



# Fernwood Primary & Nursery School

## Parents' Guide to Attendance and Absence

January 2023

The Department of Further Education have set new guidance for schools and local authorities – this is called Guidance '**Working together to improve school attendance**' 2022. Please find attached our new **Attendance and Absence Policy** that has come from Nottingham City Council in line with this guidance. All schools are expected to abide by this new guidance, as good attendance is seen as key to a child succeeding in school

We understand that attendance is a complex subject and that there will be times that children are unable to attend school for health-related reasons.

**The Whole School Target for every pupil is a minimum of 96%**

### **Why 96% attendance?**

This optimises learning opportunities for your child. 96% attendance equates to 7.5 days off in an academic year. As a school, we want to prepare our pupils for excellent work habits. Regular attendance and punctuality are part of this work.

### **Low attendance**

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Even taking a small amount of time off school can be problematic. Your child is likely to fall behind in their work and find it hard to catch up. The fact is, if your child doesn't attend school regularly, they are less likely to do as well as other children. Absence also impacts on the social elements of schooling, which could affect your child's ability to make and maintain friendships. Being late for school affects a child's learning too. A child who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of lessons during a year. In summary, low attendance may lead to fewer chances and fewer choices when they are looking for work and developing social relationships later in life.

### **Did you know?**

- If a child has 90% attendance that means that he/she is absent for lessons for half a day every week.
- If their attendance stays at 90% during the academic year he/she will miss 4 weeks of school, which equates to nearly half a term.
- If his/her attendance stays at about 90% from Year 1 to Year 6 he/she will have missed 27 weeks which is over half a school year.

As a school we want to work in partnership with all our families and support any families that are struggling with their child's attendance. **Mrs Jones** is our '**Attendance Champion**' and she can support any families that require help/support.

In the policy it states

**Parents are responsible for:**

- **Bringing their children to school on a regular basis and for them to be prepared for their day when they arrive.**
- **Arriving on time**
- **Promoting good attendance with their children.**
- **Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.**
- **Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.**
- **Updating the school if their details change**

As a school we understand that children are sometimes ill and that you will need to keep them off school. If a child is off repeatedly with illness we will ask for medical evidence.

We are not permitted to authorise any term time holidays. We also have to issue penalty notices for any unauthorised time off taken outside of term-time above 4/5 days. A leave of absence form is attached to the policy. If you are requesting absence from school, the link is on our website.

We also ask that medical appointments are made outside of school times whenever possible.

Letters will be sent out half termly where a child's attendance is below 95%. If a child's attendance does not improve following a letter or we still have concerns you will be invited into school for a meeting with the Executive Head Teacher and the Educational Welfare Officer.

We monitor all children who are late. If your child is late regularly we will go through the steps in the policy to support you and then, if lateness persists the Education Welfare Officer will become involved.

The guide below shows the actions that we are could to take to support the attendance of our families.

<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>		
<b>8+ DAYS OFF</b>	<b>13+ DAYS OFF</b>	<b>20+ DAYS OFF</b>	<b>Under 89%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter to parent/s informing them that a referral has been made to EWS</li> <li>• EWS procedure begins</li> <li>• School to maintain contact with the family and continue with their attendance procedures; telephone calls, home visits etc</li> </ul>
<b>6-7 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>9-12 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>14-19 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>90-92%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At 90% - letter to parents advising them that EWS will be informed of their child's attendance</li> <li>• At Targeted Support Meeting discuss individual students; agree Attendance Panels.</li> <li>• Attendance Panel. Education Welfare Specialist and Education Welfare Officer to attend.</li> <li>• School to complete EWS referral for suitable cases. Education Welfare Specialist to approve referrals.</li> </ul>

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<b>4-5 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>6-9 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>9-14 DAYS OFF</b>	<b>93- 95%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letters to be sent home informing parents of their attendance and offering support</li> <li>School staff to have weekly check ins</li> <li>School to complete home visit</li> <li>School to consider Early Help assessment to highlight barriers to learning and offer support</li> <li>School to develop an attendance plan with parent at a parent meeting</li> </ul>

Please read through our attendance policy attached and if you have any questions, please come and talk to me.

We want every child to attend school regularly and the expectation is that every child has at least **96% attendance**.

Regards

Lynne Orme  
Acting Executive Head Teacher