



Fair Field Junior School

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Headteacher: Mrs Leggett

Assistant Head of School: Mrs O'Sullivan

Tuesday 8th September 2026

Attendance and Punctuality

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Fair Field, we want all our children to enjoy school and achieve their full potential. We are committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. The Government and Local Education Authority expectation for primary/secondary school children is for attendance rates of 95% or above. We appreciate your support to ensure that **all** our pupils achieve this, enabling them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and improve their future life chances.

Parents are responsible by law for ensuring that their children attend the school regularly, punctually and that they are ready to learn.

We offer a soft start to the day. The school gates open at 8:30 (please do not drop off before as there are no staff to supervise until classrooms open at 8:30) and close promptly at 8:50. If you arrive after 8:50 you will need to enter the school via the school office. Parents / carers will be required to sign in onto our Inventory system stating the reason for lateness.

Registers are taken twice daily at 8:50am and 1 pm. In the mornings, the registers close at 8:55 am. Should your child arrive after the register has closed, up to 9:15, this will be marked as late. Arrivals after 9:15 will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless you provide a reasonable explanation. Lateness is never the child's fault. The school will follow up lateness, unauthorised absence and pupils with low levels of attendance. Our registers are inspected regularly by the local authority's Attendance Improvement Officer to ensure parents fulfil their legal responsibility of making sure their child(ren) attend school regularly and punctually.

If your child is absent from school, please contact us by 8:45 with the reason, preferably by telephone. It is the Headteacher's decision as to whether this absence is authorised or not. In most cases, illness absence is genuine and marked as authorised on the register. Applications for absence must be made to the Headteacher, forms can be obtained from the school office.

The government introduced new regulations regarding school attendance, which came into force on 19th August 2024. Essentially, the only acceptable reason for a child to be absent from school is genuine illness and a few authorised events, such as county level sports competitions or visiting a new school. Fixed penalty notices will now be considered after 10 missed sessions (total) of unauthorised absence in any rolling period of 10 school weeks. These do not need to be consecutive. This includes arriving at school late after registers close. Parents may still request authorisation for their child to be absent, but Headteachers are expected to only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Examples would include one parent home from military deployment or following the legal adoption of a child. Family holidays and visiting extended family overseas are not considered exceptional. These are national regulations, and all schools are expected to comply.

Attendance is monitored regularly by the school office and myself. Parents / carers will be contacted if we are concerned. Ongoing poor attendance and/or punctuality may result in the school making referral to the Attendance Improvement Officer when court proceedings may be considered. In some cases, a referral may be made to children's social services under the category of neglect.

The aim of staff is to work with our pupils and their parents so that the above courses of action are not necessary. We look forward to working together with you to ensure the best possible outcomes for your children.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Leggett

