FREDERICK BREMER SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Person responsible	Ben Lyon
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Agreed by LT on	20 March 2018
Does this policy need to be ratified by Governors?	Yes
If yes, which committee	SIP Committee
Ratified by Governors on	22 March 2018
This policy is communicated by the following means	Staff shared area and school website

Contents

1. 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 attendance procedures are effective and consistent.
- Ensure the marking of registers is completed accurately, consistently, reliably and within agreed timescales.
- Attendance data will be used to provide an effective monitoring system and to inform practice and target resources.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data in order to target attendance related issues.
- To 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.

To 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.

We 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.
Frederick Bremer School defines regular school attendance as being 96% or above.

1.1 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.

1.2 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 policy 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.

1.3 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- 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
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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 DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.25am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.35am; pupils who arrive later than 8.30am will be marked as late for the morning session. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.25pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the School on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

To report an absence, parent/carers should call Mrs Deere (Attendance Officer) on 020 8498 3332, or record the absence using their School Gateway account.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the School has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the School may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We 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 will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

To report an absence due to an appointment, parent/carers should call Mrs Deere (Attendance Officer) on 020 8498 3332, or send a message using their School Gateway account..

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the School can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

- 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 implement discipline measures in respect of a child who is continually late and these will increase in severity.
- Where a child attends school and is late after **9am**, the register shall be marked with the coding "**L**"
  - 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**.

3.5 Following up absence

The School will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents will receive updated attendance and punctuality information on each report, sent in November, January, March and July of each academic year.

Where there is a concern over attendance and /or punctuality, parents may be contacted by the relevant Head of Year or form tutor.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' based on individual cases, taking into account: previous attendance, proximity to examinations, capacity to catch up on missed schooling etc.

The School considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- 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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the School but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

4.2 Managing Holidays

- Term-time holidays, including those to see family members abroad will not be approved and therefore any absence as a result of this would be considered unauthorised
- 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 Ben Lyon – 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
- Flexi-schooling requests – 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.

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

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
  - Daily detentions system
  - Progress Review Panels

Attendance is promoted through - General Actions including:
- **Attendance focus, including impact of positive attendance in newsletters and reports to parents**
- **Year Assemblies driving Attendance theme weekly**
- **Termly attendance certificates**
- **Weekly Bulletin entry for all staff**
- **Monday and Friday extra push on chasing absence**
- **Medical evidence for illness over a single day, or for repeated incidents of single day absence**
  In addition specific actions are taken in response to the attendance of pupils in the following groups:

Attendance Level	Actions

Gold Group consists of those pupils whose attendance is at 98% - 100%. This group need consistent praise and reward to maintain their excellent record.	• Monthly praise communication through Gateway • Termly awards in assembly
Green Group consists of those pupils whose attendance is above 95% but below 100%. These pupils need monitoring to ensure that they endeavour towards 100% attendance.	• Ongoing monitoring and tracking • First communication through Gateway • Termly awards in assembly
Amber Group consists of pupils with attendance between 90% and 94.9%. These pupils are **at risk of becoming persistently absent** and are missing a significant amount of their education through absence and need intervention to ensure improvement.	• 'Attendance letter 1 below 96%' • 4 week monitoring for improvement • Parental meeting with Attendance Officer to review – if not improved (i.e. over 95% = any more than 1 day off) then move to Red / Amber Group / Phone call if improved sufficiently • Head of year focus on this group • '20 Day' challenges run by pastoral teams, supported by Tutors and Heads of year
Red / Amber Group consists of pupils with attendance between 85% and 89.9%. These pupils are **persistently absent** and are therefore significantly at risk.	• 'Attendance letter 1 below 90%' and referral to Social Services or 'attendance letter 2 below 96%' and referral to Social Services • Meeting with EWO or home visit if necessary • 8 week monitoring for improvement • Parental meeting to review – if not sufficiently improved (i.e. over 95% = any more than 2 days off) then move to Red Group
Red Group consists of pupils with attendance below 85%. These pupils are **chronically persistently absent** and are extremely high risk.	• Attendance letter 1 below 80% *or Attendance letter 2 no improvement below 90% or Attendance letter 3 no improvement despite 2 letters and meetings (each informing family of referral to Newham AMS (*Attendance Management Service) *for consideration for prosecution)* • Referral to CYPS if not done already • Referral to Local Authority Attendance Management Service (AMS) • 4 week monitoring for improvement • Prepare to remove from school roll (If out of school unauthorised and unable to contact)

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly basis with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Parents are expected to call the School in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents should contact the School in the morning of each consecutive day of the absence.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to meet and discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The School uses an electronic registration system 'SIMS' which gathers and holds attendance data. This is used to generate reports and to track the attendance of individuals and groups of pupils. This information is held on pupil files and is shared when a pupil moves to another school, college or educational establishment.

Where a pupil has Special Educational Needs or a Disability, is on a Pastoral Support Plan, a Child Protection Plan or is a Looked after Child absence could be an indicator of a greater concern and therefore intervention and support responses would be quicker as would potential communication of concerns with official agencies outside of school such as CYPS.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body
The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The Headteacher
- Take overall responsibility for developing Attendance Policy within the school.
- Initiate Attendance Panels as required
- Support 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 referral meetings
- Using attendance data analyse this for patterns of poor attendance amongst particular year groups or other groups of pupils and take action to address any anomalies.
- Oversee the efficient running of the Registration system and take action where registers are not being completed accurately.
- Ensure good attendance is a theme that runs through Parent/Carer Events
- Take a lead in promoting the need for good attendance through assemblies, and work with staff and pupils.
- Monitor upon mid-term admissions and decide upon any initial action to be taken to encourage good attendance.
- 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

7.3 The 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 at risk of persistent absence. Work with HOY 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 HOY 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
- Liaise with HOY and use attendance data to identify pupils for referral to the Education Welfare
- Officer
- Meet with the Education Welfare Officer on a fortnightly basis and ensure that details of action are provided for the relevant stakeholders
- Work with targeted pupils to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, short-term targets and rewards. Particular attention will be paid to pupils with attendance below
- 90% and those falling into the Persistent Absentee category
- Identify and prepare cases for referral to the Education Welfare Officer and for cases where court action is required
- Work with HOY to involve outside agencies with individuals and groups of pupils.
- Take part in targeted intervention work directed at groups of poor attendees.
- Collaborate with Education Welfare Officer to investigate reports of illegal juvenile employment of pupils and liaise with HOY on action to be taken in response.

7.4 Class teachers and form tutors
- Ensure that registers are accurately completed during morning registration and must be completed by **8.35am** and lesson registers within **10 minutes** of the lesson 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
- 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
- Identify, within each lesson, any pupils who clearly should be present in the lesson but are not.
- Class teacher to inform **On-Call** as soon as possible
- 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 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 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
- Welcome back pupils from long-term absence in a professional 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

7.5 The Head of Year
- 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. Inform SLT and the Attendance Officer of any identified patterns

- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to decide upon referrals to the Education Welfare Officer and to the school referral panel. Meet with the EWO on a fortnightly basis
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to ensure that pupils with poor attendance (those in the persistent absence groups) are receiving appropriate levels of support
- Report to the appropriate SLT member on a half-termly basis on those pupils within the Persistent Absentee category
- 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
- 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 95%
- 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

7.6 Reception staff
Reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and pass this information to the Attendance Officer.

7.7 Parent/Carers
Encourage their children to attend school regularly
- Contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend school – preferably 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 and inform Ms Deere (Attendance Officer), if any problem occurs which may hinder their child's regular attendance or behaviour in school
- Seek to attend meetings in school to discuss their child, including Parent/Carer Evenings and Information Evenings

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head i/c attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the Learning and Teaching policy, E-Safety policy, the Safeguarding policy, the school's Anti-Bullying policy and the Behaviour policy. All staff must be mindful of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and the relationship between poor attendance and safeguarding issues such as extremism, FGM etc. There are experts for each of these key areas in school and these are highlighted in the Safeguarding Policy.

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the School
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the School
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the School
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the School
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the School
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the School
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day