

November 2019

Attendance, punctuality and penalty notices

Ferndown Middle School is committed to maximising attendance for all pupils to enable them to benefit fully from their education. We believe that regular attendance is vital for effective learning.

We expect your child to be in school every day, on time. If your child can not be in school, please make sure you contact the school office and inform them of why your child is absent from school. We expect a child's attendance to be 100%. Any child whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored and if the attendance falls below 90% they are 'persistently absent'

Please find below a reminder of our procedures.

1. Request for time off school

Parents need to request a 'request for time off school' form and return it to the school office. Only applications requested on this form will be considered. **We do not accept any other method of application for time off, this includes emails to the school office.**

Please allow two weeks for applications to be considered and returned by post. These forms can be requested from the school office or downloaded from the school website.

We ask that parents consider the impact holidays during term time could have on their child's education.

2. Penalty notices for holidays during term time

Holidays during term time will not be authorised by the school. If your child is removed from school for the purpose of a holiday, a Penalty Notice will be considered.

3. Penalty notices

Penalty notices can also be issued when a child's attendance is of a concern. If your child has 10 sessions (5 days) or more of unauthorised absences within a 12 week period, the local authority can issue a penalty notice. If your child is absent from school and this is a cause of concern, two members of staff may conduct a home visit to establish the reason why your child is absent.

4. Punctuality

Pupils are expected to be in the classrooms at 8.45am when the register is taken. If you are arriving with your child after 8.45am, children must enter through the school office and sign in. Children who arrive after 8.45am will be marked as 'L'. If your child arrives after the register closes at 9.10am they will be marked as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence. If your child is late due to a medical appointment please let the school office know and this will be marked as an 'M'.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

If your child is persistently late for school you may be invited into school to discuss if there is any support we can put in place to support with your child arriving at school on time. A Penalty Notice can also be issued for persistent lateness after the register has closed at 9.10am.

If your child is late ten times in any ten school week period this will trigger a Penalty Notice.

Please note we are aware that we have a small group of children who follow a slightly different time table due to medical conditions.

5. Absence due to illness

Whilst we understand that children do become ill on occasions, children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning. If a child's health continues to affect their education, we are obliged to make a referral to the school nursing team to ensure medical advice and support is provided. If your child is ill it is your responsibility to inform the school.

6. Monitoring Attendance

Our office staff has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the SIMs attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the Headteacher and our Pastoral Team to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents. Our Pastoral Team also work with children and parents re attendance issues.

For further details please refer to our Attendance Policy on our website.

“If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.” DfE 2015

If you have any queries regarding attendance, please contact Miss Hurst via the school office.

Mrs G E Allen
Headteacher