

Attendance Policy

Fairmead School



Signed by:

Mrs T Felstead

Date:

6th November 2024

Next Review:

November 2025

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1. Introduction:

It is our aim at Fairmead School that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on routines, motivation and attainment of pupils.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents/carers¹ must follow to report their pupils absent from school each day.

Any absence affects the pattern of a pupil's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. The Attendance Officer can be contacted via 01935 421295 and/or office@fairmeadschool.com

Please note: This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance and printed copies of guidance documents are available upon request (5p per sheet).

2. Aims, Roles and Responsibilities:

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values excellent attendance, including:

- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Promoting excellent attendance includes supporting punctuality to school and lessons
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will make the best provision we can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

It is vital that pupils develop regular attendance habits from an early age. Therefore, the school will encourage parents/carers of reception pupils who are not yet compulsory school age, to send their pupil to every session.

We expect our pupils to attend school every day, unless unwell. We believe that pupils who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, learning to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can achieve their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace, preparing our pupils for further education and their future.

¹ Education law defines parents/carers as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a young person; and any person who has care of a young person i.e., lives with and looks after the young person.

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting excellent attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. We strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all pupils, and to build positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents/carers.

By promoting excellent attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make excellent attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community
- Raise our pupils' awareness of the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents/carers, pupils and staff
- Work in partnership with parents/carers
- Celebrate and reward excellent individual attendance and punctuality and tutor groups by attendance assemblies, attendance rewards, postcards and E-Praise points as well as celebrating total highest tutor group percentage annually.

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Regularly monitoring, reviewing and challenging attendance data for the whole school - Link Governor to attendance is Mrs Claire Morgan, Safeguarding Governors
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's ethos and policies
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Making sure staff receive adequate training in attendance software (BromCom)

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading attendance and overall management and implementation of the policy
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- To oversee the analysis of half-termly data and respond to findings, monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies, with a clear vision for attendance improvements
- Supporting staff with monitoring individuals' attendance
- To manage parental requests for term-time leave in line with Somerset Local Authority policies and procedures
- Authorise fixed penalty notices where necessary, in line with Somerset Local Authority policies and procedures
- To ensure that rewards, certificates and incentives for attendance and punctuality are celebrated

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- To receive each day's communication regarding absence via phone calls, answer phone messages or emails from parents/carers about pupil absence (see section 5) recording (in detail) the reason for absence, using the correct attendance codes, input information to the schools daily briefing, update class registers and liaising with tutors
- Inform via email DSL/Safeguarding Team of any high tariff pupil's absence.
- Enter individuals' medical appointments in the school calendar, diary and BromCom gathering medication evidence, where necessary
- To regularly remind parents/carers and pupils about the importance of excellent attendance and inform them of school procedures
- To implement the daily checking of BromCom registers
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy
- To carry out and record the outcome of, when a pupil does not arrive at school with no reason given
- To liaise and work alongside external agencies such as the Education Safeguarding Services and make referrals, where necessary, to tackle persistent absence
- To promptly inform the Headteacher, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To produce half-termly data for the Headteacher and Governors to analyse
- To communicate with parents/carers via attendance letters as instructed by the Headteacher
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Advising and liaising with the Headteacher to issue fixed-penalty notice
- To revise and amend the Attendance policy

Teaching Staff are responsible for:

- Promptly complete an accurate formal register using the legal document of BromCom twice daily during AM Registration completed at **8:55am** / PM Registration completed at **1pm** for Primary pupils and **1:20pm** for KS3/4 pupils to record pupil's attendance

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their pupil attends school every school day on time (Gates open from 8:40am-8:55am)
- Ensure their pupil is promptly collected by 3:25pm
- Contact the school/Attendance Officer to report their pupil's absence (from 8am) on each day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Ensure positive conversations regarding education take place, respecting members of staff at Fairmead School
- Provide the school with a minimum of 3 emergency contact numbers for their pupil
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their pupil are made outside of the school day
- Advance notice is required for any medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, ideally, with a copy of the appointment letter

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend Fairmead School every school day on time (Gates open from 8:40am-8:55am)
- Attend each lesson promptly

3. Safeguarding:

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues.

In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2024 version, or as updated by the DfE) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information).

4. 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 Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) The DfE's guidance on the [school census](#) explains the persistent absence threshold.

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015](#)
- [Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013](#)

Children Missing Education (CME):

Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. The school will follow Somerset Child Missing Education process and make CME referral as appropriate.

5. Recording attendance including absence response:

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of AM registration each school day and once at the start of the PM registration. On each school day the school must record whether each pupil is:

- Present (Pupils must arrive in school from 8:40am on each school day);

The importance of regular attendance is vital at Fairmead School, we regard excellent attendance as 96% or higher.

- Attending an approved educational activity off-site; or,
- Absent (whether the absence is authorised or not);
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances see appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes (NEW).

Present:

Our pupils can arrive to school between **8:40am** and **8:55am** on each school day through the school gates allowing time to settle and prepare for learning. Our morning register is taken at **8:55am** and will be kept open for 25minutes until **9:20am**.

Our afternoon register is taken at **1pm** for Primary pupils and **1:20pm** for Secondary pupils and will be kept open for 25minutes.

Pupils are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

If the pupil is unable to attend school for any reason, the parent/carer should inform the School/ Attendance Officer on **01935 421295 (Option 1)** of the reason on each day of absence.

If the school does not know a reason for absence the Attendance Officer send text message and then a phone call leaving a voicemail message priority 1, asking them to contact the school, and a response is waited for. If it is a vulnerable pupil, the Attendance Officer would liaise with the DSL/Headteacher. If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency contact numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, someone from the safeguarding team or Police may carry out a welfare check.

The Attendance Officer would follow these procedures as appropriate:

- Once AM registration has been entered from 8:55am, a polite reminder text message (if applicable) would be sent to notify parents/carers to contact the school daily regarding their pupil's absence/attendance code and a response is waited for.
 - The Attendance Officer will phone parents/carers' contact number(s). A voicemail message is left asking to contact the school, and a response is waited for.
- Ask to speak to the parents/carers face-to-face or by phone when convenient to establish the reasons for absence and update contact numbers, if necessary.
- Phone emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly, if necessary.
- Communication via text messages or phone calls to inform parents/carer of unauthorised absences (as seen on Bromcom - My Child at School App)
- Will report attendance percentages to parents/carers twice during the academic year; in the Mid-Year report and in the end of year school report. Where a pupil's attendance drops for whatever reason, the Attendance Officer will communicate to the parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

Parents/carers are asked to provide the school with the contact details of at **least three people** who can be contacted in an emergency. These details are reviewed on a regular basis. Parents/carers are expected to inform the school of any changes to details promptly. If there are concerns about attendance and the welfare of the pupil, the school will contact the other emergency contacts listed.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the pupil is not in school. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N attendance code' (no reason given). If the parent/carer has not contacted the school/Attendance Officer in 5 working days, then the absence is recorded as 'O attendance code' (unauthorised absence) in line with [working together to improve school attendance](#).

Effects of Late Arrival at School:

A pupil who arrives late (after 9:05am) but before the register has closed (9:20am) will be marked as late (**L attendance code**) – which counts as a present attendance mark.

Please inform the school accordingly, If the pupil is late arriving, due to a valid reason such as an emergency medical appointment, the absence will be authorised. If the pupil is late for no good reason, such as overslept or parent unwell, and arrives late **after** the AM registration has close this will be marked with an **unauthorised absence (U attendance code)** 'Late after registers close'. See DfE Attendance Codes (NEW) – Appendix one on page 20.

It is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that pupils attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and reduces any possible classroom disruption. The Attendance Officer, class teacher and/or Headteacher will meet with parents/carers of those pupils who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

When a pupil arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Pupils often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage pupils and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence:

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:

Illness:

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

The reporting of absence daily due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the Attendance Officer by the parent/carer on each day of absence may not be authorised.

Parents/carers must inform the Attendance Officer between 8am and 10am by telephone/email/face-to-face when their pupil is absent. If a pupil is absent for more than one day, the parent/carer should contact the school each day to provide an update on the pupil's condition/symptoms, unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher.

The school follows the 2019 DfE School Attendance Guidance which states that the school may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. (See DfE 2019 School Attendance guidance document) - Please find link in the Legislation and Guidance section on Page 6. In some instances, the school may ask the parent/carer to obtain a letter from a GP, or (GDPR?) the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parents/carers aware of this expectation in advance.

Pupils taken ill during the school day:

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with a member of the senior leadership team or Headteacher. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the School Office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out of school site via the Entry system (in case of a fire evacuation) and attendance code changed on BromCom. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Medical Appointments:

Parents/carers should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Please email office@fairmeadschool.com a screenshot of the medical appointment letter with advanced notice including possible collection and/or drop off timings. It is not acceptable for a pupil to miss a whole day's schooling for a local medical appointment (unless agreed for distance of appointment and/or nature of appointment) in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is, if not exceptional circumstances one of the sessions would be unauthorised.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the School Office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out of school site via the entry system (in case of a fire evacuation) and attendance code changed on BromCom. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for any medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and where possible supported by providing the school a copy of, the appointment card or letter for absence to be authorised.

Approved Educational Activity (AEA):

When pupils are attending educational activities off the school site that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case. (See DfE 2019 School Attendance Guidance).

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all their education, our school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (off-site educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify Fairmead School of any absences by individual pupils daily and promptly, to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns and take follow up action, as necessary. An overall report (which highlights attendance) on individuals will be provided on a weekly basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative provision setting. Any attendance concerns will be followed up by Fairmead School, in conjunction with the alternative provision (AP).

Religious Observance:

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Traveller Absence:

Fairmead school will authorise the absence of a traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent/carer who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the pupil's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with traveller parents/carers as necessary. Parents/carers should let the school/Attendance Officer know of their plans as far in advance as possible.

To help ensure continuity of education for traveller children, wherever possible, the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the pupil will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is the

'main' school. Pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

Pupils on Part-time Timetables:

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent/carer and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any part-time timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible (4 weeks), whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to a full-time timetable.

Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances':

Please note: The law does not grant parents/carers the automatic right to take their pupil out of school during term time.

Parents/carers should complete a leave of absence request form which is available from the school website here [Term Time Leave | Fairmead School](#). The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your pupil is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support your request.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The school will consider each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance.

The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents/carers will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for pupils to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage, we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

Unauthorised Absence:

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the

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permission of the school. Whilst parents/carers can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

Suspensions:

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a suspension. The school will follow the current [DfE's statutory guidance on suspensions](#).

Any suspension must be agreed by the Headteacher.

The school will notify the parent/carer of the suspension. If the pupil is a Looked After Child, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and virtual school. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil must be collected from the School Office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out on the Entry system (in reception) and the BehaviourWatch system. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Parents/carers who have concerns about their pupil's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for further information on the support available. Parents/carers should also contact their doctor or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents/carers should dial 999.

Effects of non-attendance:

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days' absence can result in pupils missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in the law and DfE guidance):

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by the Local Authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE's ['Home to school travel and transport'](#) guidance document.
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- The pupil is in custody, but still on the school roll. (If the school has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as present at approved educational activity)

7. Strategies for promoting attendance:

To promote attendance, we communicate with parents/carers on Parents Evening consultation evenings. This provides an opportunity for class tutor to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to improve attendance.

At the end of the Autumn term and summer term, we hold celebration assemblies to award excellent attendance certificates, postcards and a choice of reward to individuals and the annual competition for confectionery of highest tutor group with the winners announced at the end of the year.

8. Support for poor school attendance:

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents/carers and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a pupil is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent/carer to give in to pressure to let the pupil stay at home. This can give the impression to the pupil that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend to be able to support pupils and parents/carers in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parents/carers aware of the concerns about their pupil's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents/carers do not make use of the support offered and improve their pupil's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer, Tutor or Headteacher to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract or support from the Team Around the School being offered.

If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parents/carers that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.

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We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents/carers fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parents/carers that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

9. Monitoring attendance:

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority and DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board each September.

Fairmead 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 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance:

Fairmead 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

Using data to improve attendance: Fairmead school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families at Parents Evenings
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

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. Fairmead school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers 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

10. Penalty Notices, Fines and Prosecutions:

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their young person attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents/carers who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their young person fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent/carer but may have day to day care of the pupil.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents/carers and young people. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a pupil of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school their parent/carer(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents/carers with more than one school aged pupil need to be aware that each pupil's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold, currently 10 unauthorised sessions in 12 school week period, for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice, Fines or Prosecution.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance. They are an alternative to prosecution, and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. Our local council can give each parent a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.)
2. From the 2024 to 2025 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period.
3. If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 day's you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school.
4. If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but taken to court.
5. Check [your local council's](#) rules on when you can be fined and how to pay a fine.
6. Prosecution.

Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2,500 and /or 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#) for more information and Somerset Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent/carer with responsibility for the pupil

The importance of regular attendance is vital at Fairmead School, we regard excellent attendance as 96% or higher.

and are issued for each pupil with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents/carers with responsibility for the young people, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

11. Guidance Documents:

Links with other policies: This policy is linked to our Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

[Share your daily school attendance data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Fairmead School share their daily school attendance as it is a statutory requirement on schools under the following legislation:

- [Section 537A of the Education Act 1996 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Education \(Information About Individual Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) (as amended, including by the Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024)

A statutory requirement:

- means that schools do not need to obtain parental or pupil consent to the provision of information
- ensures schools are protected from legal challenge that they are breaching a duty of confidence to pupils
- helps to ensure that returns are completed by schools
- means that all pupil data collection elements are mandatory unless specifically stated to be voluntary

The importance of sharing daily attendance data:

Sharing daily attendance data not only ensures schools and academy trusts meet their statutory duty, but also:

- helps schools, academy trusts, governing bodies and local authorities meet the new expectations set out in [working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance
- requires no additional cost
- will not add to a school or academy trust's workload

Schools, their academy trusts and local authorities can access and analyse the data via the secure [Monitor your school attendance tool](#).

This data:

- gives schools, local authorities and academy trusts access to more up-to-date pupil level attendance data
- enables easy identification of pupils requiring support and facilitates greater working together
- helps identify trends across pupil groups, schools, local areas, and nationally enables efforts and strategies to be targeted

[Pupil attendance in schools](#) data from national and local authorities is published on Explore Education Statistics every 2 weeks.

This guidance applies to all:

- schools maintained by a local authority
- special schools not maintained by a local authority
- academy schools
- alternative provision academies

But it does not apply to nursery schools.

- Schools required to share attendance data

The regulations do not apply to any other types of institutions, such as:

- 16 to 19 academies
- sixth form colleges
- independent schools that are not academies

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015 updated 2017)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medicalconditions--3>

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needswho-cannot-attend-school>

Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> School

Attendance (DfE September 2019 updated 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015 updated 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-forbehaviour-and-attendance>

School census 2017 to 2018 (DfE May 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2017-to-2018-guide-forschools-and-las>

School Exclusion (DfE September 2017 updated 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014 updated 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>

12. New Appendix One – Pupil attendance codes (not for nursery schools) from August 2024: Use these codes for pupil attendance from August 2024

Code	Description
I	Morning session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
\	Afternoon session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
B	Attending a place for any other approved educational activity. Where schools use code B, they must also record the nature of the educational activity
C	Absent with leave for other circumstances
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Absent with leave, of compulsory school age, and a temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend
D	Attending another school at which they are a registered pupil
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
G	Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday
I	Unable to attend because of sickness (do not use for medical or dental appointments)
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

K	Attending a place other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil for educational provision arranged by the local authority (under Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or Section 42 of the Children's and Families Act 2014). Where schools use code K, they must also record the nature of the educational activity
L	Absent from the school when attendance register begins to be taken, but attends before the taking of the register has ended
M	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Absent - circumstances not yet established
O	Absent - other circumstances
P	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements by the local authority to facilitate their attendance
R	Day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
S	Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Mobile child whose parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and who is travelling with that parent
U	Absent for registration - arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a visit or trip
W	Attending a place for an approved education activity that is work experience
X	Absent with leave, not of compulsory school age and timetable does not require them to attend

Y1	Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in the parts of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled
Y5	Unable to attend because pupil is subject to a sentence of detention
Y6	Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary or prohibited by guidance or law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. Where schools use code Y7, they must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause
Z	Pupil's name entered in advance of start date (not collected in the school census)
'#'	Planned whole school closure – no session to take place (not collected in the school census)