




Folville Junior School Attendance Policy

DATE APPROVED: November 2024	SIGNATURE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: This policy is awaiting ratification by Governors. 
FREQUENCY OF REVIEW: 3 years	
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: November 2027	

Folville Junior School believes that to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

All our actions reflect best practice in promoting good attendance and reflect the guidance provided by the DfE in the 'Working Together to improve Attendance' guidance (2024).

Folville Junior School works closely with Leicester City Local Authority to manage attendance. Folville's actions will follow the guidance and policy outlined by LCC.

Legal Duty to attend School

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Importance of Good Attendance

Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and several extra-familial harms including crime and serious violence.

Promoting Good Attendance

Folville Junior School will take every step possible to promote good attendance through:

- Effective communication with parents and children
- Regularly promoting and rewarding good attendance within school
- Working directly with families to understand barriers to attendance
- Employing other agencies, such as the GP and Early Help Service to support families at home

Parent's responsibility

- To only allow their child a day of absence if they are too unwell to come to school.
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time each morning.
- To ring on the first morning of all absences to inform us of the reason for their absence and advising of the date of expected return.
- To arrange any appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- To avoid arranging holidays and other visits during term time.
- To responding positively to any letters or phone calls made by the school regarding their child's attendance.

Folville Junior School will:

- Register pupil's attendance accurately and on time.
- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls, texts, emails, and letters as soon as possible. We will use telephone numbers listed to establish the reason for any unexplained absence.
- Publish children's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.
- Provide wide ranging support for parents to remove the barriers to attendance
- Let parents know at the first available opportunity if we have concerns regarding a child's attendance and work with the parent and child to improve this.
- Follow up attendance concerns via class teachers in parents evening and contact with parents.
- If we continue to have concerns, make a referral to the Local Authority who may fine or prosecute parents for the poor attendance of their child/ren.

Attendance Registers

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The register closes at 8:40am and 1/1:15pm in the afternoon.

Punctuality

- The school gates are opened at 8:30 am each morning. Breakfast club is available from 8am.
- Registration takes place in the classroom at 8:40 am. Any child arriving after this time is deemed to be late for school.
- If a child arrives gates have been locked, they should be taken to the main office in reception in order to sign in and for a member of staff to escort them to class. For safeguarding reasons, we ask that parents **do not** take children directly to classrooms themselves.
- Arrival 30 minutes after the close of registration, will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Illness

The school does not expect children who are too ill to attend school but does expect parents to minimise the number of days that their child is absent and only keep them away from school if necessary.

Parents are asked to consider the type of illness or ailments that the child may have and consider carefully if a day away from school is necessarily beneficial for the child's health.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we ask that parents communicate this and inform the school office.

Where we consider that a child has several absences and is a cause for serious concern Folville Junior School will request medical evidence to support any absences due to illness. If no medical evidence is provided the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents will be informed by letter if medical evidence is required to support absences. The school reserves the right to work with other agencies that support families to improve attendance, such as Early Help and the GP with consent from the parents.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons other than illness or those permitted by the DfE, in these instances, their absence is recorded as unauthorised absence. Increasing levels of unauthorised absences is a cause of concern and these patterns are monitored regularly in school using the systems detailed in 'Monitoring and Reporting Attendance and in appendix 1.

Term Time Leave of Absence/Holiday Requests

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

To have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to complete the 'request for absence' form at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the absence providing the reason the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. Parents should not book the holiday until they have had their leave authorised.

As a rule, leave of absence is not granted for most requests. The Head Teacher may consider requests where they consider there to be an exceptional circumstance. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be considered. The Head Teachers decision in these circumstances is final.

Where the absence is granted, the Head Teachers will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances under any circumstances.

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 5% percent for any reason

If the school does not agree to your request for absence and you take your child on holiday, or we have evidence to believe that you have provided a false reason for why your child is not attending school, we may pass the absence to the Local Authority for a penalty notice.

Procedure for monitoring attendance and alerting parents

The school monitors attendance and the impact poor attendance is having upon pupils throughout the academic year. The attendance calendar (appendix 1) provides details of how this monitoring is structured and the numerous ways in which the school will alert parents to any issues regarding their child's attendance.

The school aims to work with families where attendance requires improvement. This may include regular meetings with school staff and the involvement of outside agencies (for example the school nurse or paediatrician, Child, and Adolescent Mental Health Service [CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)], Social Care, SEN (Special Educational Needs) support services, etc.).

The school aims to deal with all cases by having effective communication with the family and, where ongoing matters exist, by finding a satisfactory solution for all concerned as soon as possible. Where communication breaks down, or where a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the school has a duty to inform the Local Authority of attendance issues.

Monitoring of Severe or Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% or below for any reason whether the absences are authorised or not.

Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 school days; equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

A pupil becomes 'severely absent' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% or below for any reason, whether the absences are authorised or not. As persistent absence is often a symptom of wider issues in a child's life, schools, local authorities, and their partners play a crucial role in overcoming barriers to attendance and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled.

Pupils are monitored monthly to identify any that may be at risk of becoming persistently absent. Once a child's absence becomes 12 days or more in an academic year, they will be issued a letter to warn them that their child is at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Pupils with medical conditions or Special Educational Needs

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than others. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as any other pupil. We will work closely with parents of these children to put additional support in place to ensure the best attendance possible. If necessary, we will work closely with outside agencies, such as medical professionals, to remove barriers.

Appendix 1

CALENDAR FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND ALERTING PARENTS:

		Letter/report	Responsible
AUG/SEP	Start of Academic Year: Office sends letters to the parents of pupils with below 90% in previous academic year to remind them of the need for good school attendance.	PA New Year	Office
OCT	Parents Evening: Class Teachers discuss impact any poor attendance is having upon pupil attainment/progress and wellbeing (including poor attendance from previous year).	Office to issue report to Class teachers prior to parents evening	Office/Class Teachers
End of NOV	First round of letters issued to parents for pupils with attendance below 95% (appendix 2)	AT1	Office
DEC			
JAN			
End of FEB	Second round of letters issued to parents for pupils with attendance below 95%. Parents Evening: Class Teachers discuss impact any poor attendance is having upon pupil attainment/progress and wellbeing.	AT2 or AT3 Office to issue report to Class teachers prior to parents evening	Office Office/Class Teachers
MAR			
APR			
MAY	Third round of letters issued to parents for pupils with attendance below 95%,	AT2 or AT3	Office
JUN			
JUL	Annual school reports issued to all parents including a print out of their child's attendance for the academic year.	Office to issue reports to class teachers for attendance	Office/Class Teachers
Pupils' attendance is monitored weekly throughout the year and any child who reaches 12 days absence in an academic year is sent a letter to advise at risk of persistent absence. These pupils are then passed to the attendance lead to support.		RPA	Office CC

Appendix 2: Example below 95 % attendance letter

XXXX

Dear Parents / Carers

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS: XXXX

Following a review of attendance, we continue to have concerns about the increasing level absence that XX has so far this academic year.

At present, XX's attendance is XXX%. This means they have had XX days absence from school this year.

While we appreciate that there have been many illnesses circulating recently we would like to stress the importance of only keeping your child off school if they are too ill to go to school, for example if they have a fever or pain. All the staff in school place the wellbeing of our children at the centre of everything they do. If your child is too unwell to attend we will contact you.

The NHS has provided guidance as to how long children should be away from school with common childhood illnesses. If you would like a copy or are unsure about if they should attend please contact the school office.

The school has many ways which we can support you to improve school attendance and punctuality. If you would like to discuss any issues please make an appointment to see me via the school office.

We will continue to monitor XX's attendance and punctuality over the coming months and look forward to seeing a continual improvement.

Yours sincerely
Head Teacher

AT1

Appendix 3: Sample Worsening attendance Letter- To be personalised depending on circumstances

Dear XXX

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS: XXX

Further to my letter of XXX, I write to inform you that the school is still very concerned that XXX attendance is well below the expected rate of 95% (see below). This is particularly concerning given his pattern of poor attendance last year.

At present XX attendance is XX%. In total he has had X days of illness, X occasions of unauthorised absence and he has also been late on X mornings. In total this year he has missed X days of school.

As you have been made aware in previous letters, **all children in the school are expected to have a minimum attendance of 95%** and any absences should be fully explained to the school.

Whilst I appreciate that XX may have been unwell, lack of attendance at school is detrimental to his progress both academically and socially and for this reason the school has a duty to follow up such concerns with parents and the local authority. **By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full time education. As parents you have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens.**

Please be aware that from September 2013 Local Authorities and schools have been instructed to apply much stricter rules and issue penalty notices or prosecute parents when any of the following apply:

- Pupils fail to attend school regularly
- Pupils have 10 or more days of continuous absence
- Overt truancy
- Unauthorised absence, including holidays during term time which are not deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances'
- Persistent late arrival

As a school we are keen to support you in ensuring that your children all attend school fully. I would like to offer you an appointment to discuss how we can work together to improve his attendance and avoid the need for any further action. I will monitor his attendance again at the end of XX and look forward to seeing an improvement.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

AT2

Appendix 4: Sample letter- Unauthorised Holiday In Term Time

Re: Formal Warning in relation to your family holiday taken during term time

XXX

Dear XX

It has come to our attention that during this year your child was removed from school for XXXX days due to taking an unauthorised family holiday in term time.

We do not authorise holidays in school unless it is for an exceptional circumstance which is outlined on our holiday request form.

A family holiday during term-time does not fall under the category of 'exceptional circumstances'. Whilst we are very sympathetic to the issues surrounding the costs of going away during school holidays and the benefits of spending time with families, all days missed from school, during core term time, has a significant impact on pupil's learning.

Please be aware that the parents of any child who has absences recorded as a result of unauthorised family holiday may be referred to the local authority who may issue a penalty notice of £120 per parent per child, which may be reduced to £60 if paid within 14 days. This matter has now been referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team to process a penalty notice.

We thank you for your support.

Yours Sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 5: Persistent Absence - New Academic Year

PA- New year

To the Parents/Carers of

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CONCERN – PERSISTENT ABSENCE

I am writing to inform you that due to high levels of absence your child was considered to be persistently absent during the last academic year.

Number of days illness	
Number of days unauthorised absence	
Number of days medical appointments	

As you have been previously made aware the **legal requirement** is that each child should have a minimum of 95% attendance by the end of the summer term.

Good attendance and punctuality is essential for good academic and social development. As a school we pride ourselves on providing a high quality of education and it is essential that your child is at school to access this.

We appreciate that there are many different reasons behind absence and as a school we wish to support you in bringing your child to school. We are able to make many adaptations in school and support your child with medical care if they need it.

It is essential that your child now attends fully at school during this academic year. We will be monitoring your child closely to ensure that they attend school regularly.

If you have not already spoken to myself regarding this matter I would like to make an appointment with you to discuss how we can support you in school. Please contact me via the school office to book an appointment.

We look forward to seeing your child enjoy school fully during the remainder of the school year.

Kind regards

Head Teacher

Appendix 6 – Persistent Absence 1

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

XXXX

Dear XXX

I write to you regarding our continuing concerns relating to XXX attendance at school.

Total Possible Days	Days Missed	Days Late	% Attendance

You have made us aware that XXXX, has not attended school due to

- XXXX [insert summary of absences here]
- XXXX
- XXXX

Delete/add as required

- First day calls/office support during absences
- Support from LSA and class teacher to support attendance.
- Offer of breakfast club to support attendance
- Meeting offered between parents and SLT leading attendance
- Rewards and incentives for good attendance and a positive day
- Request for referral to CAMHS **in case of anxiety as cause of absence.**

Unfortunately, despite this support XXXX is still missing significant periods of school and their high levels of absence is now causing concern. Children who are persistently absent from school may not reach their full potential.

As you have advised us that XXXX absence is due to anxiety we ask that you consult with your GP and request a referral to CAMHS or other suitable agency for support. Evidence of this referral will be required to support any further absences linked to anxiety. [delete as appropriate]

We would also like to offer a meeting with myself to agree an attendance improvement plan to support XXXX to improve their attendance. We can be flexible to suit your needs and ask that you provide us with 3 possible dates that you are available over the coming weeks. **Please provide this information to the school office by XXXX.**

From the date of this letter all absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided to support the absence. This can be in the form of a confirmation of appointment, any medical prescriptions or confirmation of appointment from the doctors. A supporting letter can be provided to your GP if required.

We will be monitoring XXXX absence closely going forwards and will look to review it again on XXXX 2023. If we do not see a significant improvement in XXXXs attendance we will look to refer this matter to Leicester Local Authority Attendance Team for intervention.

As always, we look forward to working with you as a team to support XXXX improved attendance in school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 7 – Persistent Absence 2

Dear XXX

Further to my letter of XXXX, I write to you regarding our continuing concerns relating to XXX attendance at school.

Total Possible Days	Days Missed	Days Late	% Attendance

XXXX, is now considered to be persistently absent from school.

You have made us aware that XXXX, is struggling to come to school due to ongoing XXXX. This has been an ongoing issue since XXXX.

Since XXXX, we have offered a range of support to you and XXXX, to attend school more regularly. These include:

Delete as required

- First day calls/office support during absences
- Support from LSA and class teacher to support attendance.
- ELSA support in school
- Offer of breakfast club to support attendance
- Meeting offered between parents and SLT leading attendance
- Assigned support from Senior Leaders with XXXX supporting as a named contact.
- Home escort by SLT for XXX on non-attendance days
- Rewards and incentives for good attendance and a positive day
- A referral to Early Help to support with strategies to implement in the home
- Consultation with Leicester Inclusion Service to explore further measures available
- Request for referral to CAMHS in case of anxiety as cause of absence.

Unfortunately, despite this support XXXX is still missing significant periods of school.

As you have advised us that XXXX absence is due to anxiety we ask that you make an urgent appointment with your GP to request a referral to CAMHS or other suitable agency for support. Evidence of this referral will be required to support any further absences.

We would also like to offer a meeting with myself to agree an attendance improvement plan to support XXXX to improve their attendance. We can be flexible to suit your needs and ask that you provide us with 3 possible dates that you are available over the coming weeks. **Please provide this information to the school office by XXXX.**

From the date of this letter all absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided to support the absence. This can be in the form of a confirmation of appointment, any medical prescriptions or confirmation of appointment from the doctors. A supporting letter can be provided to your GP if required.

We will be monitoring XXXX absence closely going forwards and will look to review it again on XXXX 2023. If we do not see a significant improvement in XXX attendance we will look to refer this matter to Leicester Local Authority Attendance Team for intervention.

As always, we look forward to working with you as a team to support XXXX improved attendance in school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Co-Head Teacher

Appendix 8 – Persistent Absence 3

Dear XXX

Further to my letters of XXX, and XXX where I have highlighted to you that XXX attendance is continuing to cause significant concern.

Total Possible Days	Days Missed	Days Late	% Attendance

You have previously advised us that XXX absence is due to: (Summarise actions from SIMS)

XXX

XXX

XXX

This means that the parent of a child registered at a school and of statutory school age has a legal duty to ensure the child's regular attendance. Failure to fulfil this duty is an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and could result in a penalty notice or prosecution I write to you regarding our continuing concerns relating to XXX attendance at school.

Delete/add as required

- First day calls/office support during absences
- Support from LSA and class teacher to support attendance.
- ELSA support in school
- Offer of breakfast club to support attendance
- Meeting offered between parents and SLT leading attendance
- Assigned support from Senior Leaders with XXXX supporting as a named contact.
- Home escort by SLT for XXXX on non-attendance days
- Rewards and incentives for good attendance and a positive day
- A referral to Early Help to support with strategies to implement in the home
- Consultation with Leicester Inclusion Service to explore further measures available
- Request for referral to CAMHS in case of anxiety as cause of absence.

Unfortunately, despite this support XXXX is still missing significant periods of school and we have not seen the required improvement in attendance.

We would also like to offer a further meeting with myself to agree an attendance improvement plan to support XXXX to improve their attendance. We can be flexible to suit your needs and ask that you provide us with 3 possible dates that you are available over the coming weeks. **Please provide this information to the school office by XXXX.**

If we do not see a significant improvement in attendance over the next two weeks, which is sustained for a period of 6 months we will have no choice but to refer this matter to Leicester Local Authority Attendance team. This is the final opportunity that we will provide for this matter to be resolved.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their child receives efficient full time. This means that the parent of a child registered at a school and of statutory school age has a **legal duty** to ensure the child's regular attendance. Failure to fulfil this duty is an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and could result in a penalty notice or prosecution.

We will be monitoring XXXX absence closely going forwards and will look to review it again on XXXX .

Appendix 9- At Risk of PA

AT RISK OF PERSISTENT ABSENCE

XXXX

Dear XXX

I write to you regarding our continuing concerns relating to XXX attendance at school.

Total Possible Days	Days Missed	Days Late	% Attendance

Due to the number of days absence they have had this academic year they are now at risk of becoming persistently absent. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects.

Persistent absence is reached once your child has had 19 days or more absence. Where a child’s attendance is a cause for concern and we are not seeing a sustained improvement we will put in an attendance improvement plan for your child.

If you do have any barriers to attendance that we are not aware of please do not hesitate to contact us for support.

We look forward to seeing an improvement in your child’s attendance.

Yours Sincerely

-Head Teacher

RPA

Folville Junior School Individual Pupil Attendance Improvement plan

Name	Date of Birth	Current year/teacher	Current Attendance %	Attendance % Prev Year

Summary of reasons for absence	Number of days absence for each reason

Date	Target	Strategies to support	Date review	Responsible	Outcome

Has a Leicester Local Authority Attendance Guidance Checklist been completed?	
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