



Forest Gate Community School Attendance Policy

1.0. Forest Gate Community School mission statement

Forest Gate Community School is a learning community where our students have high aspirations for themselves and each other. We want our students to grow into well-informed, well-balanced and confident citizens. We aim to provide a disciplined, safe environment where children learn effectively and respect each other.

2.0. Policy links to school mission, aims and values

At Forest Gate Community School we do everything possible to facilitate regular attendance at school. There are four main reasons for this:

1. all young people aged between 5 and 16 have the right to full time education. Schools and local education authorities have a duty to ensure that they take up this right
2. a key factor in raising levels of achievement in our school is establishing a regular pattern of attendance and punctuality. Pupils cannot achieve if they are absent from school
3. positive attitudes towards attendance enable pupils to maximise their opportunities both at school and in later life
4. Forest Gate Community School places a high priority on promoting equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. Irregular attendance may lead to disadvantage and inequality, place pupils at risk, isolate them from their peers and may result in unsettled behaviour

At Forest Gate Community School a member of the Leadership Group (LG) has responsibility for attendance. The attendance and punctuality of all pupils is regularly monitored by the pastoral staff. Written attendance reports are submitted to the Head of School or designated member(s) of staff, Local School Board and leadership group every half term.

3.0. The position regarding family holidays, extended trips and/or leave for other purposes

We generally do not authorise request for personal leave, family holidays, extended trips or any other purposes. Absences taken during term time for the purpose above after a termly/half termly break cannot be authorised by parents; only the school can do this. Exceptional circumstance will be considered by the Head of School or designated member(s) of staff at their discretion, and their decision is final. The legal position is that under regulation 12 of the Education, Schools and Further Education Regulations 1981, no parent can demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday or personal circumstances as of right.

At Forest Gate Community School we do not authorise holidays and/or extended trips overseas in term time as regular attendance is a key factor in a pupil's achievement at school.

If a pupil is taken on holiday and/or extended trip during the school term, the school may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice on its behalf. The fine is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days of receiving the notice. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, but is paid within 28 days, the cost will rise to £120. Failure to pay the penalty notice may result in the parent/carer being taken to court.

In exceptional circumstances, a parent/carer must make a case for taking the pupil away from school during term time, which means that the parent/carer has to show why his or her child should be

treated differently from the norm. The case must be made in writing directly to the Head of School. However, making a case does not mean that leave will be granted.

4.0. School procedures for improving pupil attendance and punctuality

4.1. Recording and authorising absence

Any pupil who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Head of School or designated member(s) of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be reported to the Local Authority. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken to address the absence.

4.2. Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:30am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases, for instance, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will open at 13:00 and will close at 13:30.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present but will be coded as late before registers close. This will be recorded with time of arrival and reason for the lateness.

Pupils arriving late without a valid reason will be put in late detention for an hour on the same day. Detentions take place after school for Years 7 to 10 and during lunch time for Year 11s.

If a pupil is persistently late to school, the Head of Learning will intervene to resolve the problem. This may include an interview with the pupil to understand the problems, placing the pupil on punctuality report, and making home contact to remind parents of the school's punctuality expectations.

4.3. First day/second day absence

For safeguarding reasons, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school on the morning of their child's absence. The school will make contact to notify parent(s)/carer(s) on the first day of absence if we have not previously been contacted.

4.4. Third day absence

If a pupil is still away and there has been no parental contact over the previous two days, the Family Support Worker or a member of the pastoral team will complete a home visit to confirm the pupil is safe and not a Child Missing Education (CME). The parent/carer will be reminded of the attendance procedures of the school. The school will invite the parent/carer into school for a meeting to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Head of Learning, Student Manager or Attendance Lead if absences persist.

4.5. Attendance intervention stages

Research has indicated that poor attendance has a detrimental effect to student achievement and outcomes. For that reason, the school monitors and undertakes various actions to improve the attendance of all pupils. These include meetings with various members of the attendance team in the following stages:

Stage	Criteria	Actions
Stage 1	Sporadic absences & attendance figure of below 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stage 1 attendance meeting between the parent/carer and Student Manager● Stage 1 letter sent● Actions agreed and attendance is monitored for 3 weeks● Referral to Stage 2 if attendance does not improve
Stage 2	Regular absences & below 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stage 2 attendance meeting between the parent/carer and Head of Learning● Stage 2 letter sent● Actions agreed and attendance is monitored for 3 weeks● Referral to Stage 3 if attendance does not improve
Stage 3	Regular absences & below 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stage 3 attendance meeting between the parent/carer and LG Attendance Lead● Stage 3 letter sent● Actions agreed and attendance is monitored for 3 weeks● Attendance Panel Hearing warning letter sent● Referral to Attendance Panel Hearing if attendance does not improve
Stage 4	Regular absences & below 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stage 4 Attendance Panel Hearing meeting between parent and Deputy Headteacher● Parents/carers attendance contract signed and improvement timeline is set● Stage 4 letter sent● Actions agreed and attendance is monitored for 3 weeks● Referral to Local Authority's Court Officer if attendance does not improve

4.6. Persistent absence

A pupil is considered to have persistent absences if he/she has an overall attendance at the school of below 90%. Parents are notified of this via letters, home contact is made to remind parents of the school's attendance procedures and meetings are arranged in accordance with attendance stages to understand the issues and agree actions to improve attendance.

4.7. Continued Persistent Absence

For pupils whose attendance fails to improve after the above interventions and support measures have been tried, the ultimate consequences may be one of the following:

1. The school may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice on its behalf. The fine is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days of receiving the notice. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, but paid within 28 days, the cost will rise to £120. If you do not pay at all, we may take legal action.

2. The school may ask the Local Authority to initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even imprisonment.
3. In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

5.0. Policy documentation control

Responsible for review:	Shahid Hussain
Version:	4
Reviewed:	February 2019
Next review date:	February 2022