FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

# Attendance Policy – Finham Park

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Document History

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| V1 | May 2024 | R Diaz | New Policy |
| V2 | June 2025 | R Diaz | Introduction added. Update to sharing information with the local authority |
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At Finham Park Multi Academy Trust, we strive to create a culture of excellence in attendance across all schools within the Trust, ensuring that every student is supported to attend school regularly and engage fully with their learning. By working together, we will foster an environment where students thrive, families are engaged, and staff work collaboratively to remove barriers to regular attendance.

Our goal is to see a measurable reduction in absence across the Trust, with sustained improvement in attendance rates and engagement. The Trust will be recognized as a leader in fostering positive attendance habits, and our approach will be ingrained in the culture of every school.

Our ambition is to have every child in school every day. To facilitate this, there must be a robust and effective attendance strategy in place. As a Trust, we have adopted the principles of 'Inclusive Attendance' where we prioritise an inclusive and effective partnership with both parents and pupils with the aim of understanding barriers and working with families to remove them.

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance. We aim to achieve this through our whole trust & school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- 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
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- School census guidance
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1. The Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies

The board of trustees will:

- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteachers to account for its implementation
- Identify and monitor attendance patterns across the trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice between schools

The local governing body are responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure all schools in the trust record attendance accurately in the register, and share the required information with the DfE and local authorities
    - Making sure all schools in the trust work effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keep them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most, through termly attendance review meetings with each individual school
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance, including with teachers from across the trust, as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources
- Holding the headteacher(s) to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2. The headteacher

The headteacher, alongside senior leaders within the school and trust, will promote our unwavering commitment to attendance which centres around child-centric actions, evidence informed practices and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote attendance.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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 fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### 3.3. The trust Safeguarding & Inclusion lead

The trust Safeguarding & Inclusion lead, in collaboration with the FPMAT Attendance working party is responsible for:

- Driving attendance improvement across the trust
- Working more intensively with schools who require support to improve attendance
- Acting as a central contact point for schools with attendance queries
- Liaising with the DfE's regional teams for advice about wider support programmes

The trust Safeguarding & Inclusion lead is Rebecca Diaz and can be contacted via telephone number 02476840839 and/or email r.diaz@finhamparkmat.co.uk

### 3.4. The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader also known as the 'senior attendance champion' is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Rob Morey and can be contacted via r.morey@finhampark.co.uk.

### 3.5. The school attendance officer (also known as Home school liaison officer (HSLO) or Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)) & administrators

The school attendance officer & administrators at each school are responsible for:

- Ensuring school register codes are up to date and accurate
- Use Studybugs/My child at school (Bromcom) to check messages
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Share information from parents/carers to the Relevant college lead /mentor where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8)
- 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
- Collate interventions on absence, keeping records, sending letters
- Meeting with parents/carers to discuss attendance concerns & agree support
- Working with Local Authority Attendance officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Collate all leave of absence request forms & inform parents/carers of the school's decision to authorise or not authorise an absence

The attendance officer/team is Laura Kennard / Kim Clarke and can be contacted via L.kennard@finham.co.uk/ k.clarke@finham.co.uk

### 3.6. Class teachers/form tutors

All class teachers/form tutors are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on Bromcom, for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1) and within the first 10 minutes of the session
- Meeting and greeting children on arrival
- Creating positive classroom environments
- Building positive relationships with all children and adults
- Recognising individual and collective attendance related achievements
- Monitoring daily attendance and punctuality for their class, form group, College/House.

### 3.7. Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Ensuring your child's attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. Therefore, parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Report their child's absence before 8.40am 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 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Discuss with the school well in advance any planned absences & only request leave of absence for an exceptional circumstance
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Mentors, SEN team and attendance team, who can be contacted via Relevant Mentors email, or Attendance team : L.kennard@finhampark.co.uk / k.clarke@finhampark.co.uk

### 3.8. Pupils

Within the FPMAT, pupils are expected to:

- Primary schools - Attend school every day, on time
- Secondary schools - Attend every timetabled session, on time
- Sixth form - Call the school to report their absence before 8.40am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1. Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and

absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:45 and ends at 15:15.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45 and will be kept open until 9:15. The register for the second session will be taken at 14:15 and will be kept open until 14:45.

### 4.2. Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am, or as soon as practically possible, by reporting via Studybugs/My Child at School app or calling the school, who can be contacted via 024 7641 8135.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 will be notified of this in advance.

### 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.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, evidence must be provided and the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The school will not authorise a whole days' absence for a medical appointment – the child is expected to attend school prior to or after their appointment depending on whether it is a morning or afternoon appointment.

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.

Parents/carers who wish to request a leave of absence for their child(ren) must do so in writing using the Leave of Absence form (see appendix 2). See section 5 for further details.

### 4.4. Lateness and punctuality

All pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. Pupils who arrive late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Please note: L and/or U codes will also be used if a pupil arrives late for the PM session.

Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may result in a penalty notice being issued, or prosecution.

### 4.5. Following up unexplained absence

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

- Contact the pupil's parent 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 may complete a home visit or contact external agencies such as the LA Attendance team, Children's social care or 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Contact the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Attendance officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Discuss the pupil at the termly Targeted support meetings to seek advice and guidance on additional support strategies
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals e.g. to Early Help and/or other external agencies
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 6 below), as appropriate

### 4.6. Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.8 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through Study bugs and MyChildAtSchool.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1. Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- 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 rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

All absences associated with a family holiday (without exceptional circumstances) during term time will be marked as unauthorised on the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority by the headteacher and be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website (see appendix 2). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong (s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Pupils should attend school on the days surrounding those set apart for religious observance.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the trust/school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience

- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

## 6. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### 6.1 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

### 6.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but not criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

### 6.3 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

### 6.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 per child within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, within a rolling 3 year period, the parent must pay £160 within 28 days with no option for the offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action, such as a prosecution, will be taken instead.

## 7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Our **Inclusive Attendance** approach is rooted in a recognition-based approach that recognises both personal and collective achievements. This approach serves to thwart isolation, prevent victimisation, cultivate positive environments, nurture relationships, foster inclusivity, and ultimately cultivate intrinsic motivation among our children, families, and staff.

Schools will work closely with parents/carers to promote the importance of school attendance & support regular attendance – for example communicating early about issues; acknowledging positive improvements; indicating a named contact in school; identifying barriers to attendance; seeking support and/or making referrals to other agencies; offering parents an attendance contract etc.

Students' attendance will be celebrated for various reasons and through a range of rewards such as: Certificates, Praise points and Assemblies.

## 8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, Finham Park School will implement a range of strategies such as early intervention, support for vulnerable families, intervention programmes, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. Understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children and families is crucial for developing any targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance outcomes. The Trust promote the use of the ATTEND Framework (developed within Brighton & Hove City Council), the Coventry & Warwickshire Dimensions tool Dimensions - Home (covwarkpt.nhs.uk) and other similar resources in order to identify these barriers to attendance.

### 8.1. Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

As per government guidance, where pupils have complex and long-term health conditions that are impacting attendance, schools will work with professionals to provide cross-agency

support where they feel other services may help to alleviate a pupil's concerns about barriers to attending school, and ensure that the pupil knows which school staff they can talk to if required.

### 8.2. Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health, SEND or other known barriers to attendance

As part of any plan to support the child to attend, Finham Park School will facilitate relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying mental health issue, SEND or other known barrier e.g. young carers or those known to children's social services..

This will include making reasonable adjustments to overcome specific barriers to attendance such as:

- Sensitive conversations with pupils and with parents/carers as swiftly as possible
- Utilising the ATTEND tool or similar to identify barriers
- A trusted adult periodically checking how the pupil is feeling
- Enabling the pupil to access a quiet space during social times
- Support to access additional educational support & tutoring
- Timetable adjustments &/or phased reintegration

More examples of common, effective reasonable adjustments can be found in the DfE: Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance: effective practice examples (publishing.service.gov.uk).

Any plan to help the child attend may also involve making referrals to in-school or external professional support. This may include but is not limited to: community groups; school nursing services; specialist teachers; mental health support teams; counselling services; psychological practitioners.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Parents should consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

### 8.3. Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Finham Park School will work together with parents/carers, professionals and importantly the child, to plan the support for a return to school. The school might choose to write an Individual Healthcare/Medical Plan for your child, which sets out exactly what care will be needed in school and who will give it. Some children welcome the chance to get back into a routine and to see their friends, others, particularly teenagers, may feel more anxiety about

going back. This could be because of changes in their appearance or worries about friendships. Getting the right support in place can make a big difference & therefore this will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

### 8.4. Prolonged absence for pupils in the EYFS

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy available on the school website) and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

### 8.5. Staged Reintegration/Part-time timetables

All children of compulsory school age are entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and the school and local authority have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in the area receive such an education. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

We will not use a part-time timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision where applicable. We will never put a part-time timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

We will notify the Attendance and Children Missing Education Team of all part-time timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed and use the appropriate attendance code to record this within our admission register.

## 9. Attendance monitoring

### 9.1. Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

### 9.2. Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Work with the trust lead to find attendance patterns across the trust to identify common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools

### 9.3. Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to Mentors and attendance team, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil’s absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### 9.4. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school (19 days), and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% (100 days) or more of school. Absence at just 10% is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to both the trust & school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 6, above)

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Finham Park Schools Designated Senior Attendance lead in collaboration with Rebecca Diaz, FPMAT Safeguarding & Inclusion Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full board of trustees & subsequently the school's local governing body.

## 11. Links with other policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and reach their full potential, the following policies are integral:

- Child protection & Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

## 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 |
| **Attending a place other than the school** | | |
| **K** | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority |
| **V** | Attending an educational visit or trip | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school |
| **P** | Participating in a sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| **W** | Attending work experience | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement |
| **B** | Attending any other approved educational activity | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience |
| **D** | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| **Absent – leave of absence** | | |
| **C1** | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **M** | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| **J1** | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| **S** | Study leave | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination |
| **X** | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| **C2** | Part-time timetable | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable |
| **C** | Exceptional circumstances | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| **Absent – other authorised reasons** | | |
| **T** | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes |
| **R** | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| **I** | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health) |
| **E** | Suspended or excluded | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made |
| **Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause** | | |
| **Q** | Lack of access arrangements | Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Y1** | Transport not available | Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available |
| **Y2** | Widespread disruption to travel | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency |
| **Y3** | Part of school premises closed | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open |
| **Y4** | Whole school site unexpectedly closed | Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather) |
| **Y5** | Criminal justice detention | Pupil is unable to attend as they are:<br>• In police detention<br>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or<br>• Detained under a sentence of detention |
| **Y6** | Public health guidance or law | Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law |
| **Y7** | Any other unavoidable cause | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes |
| **Absent – unauthorised absence** | | |
| **G** | Holiday not granted by the school | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school |
| **N** | Reason for absence not yet established | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **O** | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence |
| **U** | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session |
| **Administrative codes** | | |
| **Z** | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered |
| **#** | Planned whole-school closure | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays |

## 12. Appendix 2:

**Leave of Absence Form**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Ensuring your child attends school every day will help to maximise their education and social achievements as well as developing self-discipline, organisation and preparedness for the future.

Research shows missing school for even one day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances.

The Department for Education no longer allows the Head Teachers (or authorised person) **to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances that apply to the application.**

Finham Park Multi academy Trust define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Examples of exceptional circumstances **may** include:

- An immediate family member's bereavement, crisis or serious illness
- Funeral or wedding of immediate family member
- Religious observance
- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the child is participating and is at county standard or above and a letter has been provided from the performing arts/sports regional governing body as evidence.

If you consider that your requests for school absence is exceptional, you must complete the attached form return it asap and wherever possible at least two weeks before the absence start date. All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A leave of absence for a family holiday **will not** be authorised for such reasons as:

- The availability of cheap holidays or desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced during school holidays
- Holidays which overlap the beginning or end of term
- Parental difficulty obtaining leave (with local judgement applied in cases where evidence is provided by the employer that it cannot accommodate leave during school holidays without serious consequences)

Please be aware, students who are absent for more than 10 days following their expected date of return will be reported to the Local Authority as a child missing education and may be permanently removed from the school roll.

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as the following:

- To care for other family members
- Family Anniversaries/Birthdays
- To interpret for other family members
- No school uniform/shoes
- Bullying/Friendship problems
- Head lice
- Travel problems
- School refusal

**Name of School:**

**APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME**

**Please note:** Students who miss school frequently can: fall behind with their work; do less well in examinations; miss out on social interactions and development as well as a range of extra-curricular opportunities. Good attendance shows potential employers that a young person is reliable, resilient & committed to their education and professional development. Research suggests that students who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of involvement in antisocial behaviour or crime.

**Full name of child(ren):**

Address:

Name of parent/carer with whom the child resides:

Any siblings at any other school:

| Sibling name(s) | Name of current school |
|---|---|
| | |

Leave requested from_____ to _____

Total number of school days _____

Why are you requesting an exceptional leave of absence during term time?

What steps have you taken to minimise the impact of the leave on your child's learning?

**I/we have read the information on the reverse of this application and would like to formally request the leave of absence as shown.**

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) _____Date: _____

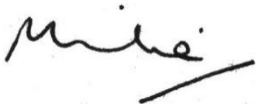
The Head Teacher will consider your request for leave of absence following government guidelines as well as the following points:

1. The child's previous attendance history
2. The child's stage of education.
3. The time of year

A letter will be sent within 7 days informing you of the school's decision regarding your Request for leave of absence during term time.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Reviewed by:** | **R Diaz** | **July 2026** |
| **Next review date:** | | **July 2027** |
| **Approved by Trustees:** | | **September 2026** |

**Signed:**



MARK BAILIE
Executive Headteacher

**Signed:**



PETER BURNS MBE
Chair of Board of Trustees