

Attendance Policy

Foljambe Primary school is fully committed to raising the progress and attainment of all our pupils to ensure that they achieve the best possible outcomes. Regular attendance and punctuality is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the learning opportunities presented to them.

The Governors, Head teacher and Staff, working in partnership with parents and carers, have a duty to promote full attendance as it is central to a successful and fulfilling school experience. Therefore we actively reward our pupils using a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards.

School understands that non-school attendance is a safeguarding issue. Only when a pupil is in school can a true responsibility be taken for safeguarding all the interests of the pupil.

Our aim is to ensure that our attendance rate is in line with national at 96% and Persistent Absence for all learners is below the national average.

Statement of Expectations

What the school expects of the pupils:

- ❖ To attend regularly.
- ❖ To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.
- ❖ To report to reception/attendance office when late.

What the school expects of the parents/carers:

- ❖ To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time.
- ❖ Keep contact details up to date.
- ❖ To ensure that they contact school on the first day their child is unable to attend giving a valid reason for absence and also each day the child is absent from school.
- ❖ To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day.
- ❖ To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- ❖ To contact school on each day of absence due to illness to update school on the current situation
- ❖ Work in partnership with school and other agencies as and when appropriate to resolve issues relating to non-attendance/punctuality.
- ❖ To inform school of any forthcoming appointments, giving copies of letters and appointment cards to school and where possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.
- ❖ Where appointments are booked for after registration time pupils must attend school first.
- ❖ The pupil needs to return to school as soon as possible after the appointment, where this is possible

If a pupil leaves the school premises for any reason during the school day, staff will ensure that this is recorded, to comply with Health & Safety Regulations.

What Parents and pupils can expect of the school:

- ❖ A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- ❖ The encouragement and promotion of good attendance with a rewards system in place.
- ❖ Efficient and accurate recordings of attendances and punctuality with strategies to improve.
- ❖ First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school and also subsequent days.
- ❖ Any barriers to attendance, dealt with efficiently.
- ❖ To respond promptly to any issue that may lead to none or irregular attendance with support from the learning mentor.
- ❖ Be sensitive to the needs of the individual parent/carer. This will be reflected in the ways in which attendance issues are addressed. For example, school should recognise that some parent/carers have difficulty understanding written communications, (school will also recognise the reluctance of some parent/carers to come into the school).
- ❖ Be alert to critical times for example, return to school after a period of long term sickness or traumatic event.

- ❖ An attendance policy which is consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parent/carers.
- ❖ The encouragement and promotion of good attendance. Information is on display in school
- ❖ Close liaison with the Education Welfare Service Team to assist and support families where needed.
- ❖ Notification to parents/carers of attendance through letters home and meetings in school.
- ❖ When a pupil's attendance falls below 96% in a half term, parents will be sent a letter advising that their child's attendance is of concern and support will be offered to improve attendance.
- ❖ It will also state that failure to attend school regularly and on time could result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act. If there is no improvement parents/carers will be required to meet with the school's Attendance Panel.

The school defines "Absence" as: –

- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9.00 am
- Not attending school for any reason

This can be broken down into two elements:-

Authorised absence: *Mornings or afternoons away from school for an acceptable reason, for example, illness and/or medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in the school day, emergencies or other unavoidable reasons and compassionate leave at the Head Teacher's discretion.*

Unauthorised Absences: *Absences which school does not consider to be reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These include:*

- *Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily*
- *Truancy before or during the school day*
- *Absence that has never been properly explained*
- *Pupils who arrive in school too late to receive their mark*
- *Shopping, looking after other children (including siblings who are ill) or birthdays*
- *Leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday in term time that have not been agreed with the Head Teacher.*

School Leadership is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified. Where there is continued sickness, school may request medical evidence, e.g. Appointment Card/Prescription before authorising further absence and school may make a referral to the School Nurse.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the home and school.

Leave of Absence Requests

Section 7 of the Education Act states that:

"Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential in order for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Rotherham Education Welfare Service will continue to investigate cases of regular absence from school and, following appropriate casework intervention, will instigate legal action if applicable".

Our school follows Local Authority guidance and the revised School Attendance Matters Pathway (SAM) from September 2019

In line with amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 with effect from 01 September 2013, the following will now apply:

No requests for leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time can be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances.

The definition of exceptional circumstances is:

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year. This must be evidenced with written proof from the employer at the time of application. The child's current attendance will be taken into account prior to authorisation and must be above 96% for it to be considered.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a child or parent's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be produced from a doctor or professional body.

If a parent/carer takes their child out of school during term time without authorisation, the Head Teacher will have to make a request to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days. After that time it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Should a request for Leave of Absence need to be made, a Leave of Absence form must be completed and brought in for the Head Teacher's attention, including any evidence as stated above.

Responding to lateness

All pupils should be in their appropriate line at the start of the day for 8.40am. This is to allow for children to organise themselves for the school day and be ready to start morning learning at 8.45am. Pupils arriving after the close of the register should enter school via the main reception. Any instances of lateness will be recorded, reasons gathered and monitored.

When lateness becomes a concern, i.e. children arriving after 9.30am will be marked as absent, absence procedures will be followed which could ultimately result in prosecution.

Attendance Awards

We promote excellent attendance as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding and improving attendance through a range of different methods.

On a weekly basis:

- the class in KS1 and KS2 with the highest attendance is celebrated in assembly and awarded with the Attendance Trophy.
- Individual 100% attendance certificates are presented.

Half term:

- Every half term children receive 100% certificates as well as certificates for attendance above 96%
- At the end of each term children with 96% or above will be invited to attend a special event e.g. hot chocolate and biscuits, movie night, trip to the local park, craft session etc.

Termly:

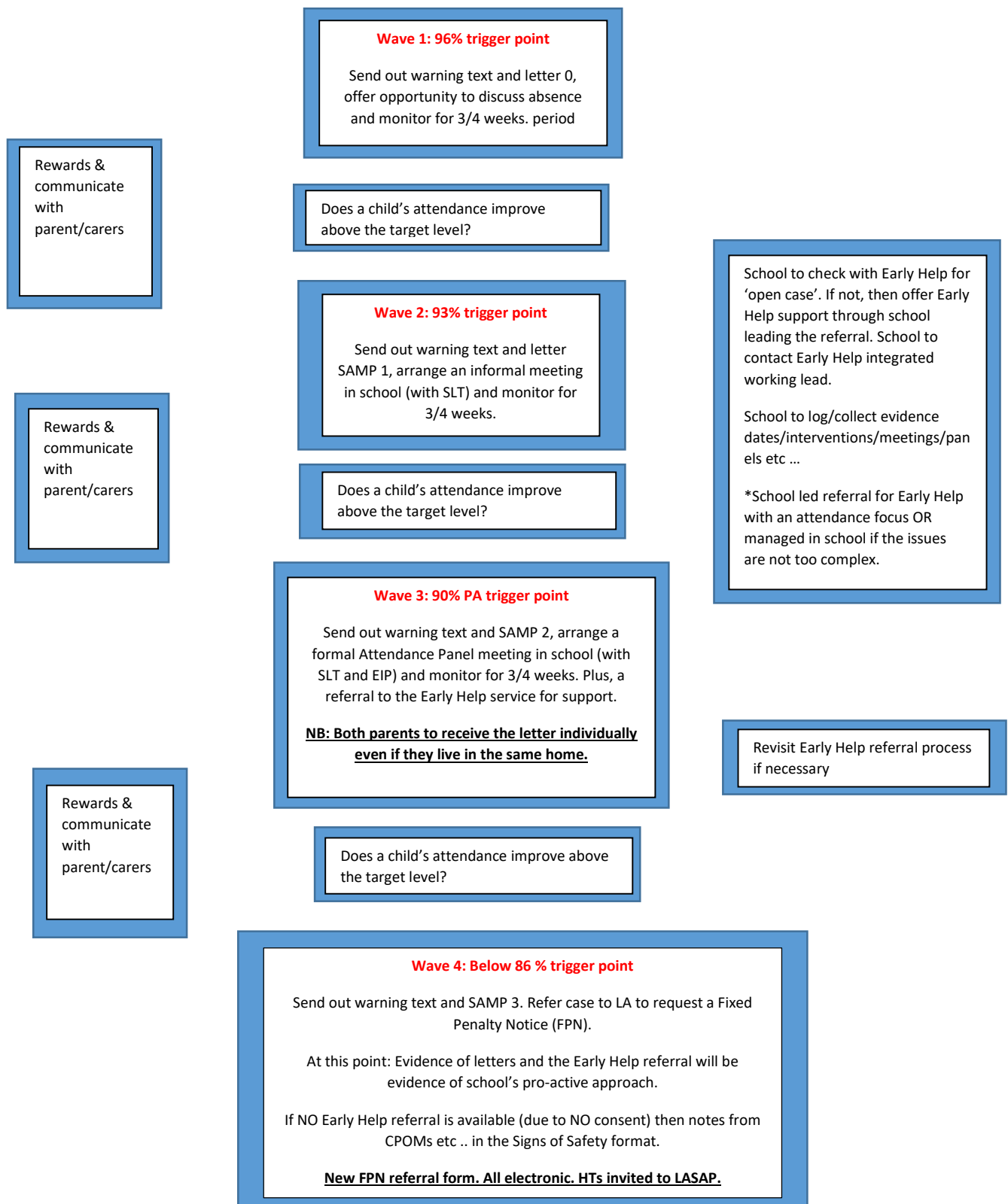
- At the end of each term children receive attendance badges, with bronze badges for children with 100% attendance for 1 full term, silver for 100% attendance for 2 full terms and the coveted gold badge for 100% attendance in all three terms!

Annually:

- Children with 100% for the year will be rewarded in a special awards ceremony in September.
- Y6 children with 2 or more consecutive years of 100% attendance will be rewarded at the annual WPT awards event

Attendance is promoted and communicated with parents via displays, class dojo, and the school website.

Fixed Penalty Notice flowchart for unauthorised absence 2019



The request form must be completed IN FULL for each child

Reason for Fixed Penalty Notice:		Please delete as applicable HOLIDAY INTERM TIME PERSISTENT ABSENCE Previous FPN Further Escalation				YES NO YES NO YES NO	
School:							
Pupil Details							
Name:		School Year:		Date of Birth:		Gender:	
Address:					Postcode:		
Parent/Carers/Significant others Living in Family Home							
Name	DOB/EDD	Gender	Relationship to child	Parental First Language			
Home Telephone Number:							
Mobile Telephone Number:							
Address of parent/carer if different from above:							
					Postcode:		
Have the school followed the Early Help Attendance Pathway and can school evidence this? (e.g. details of letters sent/ EHA offered etc?)	Yes:		No:				
Have the school completed an Early Help Assessment?	Yes:		No:				
If school have completed an EHA give the date that this was submitted to the Local Authority and briefly outline the impact that this intervention has had.							
If school have not completed an EHA please provide details of why this is the case and outline the evidence recorded by school to highlight that strategies have been tried and exhausted to engage the family in the EHA? (NB for holiday in term time and where there is evidence that there is no additional need an EHA is not required)							
Are the school contributing to an Early Help Assessment/ Statutory Assessment by another lead professional:	Yes:		No:				
Outline why the school feel that a fixed penalty notice/ further escalation is required:							

Date of Absence:			
I confirm that the pupil named above was absent during the period:			
First date of absence:		Last date of absence:	
I also confirm this absence has been recorded by the school as unauthorised. (G code for unauthorised holiday or O code for unauthorised absence)			
Name of person completing form:			
Signed:		Date:	

Please return the completed form and associated documents to: FPN@rotherham.gov.uk

NB referrals must be submitted electronically

See reverse for documents checklist

