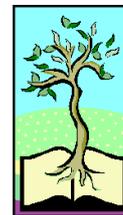


Attendance Policy

In conjunction with Irlam & Cadishead Cluster Schools

Fiddlers Lane
Community Primary School



Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School
Irlam Primary School
Irlam Endowed Primary School
Cadishead Primary School
St Mary's Primary School
Moorfield Community Primary School

Signed by the Chair of Governors	
Name: Jayne Tighe	
Signature:	Date: 25 th November 2019
Review date: December 2022	

MAKE EVERY DAY COUNT!

HERE ON TIME AND READY TO LEARN!

Mission statement

Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School believes that the regular education of all children, irrespective of age, gender, race or ability is crucial to each and every pupil. Regular and prompt attendance allows every child access to the education to which they are entitled by law.

Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School will endeavour to work alongside parents, the local community and the Local Authority.

Aims and objectives

Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School aims to improve attendance figures to 96% and to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality by promoting the following strategies:

- Demonstrate a strong attendance ethos.
- To have a clear policy on absence.
- To have effective systems for monitoring attendance.
- Use attendance data to improve school and pupil performance.
- Early intervention when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern.
- To reward and celebrate good and improved attendance and punctuality.
- Inform parents of their legal requirements regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Provide clear guidelines for staff on the registration process and the accurate use of register codes.
- Ensure that clear information is regularly communicated to parents/carers in a variety of ways.
- Raise awareness of attendance and punctuality at parent's evenings and new intake meetings.

Procedures and intervention techniques

We demonstrate a strong evidence ethos by having:

- A whole school approach, which reinforces good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and achieve.
- An attendance policy which is easily understood by all and regularly updated and shared with all stakeholders.
- Appropriate attendance targets.
- The Inclusion Manager monitors attendance weekly.
- The Inclusion Manager will carry out unannounced home visits to any pupil whose absence is a concern/unexplained.
- Panel meetings for persistent absentees/pupils with low attendance will be held by the Inclusion Manager which may involve other support services where necessary.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

We expect the parent/carer to make contact with school before 9.30am on each day to report that their child will be absent from school. The school has a first day response system in place in which the following happens:

- Day one: Text message is sent to 1st contact for an absent child, if no response then a phone call will be made.
- If no satisfactory explanation is received the absence counts as unauthorised.
- Registration is the responsibility of the class teacher or teaching assistant and is done twice a day, at 9am and 1.25pm for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and 9.10am and 12.45pm for the Foundation Stage.

Following Salford City Council guidelines the Attendance Coordinator can issue the request of a penalty notice to parents in the following circumstances:

- For unauthorised holidays in term time. (5 days/10 sessions or more absence.)
- When a child has 10 unauthorised sessions, including unauthorised sessions recorded as a U code in the register, due to arriving late for school (after 9.30am) 1 day=2 sessions.

Holidays in term time

The school actively discourages parents going on holiday in term time.

Parents are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly and is consistently punctual.

The Government legislation does not give ANY entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. Even if a child has good attendance, this will not be taken into consideration. Any absences will be marked as unauthorised unless they are deemed exceptional circumstances. (See attached appendix 1)

Requests for holidays in term time must be sent by letter or email to the Head Teacher or Inclusion Manager. On receipt of the request, parents will be sent a response, indicating whether the school is able to authorise the leave of absence or not. If parents, contrary to the school refusing the request, still decide to take their child out of school for a leave of absence, then the absence will be coded as unauthorised and a fixed penalty fine will be issued.

Requests for absences will not be authorised:

- **In September for any pupil.**
- **Between January - May for year 6 pupils, regardless of circumstances.**
- **For three days before, or three days after a school term/half term holiday.**

Under the new legislation from DFE, holidays during term time are not permitted except in exceptional circumstances and under the discretion of the Headteacher. Unauthorised holidays taken during term time may result in a £60 fine per pupil per parent. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, the fine will increase to £120. **If a child's absence has been recorded as sickness but is later proven that an unauthorised holiday has taken place, a fine can be issued after the child returns to school.**

Should a holiday be taken when no written request has been made, a request for the implementation of a penalty notice will be made to the Local Authority.

Medical appointments

Should a child have a medical appointment, it is expected that they return to school to complete the school day. Appointment cards with times and dates should be shown to the school office staff when taking your child out. **FAILURE TO PRODUCE MEDICAL EVIDENCE WILL RESULT IN AN UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE.**

Persistent absence

Pupils are categorised as being 'persistently absent' if they accumulate 10% or more absences (below 90 %.) For children whose attendance falls in the 'persistent absence' category, school may implement the Government's 'Fast Track to Prosecution' scheme.

During these meetings:

- An action plan will be compiled with input from the parent/carer and school.
- Targets will be agreed and reviewed.
- There will be a focus on how the school can support the child and his/her family to promote improved attendance, progress, and attainment in school.
- A contract will be agreed.

If there is no improvement in attendance then the matter may proceed to Court.

Definitions

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent has followed the procedures as set out in the policy.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority and consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absences

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Religious Observances

The school will authorise religious observances e.g. Diwali and will need a letter or email from the parent/carer to the Head Teacher or Inclusion Manager explaining the details of the absence.

The school will provide alternative educational provision for the children who cannot participate in the school's Christian Celebrations e.g. Christmas Nativity rehearsals, concerts, Christmas Parties and Easter Productions due to their religious beliefs.

Details of the alternative education will be provided to the parents/carers of the children concerned at the appropriate times.

Absences will not be authorised for families who do not participate in the offered educational provision.

Punctuality

Punctuality is vital to the education process.

If your child is not in school at the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher missing out on vital information and news for the day. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Pupils who arrive late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Parents must take responsibility for getting children to school on time.

The start of the school day is 8.55am. Children arriving after this time must enter through the main entrance, where their parent/carer will have to sign in at reception, and offer reasons for lateness. Children must be accompanied to the office by an adult if late. An arrival after 9.30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence. (U code.)

Persistent latecomers will be referred to the Inclusion Manager.

Rewards

Good attendance and punctuality are vital to the progress of our pupils at school. At Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School we promote good attendance in many ways:

- Each class participates in an attendance horse race. The winning class at the end of each term will choose a reward for their excellent attendance.
- Attendance letters are sent out every 6 weeks for years 1-6. Every child who has reached our attendance target of 96% or above will have their attendance celebrated in assembly. They will have the opportunity to win a reward.
- Attendance figures for each class and the whole school are published in our newsletter and on our website.
- At the end of each term and at the end of the school year, children with 96% attendance or above will receive a certificate from the Head Teacher.

Monitoring and evaluation

Fiddlers Lane Community Primary School will evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies annually. The Senior Leadership Team are involved in monitoring and evaluation.

Appendix 1

Exceptional Circumstances

- There are some exceptional circumstances under which we will authorise holidays during term time and these are as follows:-
- If a holiday is organised by a charity organisation for a family due to medical reasons and the dates are restricted – evidence will be required.
- If parents/carers are restricted to dates for annual leave by their employers – evidence will be requested from school direct to the employers.
- Special arrangements for Looked After Children.
- Funerals, family weddings or religious festivals – evidence will be required and minimal days granted, (e.g.: 2 days allowed for travel and the day of the actual wedding or funeral).

If you feel that your request for a Leave Of Absence in term time falls under one of these categories, please speak to the **Inclusion Manager**.