

20th April 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **“Every Lesson Counts” Farlingaye High School Attendance Expectations and Procedures**

At Farlingaye we are committed to supporting every student to achieve their best. Regular attendance is essential for academic progress, wellbeing, and future opportunities. We ask for your support in ensuring your child attends school every day.

Nationally, absence remains a concern: the overall absence rate in England is approximately 6.8%, and around 1 in 5 pupils are persistently absent (missing 10% or more of school). Missing just one day every two weeks results in 90% attendance, which is classed as persistent absence and can significantly impact attainment, progress, and social development; by the time a student reaches their GCSEs, 90% attendance equates to having missed around half a year of schooling in total! This link between attendance and outcomes is well established; last year the average GCSE grades for students with below 80% attendance was 2.4 in Maths and 2.8 in English, compared to 5.2 in maths and 5.1 in English for those with attendance above 95%. Put simply, being in school regularly makes a very real difference to students' achievement.

In line with Suffolk County Council guidance and the Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE) framework:

- Students are expected to achieve at least 96% attendance
  - Students must arrive on time every day
  - Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring regular and punctual attendance
- We will work proactively with families and may involve the Local Authority where attendance is a concern.

#### **Morning Registration**

Morning registration closes promptly at 09:20 each day. If a student is recorded as absent at this time and no reason has been provided, only 50% of that day's attendance marks will be awarded even if they are in attendance in school for lessons 1 and 2.

#### **Illness and NHS Guidance**

Students should attend unless too unwell to do so. Minor illnesses (such as colds, sore throats, or mild coughs) do not require absence. Students with fever, vomiting, or diarrhoea should remain at home.

## **Medical Appointments**

Medical appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours wherever possible. If an appointment must take place during the school day, **appropriate evidence must be provided** either in advance, upon collection of the child (if leaving early), or upon the child's return (if arriving late). Time absent from school for appointments should be kept to a minimum.

## **Reporting Absence**

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Contacting the school before 08:45
- Provide a clear reason
- Maintain daily contact for ongoing absence

Failure to do so may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

## **Types of Absence**

Authorised absences include genuine illness, medical/dental appointments (with evidence), and exceptional circumstances agreed in advance.

Unauthorised absences include term-time holidays, leisure activities, birthdays or social events, and oversleeping or transport issues.

## **Term-Time Leave**

Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance using the school's Absence Request Form (available on the website). Unauthorised leave may result in a Penalty Notice from Suffolk County Council.

We are committed to working with families through early help, attendance meetings, and referrals to the Local Authority where needed. Where attendance does not improve, legal intervention may be considered. If you are experiencing difficulties, please contact your child's Head of Year so we can offer support.

Improving attendance is a key priority for the school, and we are committed to working in partnership with families to support this. Our expectation is that every student aims for at least 96% attendance, giving them the very best chance of success. To help keep this visible and transparent, attendance information will be shared with you each half term and is also visible on your child's school reports. We know that strong attendance habits make a real difference, and we greatly appreciate your support in ensuring your child is in school, on time, and ready to learn each day.  
Yours sincerely,

Mr B Daly  
**Assistant Headteacher**

Mrs K Smith  
**Attendance Manager**