

FREDERICK BREMER SCHOOL



School Attendance Policy 2015-2016

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This policy has been written using the Advice on school attendance document published by the DfE in October 2015



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The Law

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and
- to any special needs he/she may have,
... By regular attendance at school ...”
(Education Act 1996 Part1, Section 7)

Other documents that form the basis of this policy are:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Philosophy

Frederick Bremer School recognises values and respects each pupil's individuality. We believe that every pupil is entitled to the highest possible quality of education. Therefore, Frederick Bremer School is committed to providing a full, rich, efficient and appropriate education for all its pupils. To this end, the school is committed to giving the highest priority to attendance and developing an effective strategy. It is policy of Frederick Bremer School to celebrate achievement and it is recognised that regular school attendance is a critical contributory factor to a productive and successful career. Full and/or improved attendance will be actively promoted and encouraged for all of our pupils. Irregular attendance undermines the pupil, school and the community as a whole, impairs pupil's academic progress and may place them at risk of involvement in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour.

Regular School Attendance and Pupil Achievement Are Inseparable

We believe that education is a lifelong process. Pupils are entitled to, and benefit from, our educational provision and that this entitlement can only be realised by regular attendance. Frederick Bremer School is committed to sending a clear message to parents and pupils that school attendance is a legal responsibility and that un-necessary absence will be challenged and where appropriate unauthorised. An ethos designed to enthuse, encourage and foster self-esteem is a vital contributory factor toward the achievement of the school's targets on attendance and punctuality. Frederick Bremer School is committed to placing the highest possible priority on attendance and the development of an effective strategy to ensure that all pupils in our school display the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality and that any factors which may impede full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon possible.

Aims

The aims of this policy on attendance and punctuality are to enable maximum pupil attendance by encouraging parent/carer's to encourage their children to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by regular and punctual attendance at school and to:

- Establish and maintain a high level of attendance.
- Raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- Ensure persistent absence (90% or below) is tackled as a priority in all areas of the school.
- Ensure attendance procedures are effective and consistent.

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- Ensure the marking of registers is completed accurately, consistently, reliably and within agreed timescales.
- Provide an effective monitoring system using attendance data which informs practice and targets resources.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data in order to target attendance related issues.
- Identify pupils and groups of pupils whose absence is giving cause for concern and target resources to work toward the resolution of any difficulties being experienced.
- Promote an effective whole-school approach to the management of attendance where each member of the school community, including staff, governors, parents and pupils is aware of their roles and responsibilities and makes an effective contribution.

Links to Other Policies

This policy is linked to the Learning and Teaching policy, E-Safety policy, the Safeguarding policy, the schools Anti-Bullying policy and the Behaviour policy.

Encouraging Good Attendance for All

The attendance aims of Frederick Bremer School can only be achieved if every member of the school community plays his/her part. Every child has the right to efficient full time education which provides an appropriate curriculum which is designed to encourage pupils to want attend school and ensure their safety.

This will only be accomplished if relationships are positive; the school is happy, safe, secure and a stimulating environment in terms of learning and teaching.

Expectations

In order for the philosophy of this school to effectively work in practice, several expectations are placed upon all those involved:

Our Expectations of Pupils

- Attend school regularly and on time – to be on-site by **8.25am** for a prompt 8.30am start.
- Arrive on time for all lessons and be appropriately prepared for the school day.
- Inform a member of staff of any problem that may hinder their attendance at school.
- Be equipped and ready to learn.

Our Expectations of Parents

- Encourage their children to attend school regularly.
- Contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend school –on the first day of absence before **9.10am**.
- Ensure that their children arrive on time and are well prepared for the school day.
- Keep in contact with school with confidence and inform Ms Deere (Attendance Officer), if any problem occurs which may hinder their child's regular attendance discipline or behaviour in school.
- Seek to attend meetings in school to discuss their child, including Parent Evenings and Information



Events.

Our Expectations of the School

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance in morning registrations and in lessons.
- Early and sensitive contact with parents when a pupil is absent where no appropriate reason has been provided.
- Early and sensitive action on any problem notified to us.
- Reward good and improved attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.
- Reintegration Procedures may be implemented at such times depending on length of period of absence
- Regular evaluation of attendance procedures by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and school governors.
- Work towards ensuring all pupils feel supported and valued.
- Send a clear message if a pupil is absent that they will be missed.
- Ensuring the whole school has an awareness of the link between absence from school and other safeguarding issues such as radicalisation, neglect, FGM and are aware of how to report their concerns.

Our Expectations of School Governors

- Identify a named Governor to serve as the designated member with responsibility for attendance at the school.
- Place a regular item on the agenda of meetings of the Governing Body to review attendance. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and governors will play an active part in the whole school community.
- Governors, in conjunction with the Head Teacher will help set realistic but challenging targets for improvements in school attendance. This will only be accomplished if relationships are positive; the school is happy, safe, secure and a stimulating environment in terms of learning and teaching.

Guidelines for Implementation of the Whole-School Attendance Policy

All staff:

- To record any concerns about absence that may be linked to Safeguarding issues on CPOMS

Class Teachers

- Ensure that registers are accurately completed during morning registration (these must be completed by **8.35am**) and lesson/intervention registers completed within **10 minutes** of the lesson/intervention starting. If, in rare circumstances, the electronic register cannot be taken during the lesson, this must be done on paper and sent to the Attendance Officer as soon as possible or send a note to the Attendance Officer.
- Contact the Attendance Officer or on-call if a child who should be present in your lesson is not..

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- Ensure that all pupils within lessons are able to access the learning through a range of teaching and learning strategies in line with the school's Learning and Teaching Policy.
- Monitor carefully the attendance of individuals within a class and alert the HoD and appropriate HOY where patterns of non-attendance are detected.
- When a pupil is known to have truanted from your lesson, follow this up by following the Behaviour Policy making sure they have caught up the missed work in detention time.
- Ensure that appropriate work is set and marked for long-term absentees and those on long-term exclusions, so that return to school is made as easy as possible.
- Ensure that those who return from long-term absence are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access the learning within the lesson and catch up work they have missed.
- Welcome back pupils from long-term absence in a professional and sensitive manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other pupils.
- Actively discourage any adverse comments about the absence from other pupils within the class.

The HoD

- Monitor attendance within your subject area and follow up anomalies between levels of attendance in different classes.
- Promote good practice in the reintegration of absent pupils and setting of work for long term absent or excluded pupils

The Form Tutor

- **Legal requirement** - Ensure that registers for morning sessions are accurately completed and sent at 8.35am
- The school register opens at 8.30pm and closes 5 minutes after, the registers must be marked correctly and any child arriving after the register is closed must be marked as late.
- Ensure your SIMS home page is correctly configured to provide attendance information.
- Check the registration data for each day to identify any internal truancy from lessons. Question the pupil and take action personally. Also, alert the Attendance Officer or HOY as soon as possible.
- To request absence notes from returning pupils if appropriate. Where absence notes are not provided within a week of the absence in spite of your actions, alert the Attendance Officer and inform her of the action you have already taken.
- Tackle any instances of inappropriate absence with the pupil and alert the Attendance Officer so that parental contact can be made.
- Encourage high attendance through constant reinforcement of individual and Form targets and through encouraging pupils to want to be the best attending form in the Year Group.
- Monitor attendance within your form and collaborate with your HOY and Attendance Officer to use short-term attendance reports and targets where you feel there is deterioration.
- Liaise with your HOY as early as possible where there are issues of attendance with individual pupils, groups within the form or the whole form.

HOY

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- Monitor carefully the attendance of pupils within the Year Group, taking note of any patterns amongst pupils from particular groups, particular times of the week or particular subject areas.
- Monitor the attendance rates of forms within the Year Group, taking action alongside form tutors where particular forms are identified as having poor attendance.
- Monitor particularly closely the attendance of Persistent Absentees, those with deteriorating levels of attendance, and those at risk of disaffection, using short-term targets and attendance reports as necessary.
- Take fast and effective action to address individuals and groups that have attendance issues as outlined above.
- Target pupils to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, referrals to Home School Workers, short-term targets and rewards. Particular attention will be paid to pupils with attendance below 90% (those falling into the Persistent Absentee category).
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to decide upon referrals to the Education Attendance Officer.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to ensure that pupils with poor attendance (those in the **Amber** and **Red** groups) are receiving appropriate levels of support.
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within the Year Group through assemblies, the form notice boards and constant reinforcement with pupils. Encourage a spirit of healthy competition between forms and individuals.
- Liaise with subject teachers to ensure that appropriate work is set for long-term absentees and those excluded from school.
- Work with the Attendance Officer to identify ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively.
- Liaise with parents on matters related to their child's attendance. Input should include calling Progress Review Panels for pupils at risk of being poor attendees and joining the Attendance Officer, as appropriate, in attendance reviews for those with attendance below 90%.
- Implement sanctions where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days.
- Keep form tutors informed of action taken in relation to particular pupils.
- Ensure that parents who wish to take pupils out of school during term-time are contacted and the potential consequences explained by passing any requests to the SLT i/c attendance.
- Liaise with the SLT i/c attendance and attend any meetings.

Deputy Head i/c Attendance

- Take overall responsibility for developing Attendance Policy within the school.
- Oversee the work of the Attendance Officer and ensure that there is good communication with HOYs.
- Raise concerns and contribute to discussions about Attendance at appropriate meetings such as the Referral Meeting.
- Using attendance data analyse patterns of poor attendance amongst particular year groups or other groups of pupils and ensure HOYs are taking appropriate action.
- Oversee the efficient running of the Registration system and take action where registers are not being completed accurately.



- Organise parent support events on attendance.
- Take a lead in promoting the need for good attendance through assemblies, PSHCE and work with staff and pupils.
- Report to all necessary stakeholders e.g. Governors
- With the rest of SLT, ensure parents are aware of the school's expectations and their legal requests including taking pupils out of school during term-time.
- With the HOY responsible for transition and the Attendance Officer, identify Year 6 pupils for targeted support on attendance at transition from primary school

Attendance Officer

- Operate personal first day calls for all pupils prioritising parents of pupils with unsatisfactory attendance or where truancy is suspected.
- Administer the registration system, noting where registers have not been completed or have not been completed accurately and taking appropriate action.
- Ensure that the school's official registers are in line with legal requirements and that any anomalies are reported to SLT.
- Use attendance data to identify pupils in the Red, Amber, Amber/Green and Green Groups. Work with HOYs to identify pupils for support and close monitoring.
- Investigate instances of suspected whole-day or lesson truancy and take appropriate action, including making initial contact with parents and informing the HOY.
- Keep in contact with long-term absentees and liaise with HOYs to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used, identifying "catch up" needs.
- Contact parents where absences have remained unexplained despite the intervention of the form tutor.
- Contact alternative provision on a daily basis to ensure attendance of our pupils.
- Liaise with HOYs and use attendance data to identify pupils for referral to the Education Attendance Officer.
- Meet with the Education Attendance Officer on a fortnightly basis and ensure that details of action are provided for the relevant stakeholders.
- Support the work of the HOY to target pupils to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, referrals to Home School Workers, short-term targets and rewards. Particular attention will be paid to pupils with attendance below 90% (those falling into the Persistent Absentee category).
- Identify and prepare cases for referral to the Education Attendance Officer and for cases where court action is required.
- Work with HOYs to involve outside agencies with individuals and groups of pupils.
- Take part in targeted intervention work directed at groups of poor attendees.
- Administer the attendance rewards systems, liaising closely with STiL's
- Collaborate with Education Attendance Officer to investigate reports of illegal juvenile employment of pupils and liaise with STiL's on action to be taken in response.
- Provide weekly data on Attendance for Tutors, HOYs and Deputy Head Teacher i/c attendance and

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HODs as required at other times.

Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service, in particular the specific Education Attendance Officer attached to the school, shall keep the designated member of staff informed as to any child concerning whom a referral has been received, with whom they are involved on a casework basis, or any other registered pupil at the school with whom they have involvement. The Educational Attendance Officer will also support the process of monitoring attendance. The Education Attendance Officer will also support the school by:

- Making home visits, organising attendance clinics and attendance consultation meetings and will also be available in school to interview pupils and their parents.
- Make judgements in co-operation with school staff and other agencies in line with statutory duties in relation to school attendance.
- Provide interim welfare support to pupils and their families and through assessment of their needs, engage a multi-agency response to addressing those needs.
- Provide an independent approach to supporting the school community in particular with advice relating to the management of school attendance.
- Assist the school in analysing data and identifying patterns of absence and punctuality.
- Carry out duties with regard to statutory intervention in cases of irregular school attendance.

Managing Lateness

- Registers are marked in accordance with the above and if a child is marked late before registration closes the register shall be marked with the coding “L”. The school will follow the Behaviour Policy in terms of sanction for lateness.
- Where a child attends school and is late after **9am**, the register shall be marked with the coding “O” by the Attendance Officer, this represents an unauthorised absence.
- Pupils who are persistently late after registration and marked with the coding “O” are to be referred to the Education Attendance Officer, who may if levels reach **13 ‘O’s** per term, instigate legal proceedings in a Magistrates Court or issue a **Fixed Penalty Notice of £100**.

Managing Illness through the School Day

- Pupils may be sent home if they have received First Aid and the First Aider would organise this.
- In the case of reported illness, HOYs will make a decision as to whether pupils can go home.
- Pupils are not allowed to make their way home, except in exceptional circumstances, but must be collected by an appropriate adult.
- Parents will still be required to complete an absence form/write to the school with regards to the reason as to their child’s absence if the absence is longer than one day.
- In exceptional circumstances, emergency services may be contacted. Parents will be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Extended Leave of Absence

Managing Holidays

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- The school will not consider requests for family holidays during term time as this has a considerable impact on pupil progress and achievement.
- The school is aware that many holidays and flights are much cheaper in school time, but it is a legal requirement for parents to ensure school attendance at all times.
- Requests for absence during term time due to specific family circumstances or one off events will be considered and a form must be collected from the school office, completed and returned to **Mr Neil Larkin – Deputy Head Teacher** at least weeks before any planned absence.
- As much evidence must be provided as possible to back up the request and it must be remembered this is not a parental right.
- All decisions will be considered based on individual circumstances such as previous attendance; proximity to examinations, capacity to catch up on missed schooling etc, and the parents will receive a decision as soon as possible.
- If the school does not authorise the request for leave of absence, but the time is taken off regardless, the parent will be liable for a **Fixed Penalty Fine** of at least **£60 per child**.
- In addition, if there is a period of absence that has not been requested by the Parent but is still taken (such as pupils returning late for the start of a term or half term due to holidays or other circumstances), **Fixed Notice Penalties** will be issued.

Alternative Provision

On occasions, pupils may be referred to Alternative Provision or may be involved in educational activities off the school site, such as sport, residential, work experience, college link courses, field trips, etc. If pupils fail to attend education off site it is still deemed as school attendance and the register will reflect as to whether any absences is authorised or not. The school keeps their own records of attendance for pupils in Alternative Provision. The aim is for this to be recorded on a day to day basis. The circumstances of which may be referred to the Education Attendance Officer.

Medical Needs

Any pupil with medical needs has a care plan which would address attendance issues. Children at Risk of Missing Education and the school will address each case on an individual basis ensuring that pupils are treated sensitively and supported. This is led by the School Nurse and TA for medical needs.

Children Missing from Education

Frederick Bremer follows the Waltham Forest Children Missing from Education guidelines which follow the principles set out by the DfE. We therefore inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,

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- Have been permanently excluded.

Part time Education

Occasionally the school may deem a part time timetable a short term solution to a child's medical condition, reintegration package or occasionally as part of a Pastoral Support Programme. The school always inform the local authority as per local guidelines.

Home schooling

Occasionally parents wish to educate their child at home and we request written notification which we then send to the local authority.

Flexible Schooling

In exceptional circumstances, this will be considered as an option for individuals, but DfE Guidance (March 2013) states that pupils should be educated whilst at they are home and the school is ultimately responsible for the attendance of all pupils registered.

Traffic Light Groups

Pupils will be "divided" into 4 groups – Wave 1, Wave 2, Wave 3 and Wave 4.

This will be done as part of the Primary Transition work – evidence suggests that poor attendance patterns are established before pupils arrive in secondary school.

PA Group Wave 4 - Red Group: Very poor attendance – below 80%

PA Group Wave 3 - Amber Group: Attendance between 80% and 89%

Wave 2 - Amber/Green Group: Attendance between 90% and 94.99%, those whose attendance is deteriorating and those at risk of disaffection.

Wave 1 - Green Group: Attendance over 95%

All Interaction needs to be recorded on the appropriate spreadsheet (Attendance 2015-2016) which is in the Staff Shared Area.

Red Group

Strategies will include as many of the following as possible:

- Discussion/action at a Referral Meeting
- Allocation of a Key Worker
- Referral to HSW or Learning Mentor
- Short-term targets monitored by the Attendance Officer and HOY.
- For some intervention sessions, Red group pupils will be invited to attend intervention sessions. They would begin with some intensive input and then perhaps meet once a month.
- Parent support group – activities will be held within school to support parents in encouraging their children to attend.
- Individual Parent Meetings with the HOY or SLT i/c attendance
- New **Red** Group Year 7 parents will be invited to school very early in September – a supportive meeting but with a signed attendance contract as an outcome!
- First day **personal** calls will be prioritised by the Attendance Officer.
- Support for reintegration after absence – the Attendance Officer will liaise with HOYs and others

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relevant school staff as appropriate.

- Rewards for pupils exceeding their individual targets.
- For New Year 7, poor attendees from primary school will be spread evenly across the form groups.
- Referral to **Education Attendance Officer**.

Amber Group

Strategies will include as many of the following as possible:

- Discussion/action at a Referral Meeting
- Allocation of a Key Worker
- Referral to HSW or Learning Mentor
- Individual parental meeting with the Attendance Officer and HOY and/or SLT i/c attendance.
- Short-term individual targets monitored by the Attendance Officer.
- Other activities as for the **Red** Group.

NB: In the Amber Group, we can place those whose attendance is erratic or where there is identified truancy even if in another group. For New Year 7 pupils, it would be wise to place those with a family history of non-attendance in this group if possible.

Amber/Green Group

This group contains those pupils who could go either way. The aim is prevention, with support the key.

- Discussion/action at a Referral Meeting
- Allocation of a Key Worker
- Referral to HSW or Learning Mentor
- Individual Parent Meetings with the HOY or SLT i/c attendance
- Form tutors and HOY monitor attendance carefully – and use short-term attendance reports where they feel there is deterioration.
- First Day personal calls by Attendance Officer.
- Access to rewards system for those meeting or exceeding targets.

Green Group

- Strategies regarding individual targets and rewards as currently in place.
- Element of competition between forms and year groups to remain.
- Rewards for forms exceeding targets.

General Strategies for all Groups

Important elements will include:

- PSHCE
- Assemblies – especially to launch the new policy.
- Attendance meetings for advice to parents.

Rewards

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When schools make attendance a high profile issue there is usually a positive reaction from pupils in terms of raised attendance and improved punctuality.

(Improving Attendance and Behaviour in Secondary Schools, Ofsted, 2001)

Sustaining this profile and the momentum generated requires systems that acknowledge good half termly and at the end of term, awards in assemblies. As a school we also display positive attendance messages around our school, use verbal encouragement and acknowledgment of improving attendance as well as contacting parents/carers, e.g. good news postcards, phone calls or letters home.

- The school recognises the need to reward school attendance and a number of strategies will be employed to achieve this to reflect:
 - Weekly Attendance
 - Termly Attendance
 - Annual Attendance
 - Punctuality

Children at Risk of Missing Education

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- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

Part time Education

Occasionally the school may deem a part time timetable a short term solution to a child's medical condition, reintegration package or occasionally as part of a Pastoral Support Programme. The school always inform the local authority as per local guidelines.