



Farsley Farfield Primary School Attendance Policy October 2025

(Based on Statutory Guidance: August 2024)

Policy Status: Statutory

Date Approved: October 2025

Review Date: Every three years, or in line with DfE guidance changes.

Statutory Basis: Education Act 1996, School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, and DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (statutory from 19 August 2024)

1. Vision and Principles: Attendance is Everybody's Business

At Farsley Farfield, we believe that regular school attendance and punctuality are very important factors in a child's educational success, well-being, and readiness for future life. We are committed to working collaboratively with all pupils, parents/carers, staff, and the Local Authority (LA) using a '**Support First**' approach to identify and remove barriers to attendance.

1.1 Our Attendance Ethos

Our culture is built on promoting the benefits of high attendance, ensuring school is a calm, orderly, friendly, enjoyable and supportive environment where every pupil is keen to attend and ready to learn. We recognise that the barriers to attendance can be complex and often require holistic, whole-family support.

1.2 Attendance Targets

- **School Target:** We expect and aim for every child to achieve 100% attendance and will have concerns when attendance is less than 95%.
- **Statutory Threshold:** A pupil becomes a **Persistent Absentee (PA)** when their attendance falls to **90% or below**. This equates to missing 19 days (38 sessions) of learning per year. Attendance below 90% is considered a serious cause for concern.



2. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibility
Parents/Carers	Ensure their child attends every day the school is open, unless a statutory reason applies. Notify the school of an unexpected absence as soon as possible on the first day through attendance@farsleyfarfield.org.uk . Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
Senior Attendance Champion (SAC)	Peter Harris Headteacher The senior leader with overall strategic responsibility for attendance improvement and championing the school's attendance culture.
All School Staff	Maintain a positive school culture, promote attendance, model respectful relationships, and flag attendance concerns early to the pastoral team.
Headteacher	Overall accountability for attendance performance and ensuring statutory duties (registration, data sharing, leave of absence decisions) are fulfilled.
Governing Body/Trust	Ensure the school meets its statutory attendance duties, regularly review attendance data, and challenge leaders on performance.



3. Daily Procedures and Registration

3.1 Punctuality

The school day timings are:

Y3-Y6 8.40am - 3.20pm

Rec-Year 2 8.45am - 3.15pm (option to stay until 3.30pm in nursery)

The attendance register is legally required to be taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

- **Lateness (Code L):** Pupils arriving after **8.50 (juniors)/8.55(infants)** but before the register closes at **9.10/9.15** will be marked as late (Code L). This is recorded as an attendance, but repeated lateness may be challenged.
- **Unauthorised Absence (Code U):** Pupils arriving **after** the register closure time will be marked with Code U (Unauthorised Absence) for the session, unless the Headteacher grants a rare exception.

Doors will remain open and staffed for the first 5 mins of each day, closing promptly at 8:50am in the Infant building for Reception and KS1 and 08:45am for KS2 in the Junior building. Where families have children who attend both buildings, it is important that KS2 children are dropped off first to minimise unnecessary late arrivals.

Older children may be required to stay in at break time to catch up on missed work due to poor punctuality.

3.2 Notification of Absence

If a child is absent unexpectedly (e.g., due to illness), the parent/carer must:

1. Email attendance@farsleyfarfield.org.uk or call the office on 0113 2058130
2. Provide the child's name, class, and a specific reason for the absence.

If the school does not receive a notification of absence, we will:

1. Call the primary contact.
2. If contact cannot be made, the school will systematically contact other listed contacts.
3. If no contact is made, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Code O) and may trigger a home visit or, in line with safeguarding procedures, a referral to the Local Authority if the child's whereabouts are unknown (Children Missing Education procedures).



4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

4.1 Authorised Absence (A)

An absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher (or designated staff) if it falls under a statutory category, which includes:

Category	DfE Code	Notes
Illness	I	Absence due to genuine physical or mental ill health. The school must authorise if the child is too ill to attend.
Medical/Dental Appointments	M	Where appointments cannot reasonably be booked outside of school hours. Evidence (appointment card, text) may be requested. It is expected that the child would attend before/after the appointment, when it is practical to do so.
Religious Observance	R	Days exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs e.g. Eid
Exceptional Circumstances	C	Reserved for specific, exceptional situations (e.g., family bereavement). Must be agreed by the Headteacher.



Medical Evidence Clarification (DfE 2024):

For short periods of illness, a parent's notification is usually sufficient. Schools should only request medical evidence (e.g., a copy of a prescription, appointment card, or hospital letter) where there is a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. A lack of written medical evidence must not prevent the absence from being authorised if the parent can otherwise demonstrate the child was, or is, unable to attend.

At FFPS, we will regard persistent absence and well-above-average reports of illness for an ostensibly healthy child as reasonable grounds for scepticism of reports of illness.

Pupils with Complex Health Needs or SEND:

For pupils with long-term or complex physical or mental health conditions, the school will work jointly with parents, health professionals, and the LA to ensure appropriate support is in place (e.g., EHC plan provision, part-time timetable—Code C2) to maximise attendance.

4.2 Leave of Absence (Holidays)

The Headteacher **will not grant** any leave of absence during term time unless an application has been made in advance by the parent and the Headteacher considers there are **exceptional circumstances**.

- **Term-Time Holidays:** Holidays are **not** considered an exceptional circumstance and will be recorded as **Unauthorised Absence (Code G)**.
- **Penalty Notices:** Taking a child out of school for a holiday during term time will prompt consideration of a Penalty Notice (see Section 6).

The Headteacher **may** grant authorised absence for organised sporting or cultural events or competitions, usually a distance from the school, during the school day where there are no other attendance concerns.



5. Persistent Absence (PA) Strategy and Intervention

We operate a four-stage process to support families, prioritising support over sanctions.

Stage	Threshold	Intervention (Support First)
Stage 1 (Monitoring and PA Risk)	Attendance falls below 95% by the end of term 1	School contacts the family to offer encouragement and reiterate expectations; and to explore and understand barriers (e.g., anxiety, friendship issues). Support from the pastoral team is offered.
Stage 2 (Persistent Absence)	Attendance falls below 90% by the end of term 1	Formal Attendance Meeting Meeting with parents and carers to explore and understand barriers (e.g., health, anxiety, friendship issues, holidays in term time). Set targets for improvement and a monitoring schedule. Any further absences will not be authorised without medical evidence, such as an appointment card, text or email confirmation or named and dated medication.
Stage 3 (Longer-term Persistent Absence)	Attendance remains below 90%	Further Formal Attendance Meeting More formal, targeted support. Consideration of an Early Help plan. Consideration of an Attendance Contract (DfE 2024).
Stage 4 (Legal Action)	Attendance remains below 90% and support has not been engaged with, is ineffective or is not appropriate (e.g., term-time holiday).	The school, in partnership with the LA, will consider legal intervention (e.g., Notice to Improve, Penalty Notice, or prosecution).



6. Legal Intervention and Sanctions

Legal interventions are considered only when support efforts have been exhausted, are not appropriate, or have been unsuccessful.

6.1 Penalty Notices (National Framework, DfE 2024)

Under the National Framework, a Penalty Notice (PN) **must be considered** when a pupil has missed:

- **10 or more sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.**

This includes unauthorised term-time holidays. The fines are set nationally:

Payment Period	Fine Amount (Per Parent, Per Child)
Paid within 21 days	£80
Paid within 28 days	£160

The maximum a parent can receive is two penalty notices for the same child within any three-year period. After the second PN, the LA will consider other legal action, such as prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

6.2 Attendance Contracts (DfE 2024)

Attendance Contracts (formerly Parenting Contracts) may be used to formalise the agreement between the parent, school, and/or LA. It includes a statement from the parent agreeing to comply with specified requirements and a statement from the LA/school agreeing to provide support.



7. Data Sharing and Children Missing Education

7.1 Mandatory Data Sharing

In line with the Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, the school is required to share its attendance register data daily with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Local Authority. This is mandatory and used to spot and support children at risk of persistent or severe absence.

7.2 Children Missing Education (CME)

Where a pupil fails to attend school and the school has been unable to confirm the child's whereabouts after following its absence procedures, the school will follow CME procedures by the **10th day of absence** and inform the Local Authority.