# Attendance Policy

**This policy applies to:**
**Francis Holland Regent's Park    Francis Holland Sloane Square    Francis Holland Prep**
Where there are differences between the schools these have been clearly highlighted.

| | |
|---|---|
| Policy owner | RP: Deputy Head Pastoral<br>SSq: Senior Deputy Head Pastoral<br>Prep: Senior Deputy Head and DSL |
| Type of policy | Regulatory  - N/A<br>Legislation – The Education Act 1996; The Education Act 2002; The Education & Inspections Act 2006; The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006; Legislation as amended.<br>Demonstrate that a framework is in place to monitor attendance of pupils. |
| Last reviewed / approved by / date | Safeguarding sub-committee – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024 |
| Next school review due | Autumn 2025 |
| Next council review due | Safeguarding Sub Committee: Autumn 2025 |
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| Circulation | ☐ Trust Website<br>✓ Schools' Websites<br>✓ Schools' Sharepoints<br>☐ FHS People<br><br>All policies are available from the Trust Office, Francis Holland Schools Trust, 35 Bourne Street, London, SW1W 8JA |
| Linked Policies | Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy<br>Behaviour & Sanctions Policy |

| Revision History | |
|---|---|
| This section should be completed by the reviewer each time this policy is reviewed | |

| Changes made [Brief description of edits] | Date |
|---|---|
| Complete review and revamp of policy | Autumn 2022 |
| Updates to the policy in line with new DfE statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance. | August 2024 |

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## 1. AIMS

Francis Holland Schools (FHS) are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance including those laid out in the Department of Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils;
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

The Schools will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.. The guidance is based on the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council is expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure the Heads and school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review (at least termly) attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the Heads to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 THE HEADS

The Head of each school are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

### 3.3 THE DESIGNATED SENIOR LEADER (DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL) IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Oversees, in conjunction with the pastoral team, calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with education welfare officers/external agencies to tackle persistent absence

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance (the Attendance Champion) is Deputy Head Pastoral at Regent's Park, Senior Deputy Head at Sloane Square and Senior Deputy Head & DSL at the Prep School and can all be contacted via email as follows: colette.mahieu@fhs-nw1.org.uk , sarah.pittaway@fhs-sw1.org.uk and caroline.smith@francishollandprep.org.uk .

### 3.4 REPORTING AND MONITORING ABSENCE

The School Office takes calls about absence and monitors absence emails from parents on a day-to-day basis, recording it on the school system. They will also transfer calls from parents to the Head of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

The school attendance champion has oversight of:
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.

Each school has an email address to which absences are reported:
- Regent's Park Senior School: absence@fhs-nw1.org.uk
- Sloane Square Senior School: office@fhs-sw1.org.uk
- Prep School: office@francishollandprep.org.uk

### 3.5 FORM TUTORS

Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance daily, electronically, using the correct codes (see appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office.

### 3.6 PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians are expected to:
- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:00 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

### 3.7 PUPILS

Pupils are expected to:
- Attend school every day on time (minimum 92% attendance)
- Attend every timetabled session on time.

### 4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

### 4.1 ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The Schools will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

The School will take an attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the attendance codes.

The School will also record:
- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The School will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## 4.2 REGISTRATION TIMES

- **SLOANE SQUARE**

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:20 and will be kept open until 08:55.

The register for the second session will be taken at 14:10 and will be kept open until 14:40.

- **REGENT'S PARK**

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:25 and will be kept open until 08:35.

The register for the second session will be taken at 13:25 and will be kept open until 13:55.

- **PREP SCHOOL**

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:15 and will be kept open until 09:00.

The register for the second session will be taken at 12:45 and will be kept open until 13:45.

## 4.3 UNPLANNED ABSENCE

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:00 or as soon as practically possible.

The School will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 consecutive school days or if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/guardian to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The School will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the School is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

The school need to provide Local Authorities with the name and address of pupils who miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days due to illness who may need additional support from the local authority to continue their education, as set out in the recently updated statutory guidance for local authorities Education for Children with health needs who cannot attend school.

## 4.4 PLANNED ABSENCE

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the School in advance of the appointment. However, The Schools encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to Section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.5 LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

A pupil who arrives late:
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Pupils who are persistently late are reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral at Regent's Park, Senior Deputy Head Pastoral at Sloane Square and Senior Deputy Head & DSL at The Prep School who will ask the appropriate member of staff to follow up.

## 4.6 FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

Where any child the School expects to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:
- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, which is done via the main school office. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a home visit or call the police for a welfare check
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

**4.7 REPORTING TO PARENTS/CARERS**
The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via regular written reports.

## 5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

**5.1 APPROVAL FOR TERM-TIME ABSENCE**
The Heads will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head's discretion and any requests for these must be made in writing.
The Schools consider each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
Valid reasons for authorised absence include:
- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Study leave for public examinations (usually for pupils in Years 11 and 13, but occasionally to pupils in other year groups as authorised by the Deputy Head)
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

## 6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE
Good attendance and punctuality (as well as significant improvements) are regularly celebrated by Form Tutors and Heads of Year. Clear communications to parents setting out the expectations for attendance.

## 7. SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO ARE ABSENT OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

**7.1 PUPILS ABSENT DUE TO COMPLEX BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE**

The schools will:

- Work with families/external agencies to alleviate barriers and/or create bespoke timetables for re-entry to school after prolonged absence

**7.2 PUPILS ABSENT DUE TO MENTAL OR PHYSICAL ILL HEALTH or SEND**

The schools will:

- Work with families/external agencies to alleviate barriers and/or create bespoke timetables for re-entry to school after prolonged absence
- Where a pupil has an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

**7.3 PUPILS RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER A LENGTHY OR UNAVOIDABLE PERIOD OF ABSENCE**

The schools will:

- Work closely with families/external agencies to ensure a smooth transition back to school. Strategies that may be employed, but not limited to, are: modified timetable, peer support, staff mentor.

## 8. ATTENDANCE

**8.1 MONITORING**

The Schools will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

**Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern**

## 8.2 ANALYSING ATTENDANCE

The Schools will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

## 8.3 USING DATA TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

The Schools will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Heads of Year to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

## 8.4 REDUCING PERSISTANT AND SEVERE ABSENCE

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

## 9  MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the Senior Leadership Teams. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Safeguarding Sub Committee on behalf of the full governing body.

# Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|---|---|---|
| / | Present (am) | Pupil is present at morning registration |
| \ | Present (pm) | Pupil is present at afternoon registration |
| L | Late arrival | Pupil arrives late before register has closed |
| **Attending a place other than the school** | | |
| K | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority |
| V | Attending an educational visit or trip | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school |
| P | Participating in a sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| W | Attending work experience | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement |
| B | Attending any other approved educational activity | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience |
| D | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| **Absent – leave of absence** | | |
| C1 | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| J1 | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| S | Study leave | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination |
| X | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| C2 | Part-time timetable | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable |
| C | Exceptional circumstances | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| **Absent – other authorised reasons** | | |

| T | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes |
|---|---|---|
| R | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health) |
| E | Suspended or excluded | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made |

**Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause**

| Q | Lack of access arrangements | Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school |
|---|---|---|
| Y1 | Transport not available | Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available |
| Y2 | Widespread disruption to travel | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency |
| Y3 | Part of school premises closed | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open |
| Y4 | Whole school site unexpectedly closed | Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather) |
| Y5 | Criminal justice detention | Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <br> · In police detention <br> · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or <br> · Detained under a sentence of detention |
| Y6 | Public health guidance or law | Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law |
| Y7 | Any other unavoidable cause | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes |

**Absent – unauthorised absence**

| G | Holiday not granted by the school | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school |
|---|---|---|
| N | Reason for absence not yet established | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes |
| O | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using 1 of the codes for authorised absence |
| U | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session |

**Administrative codes**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Z** | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered |
| **#** | Planned whole-school closure | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays |