



## Attendance policy

Federation	Yes
Statutory	
Staff member	Ros Morgan
Governor	
Committee	Standards
Full Governing Body	No
Last amendment date	Summer 2017
Renewal date	Summer 2019
Renewal cycle	Every 2 years

**Values:**

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated: pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit fully from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school’.

*School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013*

**Introduction:**

The Federation expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times. We are successful schools and every child plays an important part in making this so. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

**The importance of regular attendance**

Any absence affects the pattern and continuity of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any child’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child’s regular attendance at school is the parent/carers legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in a penalty fee or prosecution.

All attendance records are documented using SIMs software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

**School Absence Procedures**

- Parent/Carer to phone/e-mail the school office on the first day of a child’s absence with the reason for absence (before 10am).

Fox Primary School	020 7313 7666	Sarina.lott-lavigna@foxprimary.co.uk
Ashburnham Primary School	0207 352 5740	reception@ashprimary.co.uk

- Parent/Carer to phone/e-mail every subsequent day of absence with reason for absence (before 10am).
- Any supporting evidence for a medical absence is strongly requested (medical card, prescription, appointment letter, etc.)
- If a child is absent 3 or more days, a doctor's note will be required and this will be filed in the child's records and noted in the register.
- Parent/Carer to provide a medical note when an illness is reported directly 1 - 2 days before or after a holiday period. If a medical note is not provided, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Unauthorised absences will be reported in the end of year reports and they will be cumulative year on year.
- Any unexplained absences will require a meeting with the Head of School.
- If an absence is taken in term time for non-medical reasons or non-exceptional reasons, the school may issue a fixed penalty notice.

**The schools will:**

- Give details on general attendance in the weekly newsletter and in assemblies;
- Report how a child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate via school reports;
- Have clear policies on behaviour and bullying to encourage Parents/Carers to discuss with us any difficulties or hindrances to learning experienced by a child.
- Invite Parents /Carers in to discuss the situation with the Head of School if absences persist or cause concern;

**Types of absence:**

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason e.g. illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "permission" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the school issuing a penalty notice.

**Punctuality:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information

and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### **How we manage lateness:**

#### **Fox**

- Children should be in the school playground by 8.40am;
- Teachers will collect children from the playground at 8.50am;
- The school day starts at **8.50am** and we expect your child to be **in class at that time**.
- Registers are marked at 8.50am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not **in school by that time**.

#### **Ashburnham**

- Children can attend Breakfast Club from 8am onwards.
- Rise and Shine is a free exercise programme, for all pupils, from 8.30-8.45am
- School gates are opened at 8.45am and closed at 9am.
- Registers are completed at 9am, any children not in class at this time will be marked late.
- Any child arriving late, and thereby missing the first session of handwriting, will be able to catch up on this session during their breaktime, in order to ensure that they do not fall behind.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head of School to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

### **Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday**

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist

All applications for leave must be made in advance, using our Application for Exceptional Leave form (see appendix A). In making a decision the school will

consider the circumstances of each application, and only in exceptional circumstances will the absence be authorised.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice and the child being taken off roll.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

Regular meetings are held with the Head of School to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents.

The people responsible for attendance monitoring are:

Fox Primary School	Ms Lott-Lavigna, Admin Officer	Ms Madden, Head of School
Ashburnham Primary School	Sharon Lindsay, Admin Officer	Mr McMullen, Head of School

The schools work closely with the Early Help and ACE teams from the Local Authority to support improved punctuality and attendance. These agencies will work directly with families and advise the schools.

### **Summary:**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

**IMPORTANT:** Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.



Appendix A:

**Application for Exceptional Leave**

This form is to be completed by the parent or guardian. It should be presented at the School Office BEFORE the period is due to commence. Parents and carers are reminded that without permission may result in the issuing of fixed penalty fines by the Local Authority of up to £120 per parent per child.

Education Act 1996

*“Parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of that child in school where she/he is registered.”*

Education regulation 7

*“Parents do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term-time holiday. Schools have discretion to allow up to 10 days absence in a school year for a family holiday if they believe that the circumstances warrant it. “*

Name of child	
Class	
Name of parent	
Address	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Number of school days:	
Detailed explanation for absence request:	

I request permission for the above named child to be absent from school on the dates shown above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DECISION OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL**

The period of absence has been granted and is therefore authorised

The period of absence has not been granted and is therefore unauthorised

Current Attendance Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Head of School comments:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Head of School.  
Education Regulation 9 (1) (e)

*“If a child of compulsory school ages fails to return within ten days of the agreed date, and the failure is not due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause his/her name will be taken off the register”*