

# Fair Ways Education

## Attendance Policy

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## Contents

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | School Attendance.....   | 4 |
| 2 | The Admission and Attendance Register.....   | 4 |
| 3 | Children at Risk of Missing Education .....  | 5 |
| 4 | Holidays in term time .....  | 5 |
| 5 | Difficulties in getting young people to school.....                                  | 5 |
| 6 | Reporting absence / appointments.....  | 5 |
|   | Appendix A – Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (Covid-19) ..... | 7 |
|   | Appendix B – Absence and Attendance Codes.....                                       | 8 |

## Fair Ways Vision, Mission and Values

### Our vision

To build an institution that makes a difference to society and leaves a legacy greater than ourselves and our contributions.

### Our mission

Making a difference through passionate care, support and education.

### Our values

As a charity we measure our wealth by the difference we make, rather than any profit.

We believe that by embodying a culture in which every individual is valued for their own contribution, we can develop them and harness their potential, so that they may achieve great things.

Our values form the heart of the work we do, defined by Fair Ways people, for Fair Ways people. These are the values by which we operate, by which we are governed, and to which we are held accountable.

We therefore expect every individual within the organisation to *play their part*:

| <b>P</b> ROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE  | <b>A</b> CCEPTING   | <b>R</b> EFLECTIVE   | <b>T</b> RANSPARENT   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We do what we say we will</li> <li>We approach challenges with optimism and enthusiasm</li> <li>We don't judge, we notice</li> <li>We put the needs of the service before our own personal gains</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We don't give up on people</li> <li>We value all individuals and are willing to challenge them</li> <li>We embrace each other's differences as much as our similarities</li> <li>We accept responsibility for our actions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We give feedback, we invite feedback, we listen to feedback</li> <li>We look inward before we look outward</li> <li>We learn as much from our mistakes as from our successes</li> <li>We listen to each other, learn from each other and grow together</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are always willing to explain why</li> <li>We have the courage to be open and honest</li> <li>We earn trust through our transparency</li> <li>We live by our values even when no-one is watching</li> </ul> |

## 1 School Attendance

- 1.1 This policy document sets out the guidelines followed by Fair Ways education in regards to school attendance and expectations.
- 1.2 Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all the young people within Fair Ways education can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that is insufficiently stated that young people need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education.
- 1.3 Missing out on lessons and time at school leaves young people vulnerable to falling behind. Many of the young people who are admitted to Fair Ways have already missed substantial periods of time at school and it is Fair Ways priority that all young people feel safe and comfortable in attending school on a regular and consistent basis.

## 2 The Admission and Attendance Register

- 2.1 The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission and attendance register with all young people attending school to be on both registers.
- 2.2 **Admission Register** – this document contains the personal details of all young people in the school, along with the date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.
- 2.3 **Attendance Register** – the school takes an attendance register on a daily basis using information gathered from the Co-Ordinators. The administrators record whether a young person is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances or not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (Appendix A). All absences are followed up to ascertain a reason, ensure the correct safeguarding action or taken, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct code.
- 2.4 Fair Ways Education use the national codes to ensure the recording and monitoring of attendance and absence is consistent and complies with relevant regulations. (Appendix B – attendance codes).
- 2.5 Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the

date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

- 2.6 Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **3 Children at Risk of Missing Education**

- 3.1 The Director of Education, Heads of School and Senior Leadership Team all have the highest regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- 3.2 Fair Ways Education have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for all our young people who go missing from school and are absent for periods of time. Fair Ways holds emergency contact numbers for all our young people, where practicable we hold two numbers.

- 3.3 If a young person is absent from school, without notification, the SLT will; try to make contact with the primary parent / carer, if no response they will contact one of the emergency numbers; visit the home to complete a welfare check; make sure children's services and the local authorities special educational needs (SEN) team, where appropriate, are made aware of any steps that have had to be taken

### **4 Holidays in term time**

- 4.1 Parents / carers are expected to take their children on holiday during school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education and changing structure and routing. However, within Fair Ways education we understand the difficulties that can arise from young people with special educational needs, therefore holidays will be granted by the Head of School if the reasons are deemed necessary and appropriate.

### **5 Difficulties in getting young people to school**

- 5.1 Attending school can be an extremely challenging task for a lot of young people, Fair Ways education recognise this and have strategies in place to support young people and their families including planned transitions, interventions, staggered start times, 1:1 support.

### **6 Reporting absence / appointments**

- 6.1 It is the parents' / carers' responsibility to notify the school or their young person's tutor on the first day of absence at the earliest opportunity. Absence can be reported by telephoning the school office or calling / emailing tutors.

- 6.2 It is the parents' / carers' responsibility to ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents / carer's are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance.
  
- 6.3 It is the parents' / carers' responsibility to liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness.

## **Appendix A – Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (Covid-19)**

Fair Ways Education will implement all DfE policies and guidelines relating to attendance during the Covid-19 pandemic. From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

However, there are some circumstances where young people cannot attend school due to coronavirus, therefore, a new attendance code and category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

### **Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- Guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care<sup>12</sup> or
- Any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

If parents, carers or young people have concerns about attending school during the pandemic they should speak to staff or tutors in the first instance.

## Appendix B – Absence and Attendance Codes

### Present at School

Registration **Code / \**: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.

**Code L:** Late arrival before the register has closed

### Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

#### **Code B:** Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the 11 safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

#### **Code D:** Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.



**Code J:** At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment  
This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P:** Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V:** Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

**Code W:** Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience 12 placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

### Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

**Code C:** Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Code E:** Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

**Code H:** Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be

satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I:** Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

**Code M:** Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

**Code R:** Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

**Code S:** Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

**Code T:** Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

## Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

**Code G:** Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N:** Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O:** Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U:** Arrived in school after registration closed Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

## Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

**Code X:** Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

**Code Y:** Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

**Code Z:** Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

**Code #:** Planned whole or partial school closure This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.