

Attendance Policy

Policy Review Period	2 Years
Policy Review Date	1 September 2024
Policy Ratified	1 September 2022

Filton Avenue Primary School is committed to a positive policy of encouraging children to attend school every day. Filton Avenue Primary School will work with parents and children to secure this aim. We expect children to attend school on time.

Aim

The aim of this Attendance policy is to:

- ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all,
- for ensuring that children attend Filton Avenue Primary School on a daily basis in order to maximise learning;
- ensure that a reason for non-attendance is known to Filton Avenue Primary School.

Taking the Register

Children of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this School to register all children.

The register must be taken twice daily at the start of morning and in the afternoon. All registers will be closed by 9.30 am in the morning and by 1.30 pm afternoon sessions. In addition, all teaching staff must check that the children timetabled to be in their lessons are present for each session.

The register must record whether the children is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity. When a child of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence using the appropriate code. Missing marks must be changed into a code by the end of the day. The school admin team are responsible for this.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- one taking place off Filton Avenue Primary School premises;
- approved by a person authorised by the Head of school/Phase leaders;
- of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits;
- Dual registration where children attend an alternative education provision, such as hospital education, alternative education when a child is educated at another location while remaining on the roll of Filton Avenue Primary School and at the same time being registered at the alternative provision.

Responsibilities

Parents are required to:

- ensure their daughter or son attend school every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- if possible inform Filton Avenue Primary School of their child's absence on the first day of non-attendance, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- make any request for leave of absence on Filton Avenue Primary School's official leave of absence form 3 weeks prior to absence request.

Administrators will:

- Ensure that all children's absences are recorded.
- Record the reason for the absence with the correct code if known
- Endeavour to contact parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence if this has not been provided

The Trust will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Executive Head teacher;
- review the working of the policy;
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout Filton Avenue Primary School and is known by the parents/carers.

The Head Teacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of Filton Avenue Primary School Action Plan and target-setting process;
- monitor progress on SOL Attendance;
- report to Governors at the termly meetings;
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout Filton Avenue Primary School and ensure that Filton Avenue Primary School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection as required.
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout Filton Avenue Primary School;
- determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on Filton Avenue Primary School's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made;
- notify parents, as appropriate that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- liaise with the appropriate bodies (including the Local Authority's agencies) over persistent absentees; or other pupils whose attendance is a concern for any reason.
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- send absence letters to parent/carers in line with school policy.

The Phase Leads will:

- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout Filton Avenue Primary School;
- work with class teachers to ensure the efficient running of the system;
- make weekly checks of SOL Attendance to monitor children's absence and meet/call parents and record any actions on SOL Attendance and praise/reward any children with an upward trend on attendance with stickers/certificates in assemblies;
- ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by getting in touch with parents/carers (if there is reasonable concern about a child's welfare, the phase leaders will immediately inform the Head of schools who will decide what action to take including informing the relevant local authority agency);
- keep an up-to date attendance display in each phase to celebrate individual classes and whole school attendance target.

Class teachers will:

- ensure that all registers are completed on time and saved;
- speak to parents over children absences where appropriate;
- share concerns about a children's non-attendance with their phase leader;
- praise/reward any children with an upward trend on attendance with stickers/certificates.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

- If no telephone call is received from the parent/carer, the office may call/text on the first day of absence to enquire the reason for absence.
- Further absence may result in a first letter being issued to inform the school as a reminder of Attendance expectations. If there is no improvement in attendance, the phase leader will contact parent/carers for a meeting to discuss how the school can support to improve attendance. At this stage parent/carers may be required to share a doctor's note as support for absence. If attendance continues to fall, the Head of School will invite the parent in for a meeting to discuss this further.
- Further absence may result in further action, by issuing of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution. An attendance plan for children who's attendance falls below 90 % (persistent absentee) may be drawn up in line with Bristol City Council's advice.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence for a children can be granted only by the Head of school/Executive Head Teacher.

Parents will be expected to use Filton Avenue Primary School's official leave of absence request form. Absence will not be authorised unless it is exceptional circumstances and each case will be treated individually. The Request for Absence must be completed and returned to school no less than 3 weeks before the commencement of absence (unless the exceptional circumstances do not allow for such a notice period to be given). The decision will be shared with parent/carers within 5 working days.

- Dental and medical appointments during school time are not encouraged. If the child leaves for an appointment after registering no absence needs to be recorded. Parent/carers may be asked for proof of appointments – see DfES 2016 guidance).
- If the children goes on a holiday which has not been approved by Filton Avenue Primary School it will count as unauthorised absence.

Children Missing Education (CME)

All schools must notify BCC as soon as possible or within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point.

After Filton Avenue Primary School will follow Bristol City Council's CME guidance on when to make CME and pupil tracking referrals. After 10 days of a child being absent without any reasonable explanation, a pupil tracking referral needs to be completed. Schools need to make reasonable enquires of the whereabouts of the child before deleting the child off roll.

The Head Teacher will authorise the taking of a children's name off the register in accordance with the Regulations currently in force.

Part-time timetables

It is acknowledged that part-time timetables, when they are used sparingly and to support educational needs, can play a role in education settings for some children. However, their use is inappropriate without parental/carer consent, for indeterminate periods of time and without multi-agency input. This raises safeguarding issues for all children, particularly those already known to social care. It also means that children do not receive their entitlement to a full-time education.

In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where SEMH needs or a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or receive alternative provision. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as an authorised absence.

Best practice with part-time timetables is to initially identify the needs using a multi-agency approach. It is important that parents and pupils are involved in the process from the very outset. A part-time table must have the consent of the parents/carers. The rationale, arrangements, targets, strategies and planned end date should be set out in an appropriate multi-agency plan. Plans should be designed for a limited period of time and must be reviewed regularly during that period. All part-time timetables must take account of safeguarding issues for all children and in particular, safeguarding risks identified through a Child Protection Plan or via Children in Need procedures. It is recommended best practice that settings undertake a risk assessment in order to assess the pupils needs in accordance with a part-time timetable, it is essential that the pupil's welfare during time not accessing the setting is considered. The risk assessment should take into account the health and safety of the child and potential safeguarding implications of not accessing education during the school day.

Equal Opportunities

In making and implementing this policy Filton Avenue Primary School will take into account the Trust in Learning Academy Equal Opportunity Policy.

Filton Avenue Primary School will inform staff where allowances have to be made for children with disabilities.

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will review the working of the policy and make regular reports to Filton Avenue Primary School's School Improvement Board on the attendance of children.

Filton Avenue Primary School will monitor the use and effectiveness of this policy and review it every two years.