



ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Author/Reviewer:	Sue Murphy/Governors' Pastoral Committee
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At Finchley Catholic High School we strive to ensure all students enjoy learning, experience success and fulfil their potential. Students, parents, carers, and staff share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance at Finchley Catholic High School is maximised and unauthorised absence is minimised. We expect all students to aim for 100% attendance as regular attendance has a proven positive effect on the motivation and the attainment of students and staff.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent/carers are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their sons/daughters. Parent/Carers should work closely with the school to overcome any issues which may affect their child's attendance.

At Finchley Catholic High School we encourage and value high attendance. The school aims to recognise the external factors which can influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents/carers, and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school takes a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents/carers and provides an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

2. PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

(i) Attendance

Form tutors mark the register at 8.35am and 2.50pm using SIMS Lesson Monitor. All absences will be recorded as either present or absent. Should an explanation for an absence not be received or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

- Daily attendance is monitored by Student Services Staff (SSS) and the Sixth Form Administration Officer. **Parents are asked to telephone/text/e-mail the school before 9am to explain any absence.**
- Parents are contacted where students have failed to arrive by 10.00am and notice of their absence has not been received.
- When the parent/guardian fails to report an absence two days in a row, and staff are unable to make contact on the phone, a home visit is carried out, where possible.
- Authorisation of absence in most circumstances requires a written note/text/e-mail from parents/guardians; this may be a note in the study planner for Years 7 or 8.
- Unauthorised absences are followed up by either a text or e-mail home.
- Persistent absence is reported to the Pastoral Leader for further action.
- Students who do not achieve 90% attendance by the end of the term have a letter sent home with an attendance printout.
- Students will be spoken to about their attendance by Student Services Staff, the 6th Form Admin Officer, the Pastoral Leader, form tutor or EWC.

- When attendance continues to fall, the school sends a letter home inviting the parent/guardian for a meeting.
- Students who have exceptional attendance will have their name entered into a raffle for a chance to win a prize.
- In severe cases of persistent absence, a student will be invited to a legal attendance meeting or, in the case of sixth form the student may lose their place.
- During examinations registration will be conducted as specified in the Examinations procedures and parents will be notified of any absences immediately.

(ii) Punctuality

Students are expected to register with their Form Tutor at 8.35am.

- Students who arrive after 8.45am should sign in with Student Services, entering the time of arrival and the reason for their lateness in the late book. They should not be admitted to class until they have signed in. This is important for health and safety reasons.
- Students who arrive after 10.00am need a note or telephone call from home explaining their late arrival. If no note is received, this is marked as U – late after registers closed.
- Persistent offenders have letters sent home and are discussed with the PL with regard to further action.

(iii) Long term absence

- When students are absent, or likely to be absent, for more than one week on medical grounds, work will be set and marked by staff. Also on return to school, the student will be fully supported. The PL will organise and oversee the work.
- Permission for family holidays, funerals, public performances and productions outside of school and any other request for leave of absence needs to be sought in writing from the Headteacher. The following circumstances are usually taken into account when considering authorisation: the child's age; the time and length of the leave of absence; the child's record of attendance; the child's previous term time holiday leave; the proximity to internal or external tests; the personal circumstances surrounding the request.
- Parents who fail to meet expectations will be referred to the LA and subject to a FRN.

(iv) Monitoring absence

- Form Tutors monitor attendance of students in their form and refer any attendance concerns to the PL.
- PLS monitor known poor attenders with SSS or the Sixth Form Admin Officer.
- PLs monitor known students with persistent absence with SSS and take appropriate action e.g. have meetings with students, invite parents in for a meeting.

(v) Students and Achievement

- Best attendance and punctuality is acknowledged at parents' evenings and is reported in The Albanian.
- Forms with the best weekly attendance and punctuality receive House Points for each student.

3. RECORDING ABSENCE

(a) Parental Notes

Authorisation of absence requires a written note/text/e-mail from parents or guardians.

(b) Family holidays

It is not school policy to authorise absences for family holidays during term time

(c) Offsite activities

These are normally recorded as an authorised absence, depending on circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher.

(d) Lesson truancy

All subject teachers are required to keep a lesson register. Students who truant lessons will be sent to the Internal Exclusion Room and a letter is sent home. Teachers will inform SS if a student is missing.

4. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AND FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

Parents are now liable to receive Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) from the school's education welfare consultant if their child is out of school with an unauthorised absence.

Absences will usually be left unauthorised in the following situations:

- Leave of absence (where no permission has been granted)
- celebrating birthdays/special outings
- helping out or looking after relatives at home
- shopping
- where no explanation is given
- excessive attendance at University open days

FPN's can also be issued for persistent poor attendance where no authorisation has been given. This would only occur after the parent has been contacted by the school and reminded of their obligation in this regard.

Parents are required to apply in writing in advance to the Headteacher for permission for an absence. If it is not granted and parents take their child out of school, the absences will be marked as unauthorised and be a matter for permanent record.

5. Communication

Finchley Catholic High School School's Attendance and Punctuality Policy will be communicated through:

- The home-school agreement.
- Regular bulletin items in the Albanian
- Through curriculum and parents' information evenings and regular communications with parents/carers
- School Comms

ROLES

The Role of the Form Tutor

As well as fulfilling legal requirements, the Form Tutor is a key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance. In addition the role is:

- To accurately mark the register on SIMS via lesson monitor at 8.35am and 2.50pm daily.
- To scrutinise any notes from parents before amending the register and then return any notes regarding absence to SSS.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality of students in the Form
- To discuss attendance issues/concerns with the student
- To inform the PL of any attendance concerns.
- To deal with lateness according to the Sanctions System put in place by the PL
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves.

The Role of the Subject Teacher

- To mark a register each lesson within the first 15 minutes of the lesson starting.
- To inform SSS of any student missing from the lesson yet marked present elsewhere in the SIMS register
- To inform the PL and their Curriculum Leader of any attendance concerns.
- To ensure that missed work is caught up.

The Role of the Pastoral Leader

- To review attendance of their year group weekly
- To review persistent absences weekly and take appropriate action to improve attendance
- To meet regularly with SSS/EWC to discuss action with regards to students whose attendance falls below 95%.
- To ensure letters are sent home where there are attendance concerns
- To organise and oversee the support for students who have been on long term absence.
- To follow up internal truancy using the sanctions system as appropriate.
- To promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, parents evenings and The Albanian.
- Ensure that students are rewarded with Attendance Certificates in consultation with the SSS/EWC.

The Role of the Assistant Pastoral Leader

- To monitor attendance on a regular basis and set targets for improvement as appropriate.
- To deal with any attendance and punctuality issues referred from the Form Tutor in line with the School's sanctions system.
- When agreed, to work with specific groups of students with concerns to try to raise attendance
- To contact parents when necessary to discuss progress related to attendance

The Role of Student Services

- To administer the late book.
- To contact home on a student's first day of absence if this is not previously explained.
- Track and highlight any students whose attendance is causing concern.
- Liaise regularly with staff on attendance matters.
- Monitor the form class registers in the morning and the afternoon and inform the form tutor if the register has not been taken.
- Communicate and support parents on issues relating to attendance in liaison with the EWC, the Pastoral leader, the Assistant Pastoral leader
- Produce attendance data for the Headteacher, SLT, PL and Asst PL, Governors and LA as appropriate.

The Role of the Sixth Form Admin Officer

- To administer the late book.
- To contact home on a student's first day of absence if this is not previously explained.
- Track and highlight any students whose attendance is causing concern.
- Liaise regularly with staff on attendance matters.
- Monitor the form class registers in the morning and the afternoon and inform the form tutor if the register has not been taken.
- Communicate and support parents on issues relating to attendance in liaison with the EWC, the Director of 6th Form and Pastoral leaders
- Produce attendance data for the Headteacher, SLT, Director of 6th form and PLs, Governors and LA as appropriate.

The Role of the Education Welfare Consultant (EWC)

- To liaise with the SSS in obtaining the most current data.
- To meet with the Pastoral Leaders and Senior teacher responsible for Attendance to discuss progress and plan strategically for improvement
- To make home visits or arrange meetings in school as necessary in order to work with families to maximise student attendance.
- To liaise with the local education authority regarding court action in the case of serious attendance concerns.

The Role of Senior staff with responsibility for Attendance and Punctuality

The Senior Teachers with responsibility for Attendance and Punctuality have the overall strategic responsibility for school's performance. They should:

- Work to maintain the systems in operation, intervening when necessary to make improvement
- Work closely with the SSS in ensuring that students who are of concern, for whatever reason, have their attendance closely monitored
- Liaise directly with the Designated Safeguarding Officer at the school in establishing which students are to be monitored
- Work with the EWO, PL and Asst PL in putting in place workable strategies to improve attendance and punctuality
- Request data from SSS for Headteacher, Governors PLs/Asst PLs or external agencies when required
- Report back to the Governing body on Attendance/Punctuality when necessary

The Role of Parents

- To ensure their son/daughter attends school daily and on time.
- To telephone/text/e-mail the school before 9,00am to explain any absence.
- To provide a note explaining their son/daughter's absence on the day that a student returns to school if unexplained in advance.
- To make medical appointments out of school time as far as possible.
- To avoid holidays during term time.