Review Date
October 2027

Statutory Policy?	Governors Approval	Responsibility of	Date
Yes	Yes	Charlotte Wootton	October 2026

Fort Royal
Community Primary School

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Attendance policy



Fort Royal
Community Primary School

HISTORY OF POLICY REVIEW/CHANGES

Date	Page	Details of Change	Amended by	To be Ratified
31.8.23	Paragraph 4.5	Additional information about safe and well checks and CME	LC	By HT
31.8.23	Paragraph 8	Additional polices added and name changed	LC	By HT
20.12.23	Paragraph 4.2	Additional information about contacting the school office on everyday of absence and when absence is unauthorised	LC	By HT
20.12.23	Paragraph 4.5	New information about the end of the school day	LC	By HT
20.12.23	Paragraph 4.6	Additional information about CME	LC	By HT
20.12.23	Paragraph 6	Additional information about attendance target and strategies for promoting attendance	LC	By HT
20.12.23	Paragraph 7	Updated information about attendance meetings with staff and thresholds for support and monitoring	LC	By HT
1.9.24	Appendix 1	All attendance codes updated in line with Working Together to improve School Attendance	LC	By HT
1.9.24	Appendix 3	Attendance clinic log removed as no longer using this form	LC	By HT
1.9.24	Paragraph 7	Updated section in relation to attendance monitoring	LC	By HT
6.12.24	Paragraph 4.2 and 5.1	Updated information about five day safe and well checks	LC	By HT
9.1.25	Paragraph 4.2	Updated information with regard to two day safe and well checks after a holiday	LC	By HT
23.09.26	Paragraph 2	Updated policies added	CWo	By HT
23.9.26	Paragraph 3.3	Updated attendance lead name and email	CWo	By HT
23.09.26	Paragraph 4.1	Updated information regarding length of time registers are kept	CWo	By HT
23.09.26	Paragraph 7	Strengthened attendance monitoring to include early identification of attendance concerns and vulnerable groups	CWo	By HT

23.09.26	Paragraph 7.5	Additional paragraph to cover attendance, SEND and medical needs	CWo	By HT

1. 1. Aims

Fort Royal Primary School is committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promote good punctuality

We do appreciate that some children will experience significant health needs and may have long periods of time absent from school. We understand that this may affect the child's attendance and will monitor and support these families closely. (See Section 7.5)

2. 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- 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. 3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The safeguarding governor alongside the Designated Senior Leader for attendance will review attendance termly and feedback to the governing body.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing statutory interventions

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Informing a child's social worker of any unexplained absence

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Charlotte Wootton and can be contacted via email at cwootton@fortroyal.worcs.sch.uk or by telephone on 01905 355525.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue statutory interventions
- Report attendance to the DFE daily
- Report persistent or irregular absence to WCC via the portal

The attendance officer is Beth Probert and can be contacted via email at bprobert@fortroyal.worcs.sch.uk or by telephone on 01905 355525.

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.30 in the morning and 1.30 in the afternoons. During the term they will alert the Senior Leader for Attendance of any concerns they have regarding attendance for individual children in their class that are being monitored for attendance.

3.6 School Admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents and carers to the Family Support Worker to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Work closely with families and support them in getting their child to school
- Challenge parents and carers of those children who are being monitored when they call the school office about an absence that could be avoided

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or email the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. If this is not possible then for their child to miss the least amount of time as possible from the school day
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance
- Get their child to school by 9.15 every day. School opens at 8.50

Parents and carers can expect the school to keep them informed of their child's attendance on a termly basis. They will also be offered support from the school's Family Support Worker if they are finding it difficult to get their child to attend school.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day on time. Pupils can expect to be welcomed and receive assistance following periods of absence to catch up with any learning lost. Pupils will always be listened to and respected. Pupils' attendance will be celebrated half termly through a certificate system.

4. 4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. Our attendance register is held electronically on the school management system SIMS and each class team has access to this electronically.

Class teams will complete accurate registers at the beginning of the day. Registration begins at 8.50am and closes at 9.30am and at 1.30pm for the afternoon session. If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they should report to the school office. Pupils arriving after the register has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the session.

It will mark whether every pupil is (see Appendix 1):

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity (the school office will phone the other setting to ensure that the child is there)
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years from the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7). They should then contact the school office on all subsequent days of absence.

During a period of unplanned absence, the school will complete a safe and well check with the family on the fifth consecutive day of absence or third day or second day of absence after a school holiday, in line with safeguarding procedures. This check in can happen earlier if requested by the family or if the family has a social worker.

Call the school office on 01905 355525 and select option one or email office@fortroyal.worcs.sch.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Absence will be unauthorised if it is because a parent is not able to get their child to school due to being ill or having an appointment for themselves.

If a child is absent or going to be absent from school due to illness for 15 consecutive days we will inform WCC.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

To inform school of a planned absence parents and carers are asked to email the school office on office@fortroyal.worcs.sch.uk or call the school office on 01905 355525 and select option one.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise (see Appendix 2)

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (after 9.15, but before 9.30)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (after 9.30)

The Attendance Officer will produce a lateness report each week for the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance. Parents and carers will be contacted to discuss how school can support them in getting their child to school on time.

4.5 End of school day

The school day officially finishes at 3.00pm. Due to transport health and safety issues on the school site parents can collect their children from 2.50pm onwards. If a parent wants to collect their child any earlier than this there would need to be a valid reason, which would need to be authorised by the Head Teacher.

4.6 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will follow their safeguarding procedures and ultimately could complete a safe and well check or call the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer and will report the child as missing in education to the local authority
- Report the child as missing in education is the absence continues over a long period of time

4.7 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Each half term parents will be informed of their child's attendance.

5. 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- ✓ an immediate family member is seriously ill
- ✓ families have been through a traumatic event
- ✓ families where parents/carers must take holiday during term time due to another exceptional reason
- ✓ unavoidable medical appointments
- ✓ a bereavement in the family
- ✓ transport arranged by the local authority has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond statutory walking distance

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Individual children's attendance will be looked at when making this decision.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least six weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

During a period of long term absence, the school will keep in contact with the family regularly and complete either a face to face or TEAMS safe and well checks every five days.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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. 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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

6. 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Fort Royal Primary School attendance is rewarded through half termly certificates for those pupils achieving 94% or more attendance. Letters will be sent home to parents to thank them for working together with the school. Rewards will also be given for those pupils attendance has improved significantly since the previous half term. The Headteacher will inform parents and carers of whole school attendance in regular newsletters, text messages and through social media and celebrate good attendance within the school.

7. 7. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer will collate attendance data weekly for those pupils who fall below 90% and pass this to the Senior Designated Leader for Attendance. At weekly triage meetings with the schools Family Support Worker support this will be discussed for families. Interventions will be recorded and monitored.

Half termly data will be recorded on a database and actions will be updated onto CPOMs.

Level One Interventions (listen and understand) – letter home to parents / carers to inform them that attendance has fallen to below 94%, where attendance patterns emerge, or where punctuality becomes a concern, phone call from Family Support Worker to discuss support to improve attendance.

Level Two Interventions (facilitate support) – letter home to parents / carers to inform them of concerns regarding their child's attendance, an Attendance Action Plan put in place at a meeting, referral to Family Support Worker for an Early Help Plan. This level will target persistent absence (below 90%)

Level Three Interventions (formalise support) – letter to parents/ carers inviting them to meet with the Headteacher and Senior Designated Leader to review the Attendance Action Plan and put in place a Parenting Contract or referral to an Education Welfare Officer. Referrals to other outside agencies will also be discussed. This level of intervention will target those children who are at risk of becoming severely absent (below 50%)

Level Four Interventions (Enforce)– Statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected daily and share with the DFE. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Attendance data will also be analysed for vulnerable groups including pupils open to social care, young carers, disadvantaged pupils and other groups identified through attendance analysis

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Where support has been offered but attendance has not improved, the Local Authority may issue a Notice to Improve before considering a penalty notice.

7.5 Attendance, SEND and Medical Needs

- Fort Royal maintains high expectations for attendance and is committed to supporting all pupils to attend regularly.
- School will work collaboratively with families to understand and address any barriers that may be impacting attendance.

- Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments may be considered to support a pupil's attendance and engagement with school.
- In some circumstances, a phased return to school may be agreed as part of a planned support strategy.
- Where attendance concerns arise, the pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) provision will be reviewed to ensure appropriate support is in place.
- Medical evidence will only be requested where there is a genuine need to better understand a pupil's needs and determine the most appropriate support.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Relationship Based Behaviour Regulation policy
- Children Missing in Education policy

The policy will be reviewed annually and updated as required following changes to statutory guidance, legislation or local authority procedures.

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	Other approved educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school. (see additional criteria when using this code)
K	Attending education provision arranged by the LA	Pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision

		arranged by a local authority. A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another school where they are also registered
J1	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 and supervised by a member of school staff
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Exceptional circumstances	Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's

		discretion. Holiday does not fall under this category.
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.	Leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance
C2	Compulsory school age pupil subject to part time timetable	In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made
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	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	Holiday not granted	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	Where no reason for absence has been established or 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	Non-compulsory school age pupil	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend in line with part time timetable
Q	Lack of access to arrangements	Code Q is only used where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
Y1	Transport normally provided not being available	Unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption of travel	Unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Part of school premises being closed	School premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Whole school site being unexpectedly closed	School was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Pupil is in the criminal justice system	Unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Following public health guidance or law	Pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent.
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

Appendix 2 - Requesting Absence forms

Fort Royal
Community Primary School

PLANNED PUPIL ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

NAME OF CHILD /
CHILDREN:.....

PROPOSED DATE(S) OF ABSENCE:

FROM .....TO .....

ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME IS ONLY POSSIBLE IF THERE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (e.g. see attendance policy)

PLEASE OUTLINE THE REASON FOR ABSENCE AND INCLUDE THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

.....

.....

.....

.....
Signature of Parent / Carer

This form should be completed by the parent (or guardian) and forwarded to Mr E. Francis, headteacher, not less than six weeks before the planned absence is due to begin.

Each request will be considered individually by the Headteacher taking account of the specific circumstances and relevant context. Please detail these on this form.

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APPLICATION FOR EXTENDED PLANNED ABSENCE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN FOR A PERIOD LONGER THAN TWO WEEKS DURING TERM TIME

When applying for extended leave of absence from school, you must explain why you think it necessary for your child/children to be away for a period of more than two weeks (10 days). The Head Teacher will need to contact you child's SEN case worker to discuss this and gain permission from Worcester Children First to authorise it.

You will need to let the Head Teacher have the following information:

i. The nature and purpose of the absence

ii. The duration of the absence and its impact on your child/children's education, particularly in terms of continuity of learning

iii. The place or other country being visited and whether the absence is seen as a rare event in your child/children's school career

iv. Agree to keep in contact with the school via video calls.

You should also consider whether the timing of the proposed visit is at the most appropriate time of the year and at the least disruptive point in your child's school career.

NOTE: If for any reason your child (children) is (are) not able to return the school by the agreed date you should inform the school. In such cases, you should explain the circumstances and also indicate the revised date for your return. **Failure to keep the school fully informed can result in your child/children being classed as Missing in Education.**