



Attendance Policy

Finlay Community School believe that all children have the right to a full-time education regardless of age, aptitude and ability. Being 'At school. On time. Every day,' is the schools motto for promoting to children to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Finlay Community School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor the regular attendance of all pupils, acknowledging that irregular attendance can seriously disrupt continuity of learning, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

Finlay Community School provides a secure, challenging and happy learning environment for all pupils where they are respected and valued. We want every child to be motivated to reach his or her full potential, by encouraging children to attend school regularly and punctually, their experience of school life is enriched.

We believe that good habits need to be instilled at a young age as good attendance and punctuality are central to achieving potential. Children cannot participate if they are not at school therefore; miss out on vital learning experiences. It is also unsettling for children if they arrive late and can cause disruption to other pupils and the class teacher.

The school community consists of parents, children and staff and we must all take responsibility for achieving excellent attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and we are aware of the need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems, which can be used whenever there are concerns over a particular pupil.

Aims

Finlay Community School aims to meet the governments' target of achieving 95% attendance or more for *all children* in school through working with parents, children and the Local Authority (LA). We aim to create a culture in which good attendance and punctuality is accepted as the norm, and to demonstrate that this is valued by everyone in the school.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum;
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.



Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality with Pupils and Parents

The school newsletter and website communicates the whole school attendance percentage for each term as well as the class who has won best attendance for the term. If a class achieves 100% this is put in the newsletter. We hold an annual attendance award ceremony:

Individual pupils receive a rosette at the end

Rosette	Rewards
95% Purple	2 years Double rosette
96% Green	3years Gold purple rosette
97% Blue	4years Purple and gold rosette
98% Pink	5year Trophy and a gift
99% Red	6years Trophy and a gift
100% Gold	7years Trophy and a gift

Attendance Targets

The Executive Head and Head of school and Governors at Finlay Community School are responsible for setting attendance targets. The school attendance targets must be agreed and signed by the governors and Head of School to ensure they are then relayed to the staff, parents, Carers and pupils so everyone is working towards a common goal.

Overall Attendance Targets and Achievements

Attendance Targets		Attendance Achieved
2015/2016	95%	96.1%
2016/2017	95%	96%
2017/2018	95%	95%
2018/2019	95%	96.12%

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

School Year	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
2015/2016	3.4%	0.73%
2016/2017	3.13%	0.86%
2017/2018	3.48%	1.53%
2018/2019	3.62%	0.26%

Once a week, the whole schools attendance is reviewed to identify any child's attendance that falls below 90%. Any child whose absence falls below 90% will be referred to the school Family Services Manager. The Education Act of 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Section 444 of this Act states:



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“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence”.

New Intake

For those parents whose children are beginning their school life at Finlay Community School, they receive an introductory talk by the Family Services Manager and Head of School which includes the subject of attendance. Good habits are promoted from the children's' first year of school in Reception Class and are continued to be encouraged right the way through to year 6.

Registration

All schools are required to keep an admission register (the school roll) and an attendance register which must be marked once at the beginning of the morning and during the afternoon session. The school register is marked electronically directly onto SIMS which can be accessed through school IPADS in the case of a fire.. Children who are not in class at the time of registration are recorded as absent; an appropriate code will be added to the register when a reason for the absence has been provided. Attendance Codes are provided by the Department for Education (DfE).

ATTENDANCE CODE	MEANING
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late - arriving via the front door after 08.55am
U	Late - 9.15am or after - unauthorised
E	Excluded
H	Family Holiday
I	Illness
M	Absent for a medical/dental appointment
C	Other authorised circumstances
O	Unauthorised circumstance
R	Religious Observance
V	Educational Visits
P	Sporting Activity
B	Educated off site
D	Dual Registration
F	Extended Family Holiday
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)
J	Interview
N	No reason yet provided
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
W	Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory School Age Absence
Y	Enforced Closure
Z	Pupil not yet on roll
#	School closed to pupils



The Start of the School Day

The school opens at 8.00 am for pupils who have paid for breakfast. The school day begins at 8.55 am and all children should be lined up on the playground by this time.

Any child arriving after the bell has gone will need to enter school via the front door and report to the school office. The pupil's name and reason for their lateness will be recorded on electronic signing system. This lateness affects attendance figures for individual pupils and class groups as well as the whole school and is closely monitored on a daily basis. The register closes at 9.15am so any child arriving after this time will be classed as unauthorised. Any child receiving 10 unauthorised absences will be contacted by the Family Services Manager.

Absence from School

If a pupil is prevented from attending school as a result of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school of the pupil's absence. We ask that this should be done as soon as possible from 8am on the first day of absence and for each day of the pupil's absence (you can leave a message on the phone - option 1). Your message is recorded on SIMS and retained on file for future records. This type of absence is classed as authorised absence (see registration codes) unless the Head Teacher or other member of staff is unhappy with the reason provided. Absences that relate to family bereavement (close relatives only) or which are for religious observance will generally be authorised. However, absences for shopping, visiting relatives, day trips and birthdays will be classed as unauthorised even if a letter is provided.

Truancy

Truancy is currently not a problem at Finlay Community School. However, if this is suspected at any stage the parents will be contacted immediately. Strategies will then be developed within the school/parent partnership to ensure that the underlying issues are addressed.

Medical Appointments

We encourage parents not to make medical appointments during school time if possible. Medical appointments taken in school time affect attendance figures for individual pupils as well class groups and the school as a whole. However, we do realise that at times this can be unavoidable so will take this into consideration.

School Monitoring Procedures

The Family Services Manger will check registers daily to maintain accurate records. If no contact has been received by school regarding the reason for a pupil's absence, the school will contact the parents by text. If no satisfactory reason is received the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

The Family Services Manager will review identified pupils who are cause for concern regarding attendance. The following process is adhered to in order to encourage better attendance:

WEEK 1: Parents of children with unexplained absence will be speaking to by their Class Teacher requesting a reason for non-attendance at school.



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WEEK 2: If attendance does not show improvement after 2 weeks the Family Services Manager will contact parents to organise a meeting to discuss support they may need.

1 MONTH: After a 4 week period if no improvement is evident; the Family Services Manager will contact the parent/carer to arrange a meeting with the Head of School.

6 WEEKS: If the parent/s do not attend the meetings above, make contact with the school or if the attendance of the pupil does not improve, formal proceedings can be instigated by the Local Authority (LA).

Holidays

Parents *do not* have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. Requests are considered on an individual basis following guidelines issued by the DfE and Local Authority.

Although the DfE do not advise that parents remove children from school for a holiday, where parents wish to request permission to do so, they must fill in a holiday request form, which can be obtained from the school office. The school reserves the right to refuse to authorise holiday absences if they are not considered to meet exceptional circumstances, interfere with assessment tests or if the pupil's attendance is poor, below 95%. The final decision is at the Head of School's discretion.

All holiday request forms will be replied to via phone call outlining the reason behind a decision. If a pupil goes on holiday without permission the absence will be classed as unauthorised.

School Responsibilities

All staff at Finlay Community School will provide an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. Staff will therefore encourage good habits by:

- Ensuring that online registers are marked accurately and promptly every day;
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence – a letter from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence;
- Responding to those children who are absent with care, but firmly and consistently;
- Contacting parents when concerned about a pupil's absence and making a record of this;
- Consulting with the Family Services Manger if a pupil's attendance gives any cause for concern;
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual pupils.

Parental Responsibilities

We also encourage parents to promote an ethos with their children/family which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. We would ask parents therefore to encourage good habits by:

- Making sure your child gets enough sleep so they are able to wake up in plenty of time to get ready for school and eat a good breakfast;



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- Make sure your child arrives on the school playground between 08.45 and 08.55 and are collected at the end of the school on time;
- Contact the school as soon as possible in the morning if your child will not be attending school stating the reason;
- Make sure that your child attends school wearing the correct uniform and brings appropriate kit and provision for lunch;
- Help your child by showing an interest in school life;
- If your child appears reluctant to attend school, contact the child's class teacher immediately to discuss any concerns. There could be a number of reasons for this reluctance such as difficulties with school work, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important to identify any reasons for a reluctance to attend school quickly and before it becomes a more serious issue.

Pupils Responsibility

Additionally, we all encourage the pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others and to play a positive role in the life of the school, making the most of educational opportunities available. We therefore expect children to:

- Respect themselves and others;
- Do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually (e.g. getting up on time/when they are asked to);
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied and this is stopping them attending school;
- Be kind and caring to each in order to create a sense of belonging;
- Talk to an adult if they have any worries or concerns over school that make them feel like they don't want to come;
- Wear the correct school uniform and arrive at school ready to learn.

Children missing education

Anyone concerned that a child is missing education (CME) can make a referral to the Gloucestershire County Council, Education Performance and Inclusion Team.

Children Missing Education (CME) refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity eg school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.

CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown), and are usually children who are registered on a school roll / alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address and either

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
- has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

It is the responsibility of the Education Performance and Inclusion team, on behalf of the Local Authority (LA), to:-



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- Collate information on all reported cases of CME of statutory school aged children in Gloucestershire maintained schools, academies, free schools, alternative provision academies and Alternative Provision Schools (APS).
- Liaise with partner agencies and other LAs and schools across Britain to track pupils who may be missing education.
- Ensure each child missing education is offered full time education within 2 weeks of the date the LA was informed.

Alerting the LA that a child may be missing education

Any professional should alert the LA when they suspect that a child might be missing from education. To make this process as easy as possible, a referral should be sent to:

Fair Access Team
Access to education service
Shire Hall,
Westgate Street,
Gloucester GL1 2TP

Tel 01452 328774

missingpupils@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Agreed by the governors:

Reviewed: 04.05.2020



ARRIVING LATE FOR SCHOOL



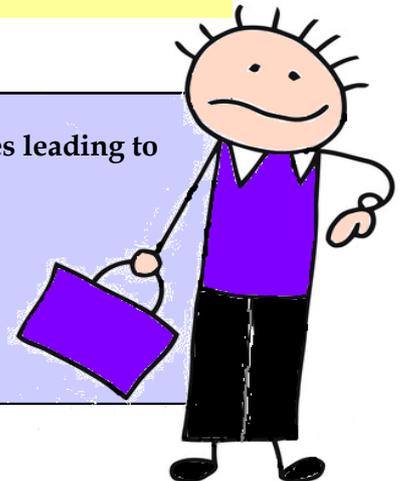
Our school registers are open from 8.55am - 9.15am. Any child arriving after this time will be recorded as unauthorised.

10 unauthorised absences can lead to a fine.

Late Each Day		Lost per Year
5 minutes	⇒	3 days lost
10 minutes	⇒	6.5 days lost
15 minutes	⇒	10 days lost
20 minutes	⇒	13 days lost
25 minutes	⇒	16 days lost
30 minutes	⇒	19 days lost

If you are having problems with morning routines leading to arriving late at school please contact:

Michelle Bryce (CFW) - 530310





Finlay Community School

Finlay Road, Gloucester GL4 6TR

School Tel: (01452) 530310 Fax: (01452) 530311

admin@finlay.gloucs.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs Rachel Lane

Date.....

Dear

Re:

We notice from our records that your daughter, _____ has been absent from school on the dates listed below and we have not yet been notified as to the reason for her absence.

We would appreciate it if you could complete the reply slip below and return it to _____ class teacher or to the school office as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Bryce
Family Liaison Officer

To:

Name:

Dates and Sessions of absence	Reasons

Signature _____

Date _____





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admin@finlay.gloucs.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs Rachel Lane

Date.....

Dear

We notice from our records that your child has been absent from school and we have not yet been notified as to the reason for their absence even though we have contacted you.

Your child's attendance is now _____ therefore we need to meet to discuss how I can support you to improve this. We expect all children to achieve at least 95% attendance over the school year and as you can see your child's current attendance is not set to achieve this.

As discussed on the phone we will meet on _____ to share ideas on a way forward. This is a supportive meeting to help ensure that your child's attendance improves swiftly.

I look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Michelle Bryce
Family Liaison Officer



Attendance Action Plan

Name:	Year:	Date Plan Drawn Up:
Present:		
Current Attendance %:		
Background:		
Pupil agrees to:		
Parent(s) or Carer agrees to:		
School agrees to:		
Other Agency agrees to:		
Agreed Attendance Target:		

Review Date:	
As Parent/Carer of I understand that failure to meet these targets may result in legal proceedings being taken against me.	
Signed:	
Pupil.....	School.....
Parent.....	Other.....



Finlay Community School Appendix E

Finlay Road, Gloucester GL4 6TR

School Tel: (01452) 530310 Fax: (01452) 530311
admin@finlay.gloucs.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs Rachel Lane

Date.....

Dear

We are writing to let you know that we will be closely monitoring your child's attendance next term due to their overall percentage for this term falling below 90%.

As a school if a child's attendance falls below 90% (which means they have had more than 10 days off school that term) we have to look together at ways this can be improved. Although letters have been sent out outlining the importance of children being **at school, on time, every day** – unfortunately your child's attendance has still fallen below 90%.

We will always look to avoid prosecuting parents and to this end we would appreciate you giving some thought to the way your child's attendance can be improved next term. We are happy to help in any way possible, through meetings to discuss morning routines/support or through our family worker Michelle Bryce.

Children are legally entitled to attend school for 190 days per year leaving them with 175 days to attend appointments and holidays. We trust that you will be able to support us with your child's education.

We look forward to seeing you next term and hope that you enjoy your break.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rachel Lane Head Teacher



Application to take a child out of school during term time

(to be completed and returned to the Headteacher before the absence takes place)

I wish to take my child/ren.....Year

Out of school for the (dates) toNumber of Days

The reason for removing my child/ren from education during term time is:

Signature of Parent/Carer:

.....Date.....

Your children have a right to receive a full time education which is 190 days.

Can I remind you that any holidays not taken in Term 6 will not be authorised.

Term 6 holidays will only be considered if your child’s attendance is 95% or above.

Thank you for your understanding.

Michelle Bryce Family Liaison Officer

Office use:

Current Attendance:	Date:	Comment:
Parent contacted:		Authorised Unauthorised

