



ATTENDANCE POLICY

COVERING BOTH SCHOOLS INCLUDING EYFS AND BOARDING

Governors' Committee normally reviewing:	Academic
Date last formally approved by the Governors :	Autumn Term 2016
Date policy became effective :	November 2012

Period of Review:	Two Yearly
Next Review Date :	Autumn Term 2018

Person responsible for implementation and monitoring :	Heads
Other relevant policies :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Admissions Policy,● Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour Policy),● Safer Recruitment Policy,● Crisis Management Plan,● Health and Safety Policy,● Health & Safety Activities outside School,● Missing Child Procedure,● Fire Evacuation Policy,● Disability Access Plan,● Safety and Security at School

Aims & Ethos

The following policy covers both schools and encompasses both the ethos of the
Preparatory School

Aims & Ethos of the School

Mr Simon James
Head, Preparatory School

and the

Senior School

Aims of the School **Ethos of the School**

Mr Chris Townsend
Head, Senior School

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy'.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of differences in ethnic background, culture, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender and disabilities, so long as in the last matter the student is able to involve himself or herself in the activity concerned; equally these differences will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

BOTH SCHOOLS (“the Schools”)

1. REGULATIONS

This policy is written in compliance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which have superseded the Regulations of 1995 and the amendments of 1997 and 2001. The relevant Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1751 is available at www.opsi.gov.uk.

The name of a pupil must be included in the register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school (Regulation 5(3)).

A pupil may be marked in the attendance register as unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances where the school site, or part of it, is closed or where transport normally provided for that pupil by the school or the local authority is unavailable (Regulation 6(1d)).

Where a pupil is attending another school at which he/she is a registered pupil he/she must be marked in the attendance register as attending an approved educational activity (Regulation 6(4)).

Where a pupil is registered at more than one school, his/her name may only be deleted from the admission register of a school which he/she has ceased to attend where the proprietor of any or every other school at which the pupil is registered gives his/her consent, (except where the pupil has died, been permanently excluded or is of no fixed abode) (Regulation 8(1)(c)).

Before deleting a pupil's name from the admission register on the ground that he/she has not returned from a leave of absence exceeding 10 days, both the proprietor and the local education authority must have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is (Regulation 8(1)(f)).

The period after which a pupil's name may be deleted from the admission register on the ground that the pupil has been continuously absent without authorisation has been changed to 20 school days and additionally the proprietor must not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause (Regulation 8(1)(h)).

The name of a pupil who is detained in pursuance of a final court order or order of recall may now only be deleted from the register where that order is for a period of not less than four months and where the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to school at the end of that period (Regulation 8(1)(i)).

The requirement to make a return to the local authority where a pupil's name is deleted on certain grounds is extended. That requirement now applies to deletions under Regulation 8(1)(d),(e),(g),(i) and (m) and also applies as soon as the grounds for deletion are met and in any event before deleting the pupil's name (Regulation 12(3)). For details see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

2. REPORTING TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND UK VISAS AND IMMIGRATION

The Schools recognise their legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the local authority and their reporting duties as a sponsor of Tier 4 students. Failure to attend regularly (or any other immediate concern) will result in such a report being made, and ten successive days of unauthorised absence (unless explained) will routinely trigger that report.

From 1 September 2016, schools must notify the Local Authority, Essex County Council, when they add to or remove a pupil's name from the admissions register at non-standard transition points. The School's will from September 2016 notify the Local Authority of any additions or deletions to our admissions register, with the exception of pupils joining at the start of Reception and Year 9 or leaving at the end of Year 8 or Year 13.

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

1. INTRODUCTION

Felsted Preparatory School (“the School”) is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone’s part in this.

It is expected that all pupils will attend school during the published term dates and at the published times unless they give good reason for absence. Such absence should be explained in writing to the Head, appropriate Head of Phase or Form Tutor, depending on the individual circumstances. There are no legal requirements for school hours in independent schools, but the hours have been carefully considered for all, for the effective delivery of the curriculum in all areas of the school. All pupils at Felsted Preparatory School are entitled to, and expected to take advantage of this provision unless absent for good reason. Compulsory school education begins in the term in which the child becomes five. However, in the interests of creating a cohesive Reception group and enabled through our very small teaching groups, entry into Reception is in September. Special arrangements can be put in place for children who are easily tired in the terms preceding their fifth birthday and such absence is deemed to be necessary and acceptable.

2. SCHOOL’S ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff (teaching and support) at Felsted Preparatory School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Registration

- i) Form Tutors are obliged by law to note the presence (or record the reason for absence) of all pupils both in the morning and in the afternoon when they do formal attendance register on the computerised system by physically marking the pupil present or absent.

The register must **record** whether a pupil is present, absent (authorised or unauthorised), attending an approved educational activity or unable to attend due to ‘exceptional circumstances’ (the School being closed or School organised travel being unavailable).

- ii) Tutors are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes
- iii) Morning Session - the registers close at 8.30 am for all those in the Preparatory School and at 9.00 am for Stewart House pupils. If pupils arrive after this time

they will be marked 'Late'. Absent pupils will be marked as Absent and the Attendance Officer will contact Parents to ascertain why the pupil is not in school.

- iv) Afternoon Session - the registers close at 13.30 pm on Monday, Thursday & Friday, 13.45pm on Tuesday and 14.05 on Wednesday in the Preparatory School and at 13.00 in Stewart House. . Any pupil who is not present at Registration will be immediately reported to the Attendance Officer and marked as Absent.
- v) Pupils arriving late must sign in with the Attendance Officer in the main School Office offering an explanation for their lateness if this has not already been offered. In Courtauld House, pupils sign the 'Late Register' and the Attendance Officer updates records accordingly.
- vi) The Attendance Officer has the responsibility of following up on any unexplained absence and ensuring that every child in the School is accounted for. All pupils who are absent without reason are followed up on the same day of absence and reported to the Head of Phase. Any pupil absent for a week will be offered support, a call from a Tutor and the opportunity to catch up on work at home, if appropriate.

Registration for Boarders

- a) All Boarders are registered each morning and afternoon in their Form Groups.
- b) At the end of the school day, Boarders sign out in their Phase, noting they are Boarding that evening.
- c) At 6.00pm all Boarders are registered in the dining room. The Houseparents/Assistant Houseparent will contact the parents if a Boarder is not at Registration (due to illness, change of Parents' plans, away matches etc.)

Categorising absence

- i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked Absent unless leave has been granted by the School in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the School as legitimate. Good reason for absence must be given such as attending an approved educational activity outside school, sickness, travel difficulties or religious observance. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Heads of Phase, the Deputy Head or the Head.
- ii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the School within 2 weeks, the absence will be unauthorised, but every attempt will be made to obtain a written (email/letter or completed Declaration Form) declaration as to why the pupil was absent.
- iii) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:
 - a) where leave has been granted by the School in advance, for example a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. family bereavement, family holidays) – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's / student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered;
 - (b) where the School is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

- (c) where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand and collect and return their child immediately after the appointment)
- (d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence that is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions making parent-organised travel to school impossible;
- (e) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

Approved educational activity

Where a pupil is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the School will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Collection and Analysis of Data

Electronic registers. The Attendance Register is kept by means of a computer and the register is backed up daily in the form of an electronic file and a printed copy (Regulations 15(2) and (5)). Each day a back-up of all files and data is carried out by our ICT Department and a copy kept in a different location and retained for three years.

- i) The Leadership Team member responsible for attendance will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and matters of concern dealt with.
- ii) All registers are updated as soon as a child is confirmed as joining the School.
- iii) These registers are analysed monthly and the registers retained electronically for a minimum of three years.

Systems and strategies for looking after pupil welfare

First-day calling

Felsted Preparatory School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. Further follow-up phone calls for regular updates will be made until the pupil returns to school.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the School will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the

register closes will be marked 'Late'. Pupils will be marked absent until such time as the Attendance Officer has contacted the parents to find out the reason for absence and the Register will be updated accordingly.. Where a pattern emerges of a pupil being persistently late for lessons, the School will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons. Plans will be put in place for the parents and pupil to resolve arriving late to school.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the School knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the School Office or sign the Late Book in Courtauld House. An explanation for the late arrival is also requested. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.

For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the School Office and sign in and/or out with the Attendance Officer using the Sign Out Book. On his/her subsequent return to school, they must sign the book again to say that they have returned. For Courtauld House, pupils must sign the 'Signing Out/In Book.

4. TERM-TIME HOLIDAYS

Term-time holidays are intended for children whose parents are unable to take holiday at any other time.

Felsted Preparatory School will consider every application individually, but its policy is not to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays is not a right. An application must be made by letter to the Head, with appropriate explanation, in advance of the intended holiday. Felsted Preparatory School will however consider authorising holidays for:

- i) service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- ii) parents who are subject to a strict and non-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

5. EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- o When considering absence for extended trips overseas Felsted Preparatory School will take account of the following:
 - o a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday'; such visits may be important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up;
 - o parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at school although parents could be encouraged to use the school holiday periods for at least part of their trip);
 - o the reasons for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, particularly for minority ethnic families, where huge distances and high costs are involved;
 - o where extended leave of absence is granted there will be an expectation that the pupil undertakes some school-set work during this period.

6. PARENT'S/CARER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The prime responsibility for ensuring that children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Felsted Preparatory School. Parents will be expected to notify the School by letter explaining absence.

7. GOVERNORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing body has ultimate responsibility for the safeguarding and promoting of the welfare of children who are pupils at the School and it delegates operational discharge of that responsibility to the Headmaster of the Preparatory School.

8. CONCLUSION

Regular school attendance is a legal requirement and a necessary contributor to ensuring the outcomes of *Every Child Matters*:

Be healthy - attendance at school supports children's emotional and social health and development and the school curriculum teaches children to be healthy.

Stay safe - Felsted Preparatory School has a statutory duty to promote the safety and welfare of children and the best way to safeguard children is to ensure that they attend school regularly.

Enjoy and achieve – good school attendance supports children in reaching their maximum potential and enjoying the fulfilment this brings.

Make a positive contribution – membership of a school community builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute to, and be responsible for, the well-being of others.

Achieve economic well-being - good school attendance supports engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support prosperous and fulfilling life-styles.

9. MONITORING & EVALUATION

This policy is monitored on a daily basis by the Attendance Officer and by the Leadership Team on a monthly basis. Records are kept appropriately. The School will review this policy in line with the agreed cycle of review.

Mr S C James
Headmaster

Felsted Preparatory School

SENIOR SCHOOL

1. INTRODUCTION

Registration is a legal requirement and requires pupils' attendance to be checked twice a day and a record kept. As a matter of good practice, electronic registration has the facility for registration of every lesson, which is employed routinely and for other activities. This allows continuous tracking of pupil whereabouts and immediate information to staff as to whether they are in a music lesson or other sanctioned activity if absent from their lesson.

2. LEGALLY REQUIRED REGISTRATION

Morning Registration:

Monday to Saturday inclusive:

All pupils are registered in Houses before 8.30 am

Afternoon Registration:

All pupils are registered in Houses between 1.30 pm and 2 pm.

3. ABSENCE

a) *Absence from Registration*

If a pupil is absent at morning registration it shows immediately to the Housemaster or Housemistress, **and to the CR Secretary** and they will email or phone home, if required, after consultation with the HM. The name of **the absent pupil** will be identified as Absent on the MIS and is visible to all other staff, **which also produces a list of daily absentees (under Ad-hoc reports). Afternoon registration is dealt with in house.**

b) *Absence from lessons*

The attendance of all pupils is registered on the MIS for every lesson. The MIS shows sanctioned activities or reasons for absence. If a student is marked absent **without obvious reason**, has previously been marked present at other activities in the day, the member of staff should immediately inform the **HM or** Common Room Secretary who will follow this up, if requested to do so.

c) *Attendance at Activities*

Advance details of practices, games, matches and activities are published via the MIS, and are available to all staff. All pupils are expected to attend as required unless they bring a legitimate note of excuse. Attendance should be considered as seriously as that for lessons. Any pupil who is off exercise (off-ex) for health reasons must bring a standard chit from the Medical Centre. A list of those pupils who are off-ex is maintained by the Medical Centre. Pupils must show the person i/c their chit. It is the responsibility of the member of CR taking an activity or sport to register attendance. These registers will be maintained on the MIS for ease of reference and record keeping. This will also mean that absences are sent through directly to the HM of any absent pupil. If a pupil is absent without reason and the pupil's whereabouts is unknown the HM or the Deputy Head must be informed immediately.

4. ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

a) *Format*

Attendance Registers (in schools which include boarders) must contain an indication of boarding or day attendance. For all day pupils of compulsory school age, the attendance register must be completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. It must show whether the pupil is:

- (i) present;
- (ii) absent;
- (iii) attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the 'proprietor' and supervised by a person approved by the proprietor or Head, and including work experience or sporting activity);
- (iv) unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it; unavailability of transport provided by school or local authority, where the home is not within walking distance);
- (v) taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the proprietor or a person acting on the proprietor's behalf; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs);
- (vi) taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

At Felsted School, the attendance register is completed via the MIS, and all pupils are registered twice a day in their house, as well as being registered in all lessons and activities.

b) *Nature of Entries*

Entries must be in ink and show the original and amended entries, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name of the person making the amendment. The Felsted MIS (a computerised register) counts as being in ink as it can be printed out.

c) *Registration of Boarders*

Felsted's policy is, for convenience and to act as a check on pupils' whereabouts for reasons of welfare or health and safety, to register boarding as well as day pupils. Felsted's Policy is that day pupils and boarders, irrespective of age, are registered in the same way.

5. ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION

The attendance register is kept by means of a computer and is backed up in the form of an electronic copy (which can be printed) not less than once a month (*See Regulations 15(2) and (5)*). Each month's permanent electronic copy is stored via electronic back up and retained for three years after the end of the school year in question.

In addition, the School reviews patterns of attendance or absence that could cause concern. Where this is the case, HMs are consulted either to follow up or provide more detail for the reasons for ongoing absence.

6. ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES

Detailed explanation of attendance codes is available from the DfE website in *Absence and Attendance Codes Guidance*. Felsted uses a system of codes on the MIS which covers all of these categories.

Mr Chris Townsend
Headmaster