



Attendance Policy

Date written / reviewed	October 2019
Date of next review	October 2021
Headteacher	<i>R Swaby</i>
Chair of Governors	<i>J Goodwin</i>

Rationale

Friezland Primary School believes that regular attendance is vital for all our pupils if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. There are clear documented links between regular attendance and positive attainment. Punctuality is also very important to ensure pupils get the most out of school. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late for school.

All young people have a right to an education. A child is of statutory school age between 5 and 16. Parents / Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually. If a child does not, Parents / Carers may be breaking the law.

At Friezland Primary School we aim for every child to have attendance of 100% and expect 97% or above. We recognise excellent attendance with termly attendance certificates and rewards.

Roles & Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** in collaboration with the **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**, takes responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures. They are the key people who motivate and lead the staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

- Leading public celebrations of good attendance by awarding certificates for whole class attendance and book prizes for the class half-termly draw, awarding certificates for termly 100% attendance and badges for 100% attendance in a school year.
- Providing attendance reports to the Governing Board of the school.
- Being available for parents who may wish to discuss specific problems or in-school difficulties which their child is experiencing.
- Providing information to governors, parents, the LA attendance officer and the DfE regarding the monitoring and evaluation of the school's attendance policy and the associated in-school practices.
- Monitoring weekly attendance levels, half termly pupil percentages and making contact with families whose children are at risk of falling below 90% attendance.
- Communicating with and reporting to the Local Authority on attendance matters and seeking relevant advice.

The **Governing Board** of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance at the school by supporting and encouraging pupils and teachers in their work. They achieve this by:

- Leading and taking part in public celebrations of good attendance.
- Supporting staff in the development of a whole school approach to promoting good attendance.
- Supporting staff in setting up appropriate attendance targets for the whole school.
- Working with the Headteacher to monitor and evaluate attendance trends in the school.
- Delegating authority (if necessary) to the Headteacher to decide whether or not an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Class teachers are ideally placed because of their regular daily contact with pupils to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence or lateness are reasonable, or if the child is at an early stage in developing a pattern of absence. At Friezland, we recognise that building good relationships with pupils is vital in promoting good attendance.

Class Teachers will:

- Publicly praise and celebrate regular attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure children with weekly 100% attendance and no 'Late' marks have a ticket put in the attendance tin for the half-termly attendance draw.
- Identify pupils who are beginning to develop, or have developed, a pattern of absence.
- Welcome pupils back after they have been absent due to illness.
- Where necessary, take specific steps to assist pupils and their families who are returning to school when they have been absent due to illness.
- Consistently check parents' explanations for their child's absence.
- Be a positive, active role model.
- Refer any concerns to the Headteacher.

We believe that all **pupils** should attend school regularly if we are to encourage them to reach their full potential. We encourage pupils to appreciate the importance of attending school regularly and on time, and to have a positive working attitude.

Pupils should:

- Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine reasons.
- If he/she arrives late, they must report to the school office to say that they have arrived in school and request they are marked in. An adult should accompany a child who is late.
- Not leave the school premises during the school day without permission and only when accompanied by an adult.

The school bell rings at **8:45am** when the children line up on the playground and are met by a member of staff. Children should be ready, in their classrooms, with the appropriate equipment by 8:50am when the register is taken. Any pupil arriving after **9:00am** without an authorised reason, is marked as late (**L**). The register closes at **9:30am**. After this time, the mark given will indicate that the pupil arrived after registration closed and unless a valid reason is given, will be given an unauthorised absence (**U**).

The school operates an effective 'Keeping in Touch' procedure to monitor pupils' absence and class teachers regularly check the attendance of their class, and will follow up a pupil's absence with appropriate personnel in school or with the child's parents. Parents are expected to assist us in our work of raising and maintaining attendance levels throughout the school by:

- Ensuring the regular attendance of their child.
- Ensuring their child is punctual and arrives at school on time each day.
- Letting school know daily as soon as possible and, at the latest, by 9:00am if their child is will be absent from school and the reason for the absence e.g. illness. For frequent and longer-term absences, a request may be made by the school for parents to produce a doctor's note.
- Attending any meetings about their child's attendance, which may be necessary.
- Reading and agreeing to the statements in the 'Home-School' agreement.

The issues of confidentiality and child protection underpin any issues regarding attendance. The school has a clear and explicit confidentiality policy that ensures good practice throughout the school which both

pupils and parents should understand. It must be understood that teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality regarding attendance issues.

The Role of the School Administrator

The school administrator provides a great deal of valuable support for teaching staff in promoting attendance by:

- Operating the 'Keeping in touch' system and recording information received from parents at the school office especially: the reason for absence, identifying whether the absence is authorised or not and ensuring the correct code has been entered in the register.
- Liaising with class teachers about the foreseen and unforeseen absence of pupils.
- Making routine phone calls to parents about their child's absences if no reasons are known. If school is unable to make contact, the police may be contacted to establish the whereabouts of the child in-line with our Child Protection Policy.
- Providing the headteacher with attendance statistics and other reports upon request, through the use of the School Information Management Systems (SIMS).
- Preparing any attendance data required by the Headteacher.

Strategies for Maintaining Good Attendance and Punctuality

The school actively promotes good attendance and punctuality through:

- Involving pupils in the formation of this and other school policies and documents, including the Positive Behaviour (Anti-Bullying) Policy, School Expectations and the Home-School Agreement contract.
- Regular attendance is celebrated in assemblies, and those pupils who have been identified as having 100% attendance, receive certificates in the form of:

<i>Bronze Award</i>	100% attendance in <i>any</i> one term.
<i>Silver Award</i>	100% attendance in <i>any</i> two terms.
<i>Gold Award</i>	100% attendance in <i>all</i> three terms.

- Each child who attains 100% attendance through the academic year is awarded a 100% keyring / badge.

As a school, we acknowledge that 100% attendance can sometimes be difficult and that we all, at times, are unwell and not fit for learning. Therefore, we offer a range of other incentives to support strong attendance:

- Each child who achieves **100% attendance** and arrives at school **on time**, in any given week, is awarded a raffle ticket. This is placed in the class attendance tin and is repeated each week. At the end of each half term, the head teacher draws a winner from each class. The child is awarded a certificate and book.
- The head teacher informs parents of our attendance target and how close we are to this through the school newsletters.
- Pupils current attendance is recorded on interim and end of year reports.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Illness

The school acknowledges that children may have unavoidable absences due to illness. It is important that children are not sent to school when they are unwell, especially in the event of a stomach upset when we request that children are kept off for at least 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Religious Observance

Requests for absence for religious observance should be made in writing to the Headteacher via the 'absence during term-time' application form. These will only be granted where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents belong.

Inclement Weather

We understand that there are times that it may be difficult for students to attend school due to inclement weather. Despite this, we will always endeavour to keep the school open for the pupils that can attend.

Medical appointments

Medical and dental appointments should, wherever possible, be avoided during the school day in order to minimise disruption to the learning of the child and that of others pupils. Medical absence will usually be authorised although proof of the appointment may be requested by the school.

Term-time absences

If parents should wish to apply for a term-time absence then they will be required to complete a request form in advance, giving as much notice as possible.

It is very unlikely that a holiday will be granted in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances (examples may include **but are not limited to**: parents work in HM Forces or other sectors where annual leave is limited; the family has suffered a bereavement or has a member of family with a terminal illness).

The Headteacher will take into account the following factors when making his / her decision:

- The nature of the absence and how it contributes to the pupil's personal development.
- The pupil's attendance record including the amount of authorised / unauthorised absences already recorded.
- The pupil's current academic progress.
- The potential impact that the absence may have on academic progress.
- The potential impact that the absence could have on student wellbeing/welfare.
- The proximity of SATs and other such statutory assessments.
- The length of time requested.
- The frequency of such requests from the family.
- Any special mitigating circumstances.

Following a request for a leave of absence during term-time, school will respond in writing, stating the reasons for the decision made.

When an absence is authorised, if a child fails to return to school by the agreed return date, without good reason, subsequent days will be unauthorised and if no contact is made, the child's name may be removed from the school roll, with no guarantee of re-admission.

Only in **exceptional circumstances** will a pupil be granted leave of absence **exceeding 5 school days / 10 sessions** (1 day = 2 sessions). Such circumstances may include the following:

- Loss of passport
- Serious illness / accident to child or accompanying family member
- Death of a family member
- Missed or delayed flights
- War/civil unrest
- Severe weather conditions.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Unauthorised absences of 5 days (10 sessions) or more within each school year (whether continuous or sporadic) may result in the LA issuing a fixed-term penalty.

Example fixed penalty	If paid within 28 days	If paid between 28-42 days	42+ days
1 parent, 1 child	£60.00	£120.00	<i>Liable for prosecution</i>
1 parent, 2 children	£120.00	£240.00	
2 parents, 1 child	£120.00	£240.00	
2 parents, 2 children	£240.00	£480.00	

Unauthorised absences include:

- Unauthorised term-time absences (e.g. holiday)
- No reason provided for absence
- Unsatisfactory reason for absence provided
- Arriving after registration has closed with no reason provided (9:30am)

Closure of School at Short Notice:

In the event of inclement weather the Headteacher (or SLT) will liaise with the Caretaker, assess the situation on site, check with the Met Office website and make a decision as to whether the school is to close. The decision will be communicated to staff, pupils and their families via Eduspot texts / e-mails and will be posted on the school website.

Our aim will be to make a decision as early as possible and at least one hour prior to the scheduled opening time. Decisions will often take place on the day of closure to enable a decision that will result in students missing learning to be as informed as possible.

Our 'Snow / Extreme Weather' Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy and can be found on our school website.

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are categorised as unauthorised. Oldham LA considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that Penalty Notices may be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absence occurs. It may well be one of the actions considered if a pupil does not return to school on the date specified in the request form.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Attendance Policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if legislation changes. The Governing Board Resource and Environment Committee, will discuss matters relating to attendance at their termly meeting. The LA Attendance Officer will meet with the Headteacher termly, to discuss current issues, data and legislation.

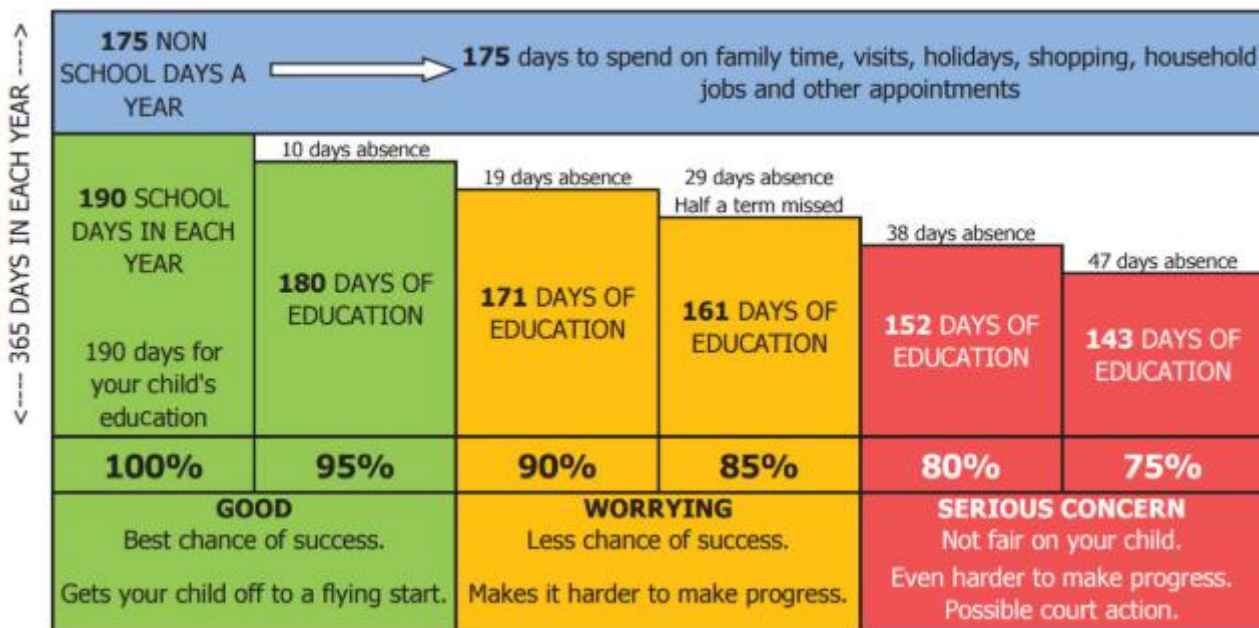
Appendices:

Every day and minute counts:

If you are late every day by 5 minutes, it adds up to over 3 days learning lost every year.

<i>Minutes Late</i>	<i>Days of Learning Lost</i>
5 Minutes	3.4 Days (98.4% Attendance)
10 Minutes	6.9 Days (97.6% Attendance)
15 Minutes	10.3 Days / 2 Weeks (94.7% Attendance)
20 Minutes	13.8 Days (92.9% Attendance)
30 Minutes	20.7 Days / 4 weeks (89.2% Attendance)

Be aware of how much learning time is lost with increasing numbers of days absent:





Application For School Absence During Term Time

Pupils attend school for **190** days each academic year. Friezland Primary School believes that regular attendance is vital for all pupils if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. At Friezland Primary School we expect every child to have attendance of **97%** or above.

All young people have a right to an education. A child is of statutory school age between 5 and 16. Parents / carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually. If a child does not, parents / carers may be breaking the law.

The individual circumstances regarding the authorisation of an absence taken during term time will be considered by the Headteacher and on occasion, the Governing Board. Holiday absence requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and will usually be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absences that accumulate to 10 sessions / 5 days within an academic year will lead to a penalty charge being issued by the LA at a rate of £60 per parent, per child.

Example fixed penalty	If paid within 28 days	If paid between 28-42 days	42+ days
1 parent, 1 child	£60.00	£120.00	<i>Liable for prosecution</i>
1 parent, 2 children	£120.00	£240.00	
2 parents, 1 child	£120.00	£240.00	
2 parents, 2 children	£240.00	£480.00	

If you wish to make an application for absence from school during term time, please complete the details below and return the form to school at least **four weeks** before the intended absence unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. bereavement. You will receive written notification regarding the outcome of your request within 10 working days of receipt.

Childs full name:	
Date of Birth:	Year group:
Name of Parent / Carer 1:	Name of Parent / Carer 2:
Full address:	Emergency contact number:
Reason for absence request:	
Date of first day of absence:	Date due back in school:
Number of absent school days:	
Signed:	Print name:
Date:	



Application For School Absence During Term Time

SCHOOL SECTION

Date request received by school	
Pupil(s) who will be absent	
Total number of absent school days	
Reason for absence	
Authorised absence	State why (e.g. exceptional circumstances: bereavement, serious illness etc.)
Unauthorised absence	State why (e.g. not exceptional)
Number of any previous absences this current academic year (authorised & unauthorised)	
Any further details requested e.g. medical note / travel itinerary	
Signed Headteacher Date	
Signed Office Administrator Date	
Date written notification sent to parent / carer	