

Falconer's Hill Infant School

Attendance and Leave of Absence

Policy

The staff and governors of Falconer's Hill Infant School recognise that good attendance and punctuality is essential in order that children reach their full potential at school. We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and punctuality and providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities it is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. In order to achieve these aims the school will:

- Ensure that children are stimulated, motivated and keen to come to school.
- Remind parents it is their responsibility to ensure children who are physically well are in school on a regular basis.
- Remind parents to inform the school promptly if their child is absent for any reason.
- Monitor absence closely and involve the Attendance Officer in encouraging parents to view attendance as important.
- Inform the School Attendance Support Service (SASS) if there are extreme concerns.
- Inform parents termly concerning their child's attendance figures and report on annual attendance at the end of the school year.
- Encourage parents to ensure children arrive at school punctually and are picked up on time.

Expectations of the school

The school expects its parents/carers to:

- encourage their children to attend school every day, on time;
- ensure children are prepared adequately for the school day;
- contact the school on the first day of absence and to keep us informed daily if necessary;
- arrange holidays outside of school hours;
- arrange medical appointments outside of school hours, where possible;
- comply with the school policies and procedures.

Strategies to support good attendance and punctuality within school

- Ensure registers are accurate and recorded by the teacher at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions electronically (or by paper where necessary).
- Registration data is checked by the administrative staff.
- Telephone messages and reasons for absence are recorded on the electronic data management system.
- Any concerns about an individual child are communicated to the Headteacher.
- Where particular concerns have been highlighted the teacher will notify the office immediately of an absence.

- Where attendance is less than 90% this will be regularly monitored. Monthly attendance certificates will be sent home regularly and a meeting will be organised between the Parents/Carers and the Attendance Team to discuss issues that the family may be experiencing.
- A Parent Contract will be put in place to monitor attendance over a fixed 4-week period for attendance below 85%. Parents/Carers may be asked to provide medical evidence if persistent absence is due to ad-hoc illnesses. If attendance improves within the 4-week monitoring period then the Parent Contract can be terminated. If, however, attendance does not improve during the fixed period, then it can be extended, at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- If attendance does not improve following a Parent Contract, and/or Parents/Carers do not engage with the process, a referral may be made to the SASS for irregular term-time attendance, if it fits the criteria. A fine may be issued.
- The Attendance Officer/Family Support Worker will be asked to intervene and support families where persistent attendance is a concern.

Recording Attendance (Safeguarding procedures)

- On the first day of absence: a telephone call to the parents must be made, including if necessary, an SMS or a letter via email.
- Day two: a follow-up telephone call must be made to the parents, including an SMS and email.
- Day three: a telephone call must be made asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. The parents/carers will be given **2** further working days to make contact. If you are aware that English may not be the parents' first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.
- **If the child is still absent from school after 5 days:** Attendance Officer and Parent Support Worker to arrange an unannounced home visit ensuring that risk assessments are in place.
- If the child has not been seen and the parents/carers have not made contact either, school must contact SASS via the on-line form to alert them to the possibility that there is a child missing from education.
- SASS will arrange a home visit to assess the situation and will be in contact with the school for further steps to be taken.

Lateness/Punctuality

- Parents will be reminded about school times and the importance of good punctuality.
- Parents will be asked to sign their child in using the electronic signing-in system in the foyer giving the reason for lateness.
- If there are more than five occasions of lateness a letter will be sent to parents reminding them of their responsibility to ensure children arrive on time.
- If lateness persists following a further five late occasions an appointment will be made to see the Attendance Team. A Parenting Contract may be put in place and possible referral to the SASS.
- At the end of the day children who have not been collected after ten minutes will be brought to the school office. Names will be recorded and they will then be asked to wait in the library.
- If there is no contact from a parent by 3:30pm a call will be made to ascertain the reason why a child has not been picked up.
- If a child is consistently late being collected then a record will be kept and the parent asked to see the Attendance Team to discuss the reasons for this.

Illness

- If your child is ill you should let the school know as soon as possible. You can report absence on the school's telephone number, by the Seesaw app or in person. Please let us know when your child is likely to return to school and **ring every day of your child's absence** unless you advise us initially of the length of time they will be absent for.
- The school is guided by Public Health guidelines so there may be occasions when your child must stay away from school in line with these guidelines. If your child is sick or has diarrhoea, they must not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea. This is to ensure the infection does not spread to other children. If your child is sick or has diarrhoea at school we will ring you and ask you to come and collect your child.
- If we feel that your child is not well enough to come to school we reserve the right to ask you to come and collect your child.

Leave of Absence

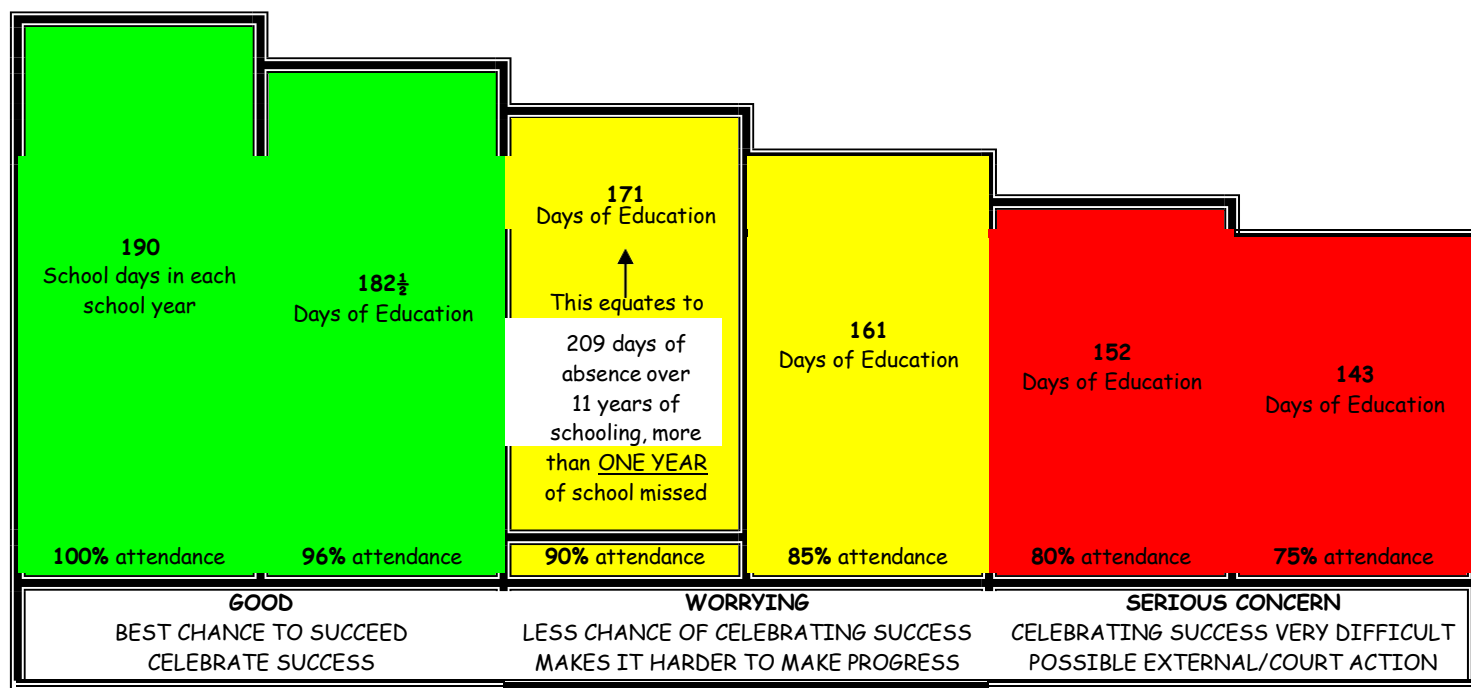
Young children in particular often suffer from early childhood illnesses (e.g. chickenpox) and to offset absence caused by these unavoidable times off school it is important that all unnecessary absences are avoided.

Schools **cannot** authorise leave of absence for holidays just because they are cheaper in term time. We urge parents to consider very seriously whether any time off school is absolutely necessary.

If parents wish to apply for a leave of absence they should follow this procedure:

- Read the school's attendance and leave of absence policy thoroughly.
- Note the school's procedure in relation to authorising absence.
- If there are exceptional or compassionate reasons for applying for a leave of absence then they should complete a leave of absence form & make an appointment to see the Headteacher or Parent Link Worker, Mrs Birch.
- It is at the Headteacher's discretion whether a leave of absence is authorised or not. Only where there are strong compassionate reasons or extenuating circumstances is any leave of absence likely to be authorised.
- No leave of absence will be authorised unless an appointment has taken place with the Headteacher or Mrs Birch.

There are 175 non-school days each year to use for family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments



FALCONER'S HILL INFANT SCHOOL

Leave of Absence Request Form

Schools have a responsibility to ensure children's attendance is as high as possible. All Daventry schools have reviewed their attendance policies so there is common practice.

From 1st September 2013 the new law gives **NO** entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time and this could lead to a fixed penalty notice. **As of 22nd April 2016 a child absent for 5 consecutive days unauthorised may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice.** There is a requirement that schools notify the School Attendance Support Service (SASS) of all unauthorised absences that meet the criteria for Fixed Penalty Notices. The initial Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 is issued to each parent for each child (two parent family, two children = £240) if paid within 21 days. Non-payment will mean that the Penalty Notice will rise to £120 after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt. If the penalty has not been paid within 28 days of issue the Local authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents/carers will receive a Criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

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By submitting this request, you confirm you provide consent for referral, sharing both parents'/carers' contact details and the involvement of Learning, Skills and Education team with the family where it is deemed appropriate. Please be aware that the referral details will be stored on a secure database for use by Learning, Skills and Education staff and the staff can discuss your child's progress with other professionals, including those from other organisations, settings and health colleagues. Privacy notice for West Northamptonshire Council can be found at [Corporate privacy notice | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

Leave of Absence Request Form

You will receive notice of whether the leave of absence has been authorised no more than one month before the dates identified.

Child's Name: Class:

I request permission for my child to be allowed a leave of absence from school as follows:

Date: From to

Reason:
.....
.....

Parent's Signature: Date:.....

PLEASE HAND THIS FORM IN AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE AND ASK FOR AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE THE HEADTEACHER OR MRS BIRCH

Authorised / Unauthorised

For Headteacher to complete:

This Leave of Absence has been: Authorised / Unauthorised

In the case of unauthorised absence please note the school policy above.

Headteacher's signature:

Slip to be returned to parent.

Attendance % ytd

Child's Name:

.....

.....

From.....

To.....