wellbeing. Punctuality is equally important. Parents and teachers have a duty to ensure that pupils attend school every school day except in the case of illness or if prior permission for absence has been granted.

For the welfare, health and safety and educational benefit of all pupils, the school registers pupils in all years, including FFD Kindergarten. The school requires regular attendance, and the presence of pupils is checked twice daily at the start of the day during morning registration and in the afternoon. See point 3 below.

Fairfield Prep School promotes a whole-school culture in which good attendance is recognised as essential to educational achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and future success.

1. School Attendance and the Law

This Policy complies with the requirements in:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (with amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

The law entitles every child of compulsory age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special education need that they might have.

Whilst children below compulsory school age are not subject to the legal requirements surrounding school attendance, the school will maintain attendance and admission registers for all registered pupils, monitor attendance patterns, follow up unexplained absences in line with safeguarding procedures, and work in partnership with parents to promote regular attendance and establish positive attendance habits from the earliest stages of education.

Parents have the legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The attendance register is a legal document. Schools must take a register at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session. At FFD we register at morning and afternoon registration. See point 3 below.

Only the school can authorise a pupil's absence. Parents/guardians must provide a reason for any absence as soon as possible. Where the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence will initially be recorded using Code N. The correct code will be applied as soon as the reason is known and no later than five school days after the session. Where no satisfactory reason is established, the absence will be recorded as Code O (unauthorised absence).

The school uses the attendance codes set out in the Department for Education's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' [See Appendix 1].

The school will make reasonable enquiries about the reasons for absence, but it is the

parent/guardian's responsibility to explain the reason for their child's absence.

FFD follows guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) regarding school attendance and guidance set out in 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'.

2. Who is Responsible for Attendance Issues at FFD?

Senior Attendance Champion: Mrs. C Bruce (Deputy Head Pastoral/DSL)

Attendance and Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility (Appendix 3) and concerns can be raised through CPOMS by all staff for the attention of Class Teachers, Heads of Year, SLT and the Safeguarding Team. However, the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/DSL supported by the SLT, DDSLs, Class Teachers and Heads of Year (HoY), has overall responsibility for attendance issues in FFD.

Key Contact Details

- Fairfield Prep School Office fairfield.office@lsf.org
- Absence line: 01509638994
- Senior Attendance Champion: Mrs. C Bruce (Deputy Head Pastoral/DSL) c.bruce@lsf.org

3. Registration

Registration times for FFD:

Registration Times	AM		PM	
	Open	**Closes**	**Open**	**Closes**
Kindergarten to Year 6	08:40	08:55	13:30	13:45

Only authorised staff (e.g. Class/Subject Teachers, inc. supply teachers) may complete registers, and they must be taken twice a day. **Fairfield Prep School maintains electronic admission and attendance registers in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.**

Registers should be taken at the same scheduled time for all pupils wherever practicable, in line with Department for Education expectations. Attendance registers will not remain open for longer than 30 minutes.

If the electronic register is unable to be taken, the relevant school office staff will provide a paper register and will then input the information on the electronic register in the office.

If a pupil arrives at school late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied with the reason for lateness, the pupil will be coded as absent for that session (code 'U').

4. Monitoring

Fairfield School Office staff monitor attendance twice a day (AM and PM registration) and weekly. If a staff member is concerned that a pupil is missing during the school day, they should follow the FFD: Missing Pupil Policy.

The school has a safeguarding responsibility to investigate any unexplained absence.

If an absence is unexplained, the school will make a first-day call by 10:00. If no contact can be made with a parent, emergency contacts registered on iSAMS might be contacted. Where absence is not explained, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be alerted, and concerns will be managed in line with the LSF: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) uses attendance dashboards and regular attendance analysis to monitor whole-school attendance, year groups, vulnerable groups and key cohorts. Attendance data will be benchmarked where appropriate to identify emerging trends, barriers and priorities for improvement. Particular attention will be given to groups who may face barriers to attendance, including pupils with SEND, pupils with medical needs, disadvantaged pupils and young carers

Regular school reports (at least once a half-term) are run for the attention of the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Designated Safeguarding Leads and Class Teachers for interpretation, support and intervention. Additional individual reports will be run for individual pupils more frequently. Attendance will feature on Safeguarding Governor Reports (termly and annually), including data and information about referrals. The FFD School Board receives regular attendance information and provides oversight and challenge regarding attendance trends, vulnerable groups and improvement actions.

Attendance is actively monitored for pupils with attendance below 95%. Extenuating circumstances, such as medical illnesses, bereavement etc. will be considered before any necessary action is taken, should attendance figures fall below certain thresholds [see below]. Attendance reports, in the first term of the school year, will require greater interpretation due to the impact of a single day's absence on attendance statistics.

Attendance figures are recorded on formal reports as determined by the school's reporting schedule for parental information.

When attendance becomes a concern, parents of pupils will be contacted and recorded on CPOMS for future reference.

Threshold of Attendance	**Associated Actions (examples)**
Emerging Concern: 95-91%*	• Class Teacher will be alerted and will identify any concerns, barriers to attendance and offer support as required. • Attendance will be monitored. *When appropriate, parents will be alerted and actions to improve school attendance recorded.
Persistent Absence below:90%	• Class Teacher and Head of Year will be alerted and will identify any concerns, barriers to

90-81%*	attendance and offer support as required (see Appendix 2). • Attendance will be monitored and reviewed. *When appropriate, parents will be alerted and actions to improve school attendance recorded.
Persistent Absence 80-51%	Pupils below 80% are likely to require targeted support. Actions *may* include (in addition to above): • Parents alerted via a phone call, email or letter and actions to improve school attendance recorded. • An attendance plan drafted in partnership with the school, pupil and parents. • Pupil's participation in non-essential school trips and visits may be reviewed to support attendance. • Attendance will be monitored at a schedule set out in the plan (e.g. every two-weeks) and there will be regular communication. • The pupil's place at the school may be reviewed. • A referral to the associated Inclusion Team will be considered by the Safeguarding Team. • International Boarders and Sponsored Pupils – Home Office Border Control threshold point, school is obliged to inform the Home Office and the school's advisor on immigration matters. Parents and Guardians informed.
Severe Absence below: 50%	In addition to the above. • A Designated Safeguarding Lead will take the lead responsibility for coordinating targeted support in school and through the appropriate Local Authority's Children Services and Inclusion Team.
Sickness (**15** days consecutively or cumulatively)	• In accordance with DfE guidance, the school will provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code 'I' (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss **15 days consecutively or cumulatively** because of sickness.
Unauthorised Absence	• The school will make the relevant local authority

(**10** days continuous)	aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of 10 school days.

All attendance concerns, updates and actions should be recorded on CPOMS in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5. Punctuality

Punctuality is essential to maximise learning and develop positive behaviours which are transferable to higher education or the workplace. Pupils are expected to be punctual in all lessons and morning and afternoon registration. Persistent lateness to school will be addressed by intervention from the Class Teacher, Head of Year and then Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Punctuality shows respect for others, and we therefore expect pupils to be punctual to lessons and school appointments. Upper Prep pupils who independently arrive late to a lesson may be reminded that this is unacceptable and persistent lateness will trigger an appropriate sanction from the teacher.

Punctuality concerns, updates and actions should be recorded on CPOMS by the Class Teacher.

6. International Boarders and Sponsored Pupils

It is expected that sponsored pupils' attendance will not drop below 80% or miss 10 consecutive days (AM and PM, is equal to one contact point) of unauthorised absence. If any of the above occurs, the school will assess the reasons behind this, and if necessary, the school will report this on the Sponsor Management System as per the sponsor guidance.

7. Children of non-statutory school age (Kindergarten)

FFD applies the same expectations for reporting absence for our non-statutory age pupils as detailed above. Additionally, procedures and actions detailed above will be employed should a child be absent without notification or for a prolonged period of time.

8. The role of Parents/Carers/Guardians

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children receive efficient full-time education by regular school attendance. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child.

Parents are responsible for ensuring pupils arrive at school on time.

Parents also have a responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence and when they may be expected to return and resume their studies.

The School will communicate with parents regarding attendance concerns in a supportive, respectful and non-judgemental manner. Attendance concerns will be discussed at the earliest opportunity with the aim of identifying barriers and agreeing appropriate support.

9. Granting Leave of Absence

The school can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. Permission for a pupil to be out of school is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Requests should be made in writing via 'My Portal'

In accordance with 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,2026', the school will restrict leave of absence to specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad. (code 'C1')
- Attending an interview or admission to another institution (code 'J1')
- Study leave (external exam)
- A temporary, time limited part-time timetable
- All requests for leave of absence will be considered on their individual merits taking account of the specific circumstances presented. The School will not operate blanket policies that automatically approve or refuse particular categories of leave request.

10. Remote Education and Attendance Support

Remote education will only be used in limited and exceptional circumstances. It will not be viewed as an alternative to regular school attendance and will normally form part of a time-limited reintegration or support plan. Remote education arrangements will be reviewed regularly with the aim of supporting a return to full-time in-person attendance as soon as reasonably practicable

11. Illness or medical appointment illness

Parents should notify the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.

It is the school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In most cases, a parent's note explaining their child was ill will be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a pupil's illness or medical appointment may be requested. Requests for medical evidence will be proportionate and considered on a case-by-case basis. The School will seek to work collaboratively with families to understand barriers to attendance and will not routinely request medical evidence for every illness-related absence. However, the school can challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

Pastoral school staff with support from the School Nurse, will work with parents to help address any concerns about elevated levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent from school
- There are frequent odd day absences due to reported illness
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Where there is a particular medical problem and school may need evidence to seek

additional support/provide support
- There are concerns about behaviour and/or safeguarding

Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents are encouraged to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents should request leave in advance of the appointment via the school Office.

12. Holidays

Parents are expected to use school holidays for family vacations. The school asks that parents and guardians adhere to the school term dates published a year in advance and only make a request if it is unavoidable.

In accordance with the DfE expectations, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation is **not** an exceptional circumstance. Therefore, it is unlikely that a leave of authorised absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Requests should always be made in writing by the parents, via 'My Portal' to the Headteacher via the school Office.

The school will not provide work for pupils who have chosen to take a holiday during term time, and it is the parents and pupil's responsibility to inform their teachers and the Music School if they are going to miss any paid lessons.

13. Holidays – International Boarders and Sponsored Pupils

We recognise that it can be difficult to book appropriate flights and in the case of sponsored pupils where it has not been possible for a flight to be booked for the last day of term/half-term, we would expect them to stay with their guardians overnight and to fly home the next day.

14. Requests for Regular Time out of School (Including Alternative Provisions)

Requests for pupils to miss school regularly should be made in writing to the Headteacher via 'My Portal'. Only requests for elite/high performance pupils will be considered (e.g. professional sports or drama academies) and each request will be assessed on its individual merits. Before granting permission, the school may ask for key safeguarding information about the alternative provision (e.g. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and direct contacts). It is the responsibility of the parents to collate the information required for the school. The explicit expectation is that these pupils will actively catch up on work missed in these lessons and the impact of the time out of school will be reviewed regularly.

15. Religious Observance

A day's leave of absence can be granted for religious observance as authorised absence. The school may only record one day as religious observance, which is a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). More than one day will be considered as a leave of absence.

Requests for absence due to religious festivals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

16. Responsibilities of Staff

Attendance is everyone's responsibility (Appendix 3) and all staff should record their concerns and actions in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on CPOMS. Staff have an obligation to action and feedback on any request by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) in regard to absence concerns.

Class/Subject Teachers must register attendance in each of appropriate (AM or PM) sessions.

17. Children at Risk of Missing or Being Absent from Education

The school will report to the Local Authority if it has a serious concern over a pupil's attendance or the pupil has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of ten days or more.

The school will report to the Local Authority if a pupil has been recorded with illness absence for 15 consecutive or cumulative days.

A child missing or absent from education is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, radicalisation, child sexual/criminal exploitations - particularly County Lines. Staff should follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy if a concern relates to a child missing or absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions. This will help identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care (and the police if appropriate) in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The Leicestershire County Council's Inclusion Team set out an operational framework for children 'missing out on education' and more guidance for school staff on how to work in partnership with Children Services can be found on their website.

Leicestershire's Inclusion Team can be contacted via: Telephone: 0116 305 2071

Email: inclusionpupilsupport@leics.gov.uk

Inclusion Service Leicestershire County Council County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RF

See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (inc. Children Missing and Absent from Education) for further information.

18. Special Education Needs and Complex Barriers for Attendance

All children have the right to an education. Therefore, the attendance ambition for pupils with complex physical, mental health, and special educational needs should be equal to that of any other child. However, additional support may be necessary to overcome barriers to school attendance for these pupils.

Adjustment to practice and policies will be considered to help meet the needs of pupils who are finding it difficult to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments

under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010.

Where appropriate the school will work together with families and a range of agencies (e.g. mental health support teams, GPs) to support school attendance as determined by their individual needs.

The School recognises that emotional wellbeing and mental health may affect attendance and will consider reasonable adjustments, phased reintegration and appropriate support plans where attendance difficulties arise from these factors.

The School recognises that young carers may face additional challenges affecting attendance and will work with pupils, families and external agencies where appropriate to remove barriers and support regular attendance.

19. Part-Time Timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests, there may be a need for the school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

A part-time timetable will:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent/s with whom the pupil normally resides
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support
- Have regular review dates to ensure the shortest time necessary
- Have a proposed end date which the pupil is expected to attend full-time

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will work with the family to write a risk-assessment for the period the pupil is not in school full-time and ensure that all stakeholders are informed (for example, Local Authority (EHCP) Social Worker or Youth Offending Team).

This policy will be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in legislation, guidance and emerging attendance issues.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes from July 2026

Refer to 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' for code descriptors.

The School will apply attendance and absence codes in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Department for Education's Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026 and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Code	Description
N	No reason yet provided for absence
B	Any other approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Part-time timetable
D	Dual registration at another school
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
G	Holiday not granted by the school
I	Illness
J1	Interview for employment or other educational institution
K	Educational provision arranged by LA
L	Late before the register is closed
M	Medical/Dental Appointment
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
Q	Lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance (1 day only, other agreed time Code C)
S	Study leave public examinations
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Transport not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Part of school premises closed
Y4	Unexpected closure of whole school site
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not on admissions register
#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix 2 Supporting Attendance and Removing Barriers

Below are some of the adjustments and strategies that FFD might employ to support a pupil who is avoiding school for emotional based reasons. The list is informed by best practice but isn't exhaustive.

1. **Individualised Approach by Staff**:
   - Staff members should take an individualised approach to each child. By understanding their unique needs and challenges, they can break down barriers to attendance.
   - The emphasis should be on creating an environment where children feel ready to learn, safe and confident.
2. **"Meet and Greet" Support**:
   - After a period of absence, some pupils can benefit from a personalised "meet and greet." This helps ease their transition back into school.
3. **Adaptive Seating Plans**:
   - Seating plans during lessons can be adapted to accommodate Emotional - Based School Avoidance (EBSA). Strategic seating arrangements can enhance comfort and engagement.
4. **Short-Term Lesson Withdrawal**:
   - For pupils struggling with anxiety about attending school, consider allowing short-term withdrawal from lessons. During this time, they may work on emotional regulation and building resilience.
5. **"Time Out" Cards**:
   - Provide pupils with "Time Out" cards. These cards allow non-verbal indication that they need some time away from their peers and support can be given to accommodate this safely.
6. **Phased Timetabling**:
   - Implement a short period of phased timetabling to facilitate a smooth transition back into school. This approach does not require full-time attendance but focuses on gradual reintegration.
7. **Open Communication Channels**:
   - Ensure that pupils are aware they can speak with anyone they trust. Staff members should know how to provide help or direct pupils to appropriate support (e.g., Class Teacher, Head of Year, Teaching Assistant, School Nurse or Designated Safeguarding Lead).
8. **Counselling and Health and Wellbeing Support**:
   - Counsellors and School Nurses can support a pupil with emotional based school avoidance.
9. **Anti-Bullying Initiatives and Wellbeing Awareness Initiatives**:
   - Promote anti-bullying, arrange mental health awareness days and sessions for pupils. These events promote understanding, reduce stigma and encourage proactive well-being.

Appendix 3: FFD Attendance is Everyone's Responsibility

