



*Inspiring All to Excellence*

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**The Fierté Multi-Academy Trust**

# **Attendance Policy**

## Document Control

<b>Policy Title</b>	Attendance Policy
<b>Effective Date</b>	September 2022
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<b>Policy Owner</b>	
<b>Policy Approver</b>	Trust Board

## Version Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amended by</b>	<b>Comments</b>
V1	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2022	T Hand	Policy compiled collaboratively by Trust Leaders from all Academies.
V2	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	T Hand	Following meeting of Trust Leaders, amendments made as detailed below.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>
Reasonable adjustments	Section added to make clear that, exceptionally, reasonable adjustments will be made to the policy.
Appendix	Updated the list of documents utilised by academies.

## Aims and Values Underpinning the Policy.

**Our vision is to inspire all to excellence.** This can only be achieved if pupils attend school regularly benefitting from the curriculum and teaching available. Parents play an intrinsic role inspiring their children to take advantage of all we have to offer as a Trust.

### **The Trust vision is underpinned by our values:**

*'We are brave'* - in the context of attendance, this means that, without fear or favour, we will relentlessly challenge poor attendance and punctuality seeking all possible solutions.

*'We care'* - in the context of attendance, this means creating the enabling conditions for children to attend every day, so they achieve.

*'We celebrate individuality'* - in the context of attendance, this means we will adopt an empathetic approach to individual circumstances and needs whilst remaining uncompromising. *Every child in Fierté genuinely matters.*

*'We leave no one behind'* - in the context of attendance, this means, we are inclusive of all pupils and families, and we will provide tailored support in response to the need for help.

### **This policy complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.**

**This policy has been equality impact assessed** and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any individual and it helps to promote equality across Fierté Multi-Academy Trust.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers including those who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other recognised vulnerabilities. Whilst always maintaining the highest expectations of attendance, we will be mindful of any genuine additional barriers a pupil or family may face. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments to this policy will be made. It is anticipated that this will be exceptional and not common practice.

### **Expectations and daily routines**

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident, and independent learners who thrive in school. Good attendance is an expectation and the responsibility of parents.

Promoting excellent attendance is also the responsibility of the whole school community. Improving attendance is in everyone's interests and it is everyone's responsibility. It is our expectation that all pupils, staff, and leaders have a shared responsibility to uphold the expectations set out in this policy.

## What are our daily attendance routines?

Academy Day – Dosthill Primary Academy

	Start of Day	Late Mark up to	Registers close – Unauthorised absence	Lunchtime	End of Day
Reception Year 1	8.45am	9.10am	9.10am	12:00am - 1:00pm	3:15pm
Year 2	8.45am	9.10am	9.10am	12:05pm – 1:05pm	3:15pm
Key Stage 2	8.45am	9.10am	9.05am	12:10pm - 1:10pm	3:15pm

Members of school staff will warmly welcome children to school in the morning, greeting them on the gate as they arrive and enter the classrooms.

Procedures for absence:

- Parents are expected to bring their children in to school on time every day.
- If your child arrives after 8.50am, they will be recorded as Late (L code) on the register.
- If they arrive 20 minutes after registration, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning (a U code).
- If children are collected from school 30 minutes before the end of the day, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U code) for the afternoon session.
- The school operates a first day contact system where parents are required to telephone and inform school on the morning of the first day of absence before 9.30am.
- If there has been no contact, we will text or telephone parents to identify why their child is not in school. This is part of the school's commitment to safeguarding the safety and welfare of children.
- It is expected that parents will let us know the reason for any absence by contacting school. If you do not answer or respond, then the academy may visit your home to check on your child's welfare (these visits may be unannounced).
- When your child is absent for longer than a day, it is important to maintain contact with school. If contact is not maintained, school staff will continue to communicate via telephone.
- When pupils arrive late, they are required to report to the main office and parents are asked to sign them in to record their arrival and provide reasons for lateness.
- If your child is persistently absent (i.e., at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence (U codes) over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays), this will lead to a referral to the local authority to assess for Statutory Action. *Please note the absences, do not have to be consecutive and national thresholds for a Fixed Penalty Notice are to be introduced by the government subject to parliamentary approval.*
- Appropriate medical evidence may be requested to authorise any medical related absence.
- Where possible, medical appointments should be made and booked before the start and after the end of the school day.
- Unexplained periods of absence will be followed up by the school office. If no evidence is provided that will allow us to authorise the period, absences will be marked as unauthorised.

## **Promoting Good Attendance**

Although we believe the main reward for a child's good attendance is being in school, therefore being able to get the best out of their education, the following incentives are available for good attendance:

- Positive messages to parents to inform parents/guardians of their good attendance
- Class attendance rewards
- Weekly attendance certificate for the classes with the highest attendance
- Class with the highest attendance is recorded in the newsletter
- Termly attendance assemblies with certificates
- End of year attendance certificates and awards for 96%+ attendance

## **Data and monitoring**

*How will we track the attendance of children?*

### **Daily Routine**

After the registers have been closed, a report is run to check on any absentees. This is then cross-referenced and confirmed with class teachers prior to sending out a 'safe and well' text. The member of staff responsible for running these reports must share concerns with a member of the Senior Leadership Team – e.g., high numbers of absences in one class, contagious infections, safeguarding concerns or absence of siblings.

Registers are updated twice daily (at the start of the school day and after lunch) with the correct codes and notes.

### **Weekly**

- A weekly attendance meeting is held where all absences are reviewed and discussed.
- N codes (no explanation provided for absences) are followed up weekly with a letter.
- If no reason for any absence is provided or we have not been able to get in contact with parents, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Attendance is shared with children in a weekly celebration assembly.
- During the weekly attendance meeting, if it is noted that any thresholds have been met (for example, if there are several late marks or a number of absences or there has been unauthorised term time leave), then referrals are made to the Local Authority for the issuing of Penalty Notices.
- Persistent absences are challenged, and support offered.

### **Half Termly**

The number of lates and absences are also monitored half termly. When attendance falls below 96%, teaching staff make a call home or meet parents to discuss any concerns and enquire about any support we can offer explaining how much learning has been lost and the impact of this. Children may be included in these discussions where appropriate.

A record of these meetings is kept and stored on the school's Management Information System (RM Integris); these are further reviewed half termly. Attendance support plans will be implemented throughout the term as appropriate and reviewed half termly which may include offering an Early Help Assessment.

### **Termly**

- If attendance is a concern, this will be raised in termly parent/teacher consultation meetings.
- Colour coded letters are sent out at the end of each term.
- Attendance certificates are awarded.
- Data is analysed including analysis of vulnerable groups which is shared with governors.
- Attendance is also monitored in each Academy through termly meetings with the Trust CEO and Vice CEO. The impact of any support put in place is determined and any further strategies identified.
- Trustees also evaluate attendance figures on a termly basis identifying any support required or offering challenge to members of the Executive Team where necessary.

### **End of year**

An annual attendance record is sent home with the end of year school report.

### ***How will we ensure that our work is effective?***

This will be through:

- Meetings with families gathering their feedback
- Reviewing the implementation of support plans
- Measure the impact of strategies to improve attendance and/or punctuality
- Monitoring individual, group, class, and whole school attendance over time including comparing these to Trust and national benchmarks.

## Escalation of procedures

How will we ensure children are safe and tackle absence together?

Attendance Percentage	Impact on Pupil	Role and Responsibility	Support and Action
 <p>96 – 100%</p> <p>0 – 8.5 days off during the academic year</p>	<p>Attendance is good to excellent.</p> <p><i>No/few lessons are being missed.</i></p> <p><i>Impact upon learning is minimal.</i></p>	<p>Class Teacher to celebrate attendance</p>	<p>Warm welcome, praise and encouragement.</p> <p>Rewards e.g., certificates.</p>
 <p>93 – 95%</p> <p>9– 14 days off during the academic year</p>	<p>Attendance levels are beginning to cause concern.</p> <p><i>Risk/high risk of underachievement.</i></p> <p><i>Child will struggle to reach their full potential.</i></p>	<p>Class Teacher to contact parent to discuss absences</p>	<p>School monitors attendance (fortnightly) including reasons for and patterns of absence.</p> <p>Letter highlighting concern and restating expectations.</p> <p>Escalation if attendance level falls.</p> <p>Rewards/recognition where attendance improves and acknowledgement to parents/carers.</p>
 <p>90 – 92%</p> <p>14.5 to 19.5 days off during the academic year</p>	<p>Attendance levels are causing <b>significant concern</b>.</p> <p><i>High/severe risk of underachievement.</i></p>	<p>Senior Leader to contact family to offer an improvement plan</p> <p>Consider legal action (risk of fine being issued)</p>	<p>Attendance monitoring weekly.</p> <p>Telephone call/meeting with parents and carers.</p> <p>Referral to Education Welfare Officer should attendance not improve.</p>
 <p>Under 89%</p> <p>20+ days off during the academic year</p>	<p>Attendance decreased to an <b>unacceptable level</b> – despite intervention and support.</p> <p><i>Extreme risk of underachievement.</i></p>	<p>Senior Leader/Trust Wellbeing Lead/EWO</p> <p>Legal action (fine)</p>	<p>Plan created including parents/carers and child (where appropriate).</p> <p>Fortnightly monitoring of plan.</p> <p>Escalate to prosecution/other formal measures e.g., Parenting contracts, Education Supervision Orders, Social Care.</p>

## Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. Improving attendance is in everyone's interests and it's everyone's business. It is our expectation that all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents have a shared responsibility to uphold the expectations set out in this policy.

### **It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:**

- Monitor overall attendance through an annual report from the Headteacher. They also receive an update each term through the Headteacher's Report to Governors.
- Approve this policy and to ensure that all requirements detailed within this are carried out wholly and consistently.
- Closely examine the information provided to them and seek to ensure that attendance figures are as high as they possibly can be.

### **It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to:**

- Ensure that attendance has a high priority and to assign a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.
- Make certain that that the academy continues to focus attention and effort on the total level of attendance and absence amongst all pupils.
- Ensure an aspirational overall attendance target is set for each academic year.
- Have high expectations with regards to attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Create a culture and environment that children want to come to and learn in.
- Communicate regularly with parents about their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Set a good personal example with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor absences to provide support and intervention to parents where needed.
- Support pupil and parents who have issues surrounding attendance.
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Service on issues surrounding attendance.
- Report termly to parents on their child's attendance and punctuality.

### **It is the responsibility of all staff to:**

- Have high expectations in their class with regards to attendance.
- Monitor class attendance, noticing and addressing any patterns of absence.
- Be proactive in securing good attendance for their class.
- Communicate with parents about their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Support pupils who have issues surrounding attendance.
- Inform the school office of any reasons they receive for a pupil being absent.
- Ensure the register is completed and saved accurately each morning and afternoon as soon as possible.
- Set a good personal example with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- Read and comply with this policy.

### **It is the responsibility of all parents to:**

- Ensure their child turns up to school every day, unless there is a legitimate reason not to, on time and with the correct equipment.
- Inform the Academy of any reason for absence on the first morning and any subsequent day.
- Speak to their child if they, for some reason, may be reluctant to come to school, encouraging them and reminding them of why good school attendance is important.
- Talk to the school if their child has any worries, so that these can be addressed.
- Not take leave of absence during term time unless it is for genuine and in absolute exceptional circumstances, as authorised by the Academy.

### **It is the responsibility of all pupils to:**

- Attend school whenever they are fit and able to do so.
- Attend school, prepared and on time.
- Complete any catch-up work following a longer period of absence.

### **Tailored support**

RM Integris is used to regularly analyse pupils' attendance and punctuality by administrative staff, class teachers and our Attendance Champion. Where attendance and punctuality are not as expected, we adopt an empathetic approach to individual circumstances and needs whilst remaining uncompromising, providing tailored support in response to the need for help.

As poor attendance contributes to significant amounts of lost learning, which impacts negatively, we have a responsibility to ensure children are attending school regularly. However, we endeavour to listen, understand, empathise, and support your child to be in school.

### **Individual plans (monitoring and impact)**

Research shows that children with good attendance throughout their school years reach their full potential and achieve highly.

If your child's attendance is a concern, you will have a meeting with the school's Attendance Champion to support you in enabling your child to be in school. The meeting will explore the reasons for absence alongside strategies to support and improve attendance. The plan will be in place for 4 weeks, monitored and then reviewed with parents for impact, where the expectation is to see a significant improvement. The expected improvement will be recorded on the plan.

Where attendance concerns relate to taking a holiday during term time, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the impact holidays have on academic attainment and progress.

### **Formalising Support**

If a threshold for referral is met, attendance details and other evidence is shared with the education core offer (Local Authority). The authority will determine whether a **Fixed Penalty Notice** is issued.

**Fixed Penalty Notice** - out-of-court settlements offered to parents who have committed the offence of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Currently, each local authority decides the thresholds at which it will issue a penalty notice. Subject to Parliamentary approval, ministers want to introduce national thresholds at which penalty notices must be considered.

**Parenting contracts** –a formal written signed agreement between parents and either the local authority or the governing body of a school and contains:

- A statement by the parents that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are set out in the contract; and
- A statement by the local authority or governing body agreeing to provide support to the parents for the purpose of complying with the contract.

Parenting contracts are voluntary, but any non-compliance will be recorded as it may be used as evidence in court where an application is made for a behaviour parenting order.

**Parenting order** - this is a Court Order which is designed to give you support and guidance. It aims to help you prevent your child from offending and/or antisocial behaviour and/or help you get them to attend school every day, and/or address issues of behaviour at school after they have been excluded. You must attend a parenting programme which may last up to three months. The programme will help you deal more effectively with your child's behaviour and provide support and guidance. The Court may add other requirements lasting for up to 12 months, for instance:

- That you make sure your child is at home during set hours, sometimes called a curfew
- That you make sure that he or she attends school regularly and on time

A residential programme could be included in the Order if it is considered to be more beneficial than a non-residential programme and to be a reasonable requirement given your family circumstances.

**Education supervision orders** – a parent is guilty of an offence if their child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly. In such a situation if the parent knows that their child is not attending, they may be prosecuted for a more serious offence. This can lead to a fine of up to £2,500 per child per parent, or a 28-day custodial sentence.

**Engaging social care** – where a family is struggling with punctuality or attendance, they may be signposted for additional support from external agencies.

**Leave of absence request** – if a family requests leave of absence during term time, this is rarely authorised. Holidays are almost never authorised and are most likely to result in a fixed penalty notice.

## Appendix

- Attendance Improvement Plan
- Attendance Monitoring Letter 95%-93%
- Holiday Evidence Request
- Holiday Response
- Improved Attendance Letter
- Invitation to attendance clinic
- Medical evidence only in exceptional circumstances
- Punctuality letter
- Referral to Local Authority Below 90% PA Letter
- Staff Prompt Sheet – Attendance Improvement Plan
- Teacher Script