



FCPS ATTENDANCE POLICY

RESPONSIBILITY	DEPUTY HEAD OF THE PREP SCHOOL
DATE REVIEWED	AUGUST 2025
NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2026

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a full school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a key part in making our school so successful. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting full school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital they are at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work.

Full attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

1.1 The Deputy Head of the Prep School will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will work with the Assistant Head Pastoral and the relevant Tutors to ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

1.2 The Deputy Head of the Prep School will be the designated 'Attendance Champion'

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

1.3 Responsibilities of Classroom Staff:

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately and in a timely fashion
- Liaise with the Deputy Head on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence to the pupil's Tutor in the first instance

1.4 Responsibilities of Pupils:

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in school on time including all lessons as school commitments as appropriate

1.5 Responsibilities of Parents:

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers legal responsibility (section of the 1996 Education Act).

Parents will:

- Inform the school at the earliest possible opportunity of their child's absence
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by email.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- Ensure that their child signs in and out at reception if arriving/departing after 0830 and leaving before 1600.

2. Recording Attendance

2.1 Attendance in school is defined as being present on the school site.

2.2 Legally, the register must be marked twice daily at an am and pm register. At the Prep School, every pupil is formally registered on iSAMS in Tutor Groups between 08:15 and 0830 when registration closes and at the start of lesson 6 between 13:45 and 13:55 when registration closes. Staff take headcounts in every lesson and activity that they deliver during the day and an additional paper register is taken at lunchtime to track attendance at mealtimes. Boarders are registered at prep, supper and bedtime and wake-up. There will be regular meetings where attendance data is scrutinised by relevant SLT members, the Principal and governors.

2.3 Lateness /Punctuality

- The school day begins at 08:30, and all pupils are expected to be in school at their Tutor Group ready for morning registration at 0815; all lateness is recorded daily.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as 'N' in the first instance whilst the parents of the child are contacted to ascertain their whereabouts
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M' and this appointment request must be sent to the Head of the Prep School via the Head's PA for approval at least 48 hours before the absence. Where possible, doctor and dentist appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

2.4 Parents of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered.

2.5 The school will use the standard codes for registration unless there are changes made by the LA meaning our data would then become skewed accordingly. The school will always be consistent in its application and assign the appropriate code to ensure clarity of where a pupil is at each registration throughout the school day.

3. Continued or Ongoing Absence

3.1 If a child misses 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as persistent absentees. Parents of children who have an attendance record of below 90% in one term will receive a phone call by the Attendance Champion to inform them, to discuss the absences and offer support to families if required.

3.2 "Severe absence" will be defined as attendance on school site as less than 75%.

3.3 “In school truancy” will be flagged where it occurs, and sanctions put in place accordingly.

3.4 The school will monitor absences daily, with the Head of the Prep School informed weekly of any trends and patterns by year and any pupils of concern. Data will be sent to the governors to regularly scrutinise. This data will also be used to confirm attendance trends and highlight any issues that may need addressing if not already flagged by staff.

3.5 Emotionally Based School Avoidance will be managed by a pupil’s pastoral team including help and support from the medical centre, counsellor or other external agencies where appropriate in close collaboration with parents and pupil.

3.6 Continued or ongoing absence will be managed by a pupil’s pastoral team including help and support from the medical centre, counsellor or other external agencies where appropriate in close collaboration with parents and pupil.

3.7 If all school interventions do not lead to an improvement in a pupil’s attendance, and parents continue to not take responsibility for ensuring their child is in school, then the EWO may be contacted.

3.8 Pupils classed as SEN whose attendance at school is low will be managed by a pupil’s pastoral team including help and support from the medical centre, counsellor or other external agencies where appropriate in close collaboration with parents and pupil.

3.9 The school will refer to the 2023 government document, “Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance” for specific guidance on supporting pupils with mental health issues affecting attendance. [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#)

4. Request for Leave of Absence

4.1 All absence requests should be put to the Head of the Prep School with the pupil’s Tutor included. Pupil absences should be avoided wherever possible unless there are exceptional circumstances which are then considered by the Head before either approving the absence or not.

4.2 Medical appointments can be authorised by the pupil’s Tutor

4.3 The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. In the majority of cases, holiday will not be authorised.

4.4 If term time leave is taken, without prior permission from the Head, or the request has not been approved by the Head, the absence will be unauthorised. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child’s schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

4.3 Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling. Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Head to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child’s participation in a public performance is recorded as C an authorised absence.

4.4 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport. Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is however, down to the Head’s discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Head.

5. Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-up.

Updating

This document has been updated in light of the latest statutory guidance from August of 2024

Deputy Head of the Prep School