



Attendance Policy – Reviewed September 2021

Our aim at Forest Academy is to actively encourage and promote regular and sustained attendance amongst all pupils.

Regular attendance is important. If children are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them they need to attend school regularly. Without this commitment pupils are at a distinct disadvantage in terms of realising their full potential. Poor attendance can greatly affect future life chances.

Our policy on attendance is written with the aims of the 5 strands of the Every Child Matters programme in mind as well as incorporating LA policies and guidelines on attendance.

Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend school and are punctual. Maximising attendance is one of the schools major priorities. We take seriously problems which lead to poor attendance.

We are committed to working with parents to overcome obstacles to good attendance.

Absence

Where children of compulsory age are registered at a school, the law states that they should attend regularly. Where such a child is absent, the school register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

An **authorised absence** is one where the school has either given approval in advance, or an explanation offered afterward has been accepted as a satisfactory justification for the absence.

Satisfactory justification at Forest Academy includes:

- Illness
- Medical/Dental Appointments
- Days for religious observance
- Interviews for secondary schools
- Entrance examinations
- Dual Registration
- Absence with leave

- Family Bereavement
- Traveller Child in process of travelling

All other absences are deemed unauthorised.

The term 'authorised' refers to authorisation given by the school, not the parent.

The school is not obliged to accept explanations such as looking after other children, preparing for secondary school entrance examinations, shopping, birthday treats, illness of a sibling etc. In these instances the absence must be deemed unauthorised. The same applies to situations where no explanation for absence is offered.

It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence. At Forest Academy the first day of an absence should be communicated by a telephone call to the school with details of the nature of the illness and, when this can be predicted, the date the child is expected to return. On each subsequent day of absence, a parent must contact the school with a reason for absence.

Where possible the school will endeavour to phone the homes of absent children where a phone message has not been received on the morning of the first day of absence.

Where a child has been absent for more than 2 consecutive school days due to illness, medical evidence supporting the reasons given for absence must be supplied. This may be in the form of: an appointment card with child's name and appointment time stated; GP's letter or certificate stating child's name and diagnosis; Prescription made out to the child, dated; Medicine brought in and shown to the Office, with **prescription label stating your child's name, dated.**

If the school is unable to ascertain a reason for absence on the first day of absence, a letter will be sent to the parent(s) requesting an explanation. Where an explanation has not been supplied within 2 weeks of the first day of absence, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Registers

School attendance registers are legal documents. They are required, by law, to be completed twice a day at the start of each session. Our registers are now completed electronically and then transferred to the school office by 9.00am. Hard copies are then printed daily and kept for fire evacuation procedures.

Staff must complete the register by inserting a diagonal line across the relevant box for pupils present. Absent pupils must be recorded as "N". No other codes should be used by the teacher.

Children arriving after the start of school but before the official close of register (9am) are marked late by the school office as 'L'. A note of the time of arrival is made using the electronic register system.

Children arriving after the official close of register, at (9.15am), are marked late-

absent by placing a 'U' on the electronic register. In this way their presence is noted to meet fire- regulations but their lateness is treated as an unauthorised absence for the session.

It is the Attendance Officer's responsibility, in the first instance, to seek an explanation for a child's absence.

Any letters or verbal explanations for absence given to the teacher are passed to the school office where the appropriate code is logged.

Legal Requirements

All schools are required by law to report to the LA continual pupil absence or irregular attendance. The Education Welfare Service is the attendance enforcement arm of the LA.

The officers are able to bring to the assistance of schools, a wide range of skills and knowledge. Through their home visiting they may be well placed to assess a non- attender's problems in the wider family context.

Education Welfare Officers should be consulted where schools are experiencing difficulty in determining whether absences are justified.

An education supervision order is used where a child is registered at a school but is not attending regularly or at all.

In consultation with the EWO, the school will issue fixed penalty notices (FPN) for poor attendance.

A parent can also be prosecuted for the irregular attendance of their child at school. Whilst we recognise that most children will be off school at some stage with an illness, we still need to monitor attendance. If a child is off school for a week, that equates to 97%. Our legal requirements are to act when a child's attendance percentage drops to 95%. As a school we pay due consideration to time off due to illness, but do also look at the wider attendance patterns for an individual and the whole school picture.

EWO and the School

The school's attendance officer meets with the appointed Education Welfare Officer (EWO) twice every half term. A computerised report of all those children whose attendance has fallen below 92% is generated. Discussion is held over the next course of action in each of these cases. As a school we may decide to:-

- Continue to monitor future attendance
- Ask class teacher to raise the issue with parents
- Make a phone call to the parents
- Send out a letter expressing concern/ asking for explanation for absence
- Send a second letter
- Send a letter inviting parents to a meeting in school
- Attendance Review Panel
- Arrange a meeting in school with the EWO present
- Make an official referral to the EWO

A record of this discussion and decisions taken are kept. A note of all phone calls made by the office are kept in a log. Copies of letters/ referrals sent are copied to the child's file and to our attendance file.

Lateness

At Forest Academy we encourage punctuality. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her continuity of learning, but also that of others.

In recognition of local circumstances, (bad weather, public transport problems) schools may keep their registers open for a reasonable period (maximum 30 minutes). At Forest Academy registers are closed at 9.00am.

Daily records are kept of children arriving late so that patterns may be spotted and concerns followed up in a timely manner with parents.

The school gates open at 8:45am. KS2 children start their learning at 8:55am and KS1 at 9:00am, by this time all children should be in school. KS2 children arriving after 8:55am are directed to the KS1 entrance prior to 9:00am.

At Forest Academy the KS2 gates are closed at 9.00 a.m. All children must then enter via the office where their names and time of arrival can be noted. For late arrivals before 9.30a.m an 'L' is placed in the absence circle. Arrival after 9.30 leads to a 'U' in the circle to denote arrival after the close of registers.

Registers are checked weekly. Attention is paid to patterns of lateness emerging.

- 2 lates in any one week, or one in the case of a 'U' will result in a letter to be sent to parents reminding them of their obligation to get their children to school on time.
- A second letter requests that parents supply an explanation for a series of lateness.

- Persistent lateness will lead to a meeting being requested with the parent to ascertain the problem.

‘Late Gates’ are held, without notice, throughout the year, in conjunction with the EWO.

Letters from the EWO will be issued to those late.

Families with persistent issues surrounding lateness may be referred to the EWO.

The school will consider the use of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) in these circumstances.

Children left at the end of the day

Classes are dismissed and led to the playground at 3.10pm (KS1) and 3:15pm (KS2). If the parent/carer has not arrived by 3:30pm children should be taken to the office and the child’s name entered into the log book by the staff member responsible for the class’ dismissal.

A log book is kept by the office. If no one has collected the child by 3.30pm a phone call is made to their home and any other contact numbers. **Children will then be taken down to our after school club to be supervised until collection. Parents may be charged for this session (£11 until 6:00pm).**

If we have been unable to contact anyone by 4.30pm the decision may be made to inform the duty social worker at Jeanette Wallace House, in Croydon.

The school acknowledges that on very rare occasions parents may be delayed for reasons beyond their control. On these occasions we would normally expect a phone call before 3pm explaining why they will be late and what time the child will be collected and by whom.

Late collection is defined as an occurrence where a child is not collected by 3:30pm.

- On the first instance of late collection, a verbal reminder of the time children should be collected will be given to the parent and/or person collecting the child/ren.
- On the second instance, a written warning will be issued to the parents of the child/ren concerned, advising that a fine will be issued if a third instance of late collection occurs and giving details of available on-site after school care.
- If a third instance of late collection occurs, a fine will be issued. For every half hour or part thereof beyond 3:15pm, a fine of £10 will be issued to the parent(s) of the child/ren who were collected late.

Families who persistently fail to collect their children on time will be referred to the EWO.

Leave during Term Time under Exceptional Circumstances

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** make clear that headteachers may not grant **any** leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Leave during term time is actively discouraged. Anyone requesting one or more days leave during term time must do so in writing to the Head. In all but exceptional circumstances this request is likely to be refused.

Parents are warned if they still take their child from school; it will be counted as an unauthorised absence and may result in the issuing of an FPN.

Please note that Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A penalty notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid, this will result in further legal intervention.

Positive Encouragement

At Forest Academy we have a number of measures in place to encourage good attendance and impress the importance of it on our pupils.

- Improving attendees rewarded on a 1-1 basis by the Attendance officer.
- Bronze, silver and gold certificates are awarded half termly to encourage good punctuality and attendance in EYFS, KS1 & KS2
- Class attendance display in dining hall, updated weekly.
- Posters around the school encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Attendance reminders are included in the weekly Forest Academy Parent Newsletter and class attendance is reported weekly in Staff Notices.
- Attendance League Table – winning class are rewarded in Celebration Assembly weekly with a trophy and points build through the year for an end of year treat for the winning class

Monitoring and Evaluation

On a half termly basis, the Attendance Officer will give each class teacher a report detailing the percentage attendance and punctuality of each pupil in their registration group thus enabling the class teacher to monitor the attendance of the class. The Attendance Officer and Attendance Leader will also pick up attendance issues, as well as monitor the completion of registers etc, in their weekly review meetings and in their meetings with the EWO.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed in our annual target setting process each Autumn.

ATTENDANCE OFFICER: Mrs J Pizzy

Attendance Leader: Abi Oldfield (Interim Principal)

2021-2022 *Attendance target is* 96%



Covid 19 Attendance Policy Addendum- September 2020

School Day Staggered Start and Finish Times

	Start Date	Start Time	Entrance	Finish Time	Exit
RECEPTION	See separate details	08:35	EYFS gate	15:00	KS1 gate
KS1	Monday 7 th September	08:45	EYFS gate	15:10	KS1 gate
KS2A (Y4 & Y6)	Y6 - Monday 7 th September Y4 – Wednesday 9 th September	08:35	KS2 Drive	15:05	KS2 path
KS2B (Y3 & Y5)	Y5 – Tuesday 8 th September Y3 - Wednesday 9 th September	08:45	KS2 Drive	15:15	KS2 path

Morning Routines

Vehicular entrance to the car park will be suspended between 08:25 and 09:00.

- EW, AO, LW, CS and CD/KS will be on the EYFS, KS1 and KS2 gates every morning to welcome parents and children during staggered starts.
- One parent/carer may walk drop off their child, but **may not** enter the school building.
- **Reception, Years 1 & 2:** Parents to enter school via **EYFS gate** – AO/LW/KS/CD to stand on gate to welcome parents and ensure they socially distance in the playground when accompanying their children to the class line.
- **Years 3 - 6:** A one way system will be in operation. – AO/EW/CS/CD/KS to stand on gate to welcome parents –and ensure they socially distance in the playground when collecting their children. Parents will enter the KS2 playground via the KS2 car park gate and leave with their children via the pedestrian gate to avoid congestion on the narrow path.
- Staff will be in position (playground Reception to Year 1, classroom Years 3 – 6) to welcome the children at the appropriate time.

End of the Day Routines

Vehicular entrance and exit to the car park will be suspended between 14:50 and 15:30.

- **Reception, Years 1 & 2:** Children lined up on the KS1 playground. Parents to enter school via **EYFS gate** – AO/EW/CS/CD/KS to stand on gate to welcome parents –and ensure they socially distance in the playground when collecting their children.
- **Years 3 - 6:** A one way system will be in operation – AO/EW/CS/CD/KS to stand on gate to

welcome parents and ensure they socially distance in the playground when collecting their children. Parents will enter the KS2 playground via the KS2 pedestrian gate and leave via the car park gate to avoid congestion on the narrow path.

If a household has more than 1 child they will be able to drop off all they can remain on site as long as they maintain social distancing. Only one adult per household may drop off / pick up children. Whilst adults are on site, they must ensure they respect social distancing and not interact with other adults / children outside their household. Parents and carers will be expected to adhere strictly to drop off and pick up times to avoid congestion.

Upon entering and exiting the school, children will sanitise or wash their hands, following the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach. A member of SLT will be at the entrance and exit at all times.

As a safe distance cannot be maintained at all times, the school office will be closed to all parents and carers except by appointment. If they wish to communicate with the school, they will be advised to either call or email.

Government Guidance

Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year

Updated 1 September 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

New for 2020 to 2021 – not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure schools record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes to the regulations² governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – '**not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)**'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)³
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Attendance codes

From the beginning of the new academic year, schools should return to using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (set out on page 9 of the [attendance guidance](#)), in addition to

the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)':

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X⁴
- schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply

In line with current legislation, and current guidance from PHE and DHSC, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

View [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

- Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test.
- If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I – illness, as would usually be the case. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test.
- If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.
- If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code X should be used during this period.
- In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. Schools should not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

View [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [NHS test and trace](#) guidance.

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The [NHS test and trace](#) guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

View guidance on [how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK](#).

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine⁵. If a pupil is required to be in

quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only

View [guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons from Covid-19](#).

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X. Schools should contact parents of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again, to set out the expectation that they can return to school. Code X should not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.

Local lockdown

If rates of the disease rise locally, schools may need to prevent some pupils from attending. Schools should follow PHE or DHSC guidance on what measures are necessary in the event of local lockdown. Where attendance is to be limited to certain groups, 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' - code X - should be used for pupils who are asked not to attend.

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), they will be able to access home learning linked to the learning taking place in school on the school website. This will be updated weekly. Parents may also request hard copies that can be collected or posted to them.

