



## Attendance Policy

Reviewed and approved by governors	Date	Minute number	Review date
2/10/2025	2/10/2025	2/10/2025.14	In line with updates

### Introduction

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

At Ashover Primary School we strive for excellence and enjoyment in education by providing a safe, secure, caring family environment, where all are valued and respected as individuals. We will endeavor to enable the children to reach their full potential, by making the most of the opportunities that our school has to offer.

We expect all children on roll to attend every day when school is in session, so long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed.

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning. At Ashover Primary School we aim to develop an ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers and the wider community how much we value good attendance and punctuality. As a school we aim for our attendance to be above 97%

### Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff, governors and parents in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Endeavour that all pupils attend school unless they are unwell
- Support parents/carers in understanding their responsibilities about school attendance
- Ensure that the school has robust procedures in place to support good attendance for all pupils
- Ensure that parents/carers understand the consequences that they may face if their child's attendance is a cause for concern

## Definitions

### Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.

*Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Sometimes, even if absence is supported by parent, an absence will be unauthorised.*

### Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

## Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- Contact parents by 9.30am each school day if a pupil is not marked as present on the daily register and we have not been contacted by the parent/carers regarding the pupil's absence
- Regularly review the attendance of each child in school. Where we are concerned about a child's attendance we will contact parents and work

with them to support them in improving their child's attendance. A review period of 6 weeks will follow, if the attendance does not improve the school will request that the LA take further action

- Regularly review the punctuation of each pupil. Where we are concerned that a child is missing school due to lateness we will contact parents and work with them to support them in improving their child's punctuality. A review period of 6 weeks will follow, if the punctuality does not improve the school will request that the LA take further action
- Regularly report to the school governors about school attendance
- Reward the class in school with the highest attendance each week
- The Headteacher will unauthorise any holiday requests in term time
- The Headteacher will unauthorise any leave of absence requests in term time unless they feel there are exceptional circumstances
- If we suspect that a family is on holiday but they have reported that their child/children are unwell, we may post a 'calling card' at your house asking you to contact school. If you fail to contact the school we may unauthorise the absence and request that the LA issue a penalty notice

## **Responsibilities**

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

### **Class teacher**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Completing the daily attendance register at 9am each school day morning and at 1.15pm each school day afternoon
- Supporting children that have been absent from school to catch up on lost learning
- Raising any concerns about a pupil's attendance with the Headteacher

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Reporting school attendance to the school governors
- Regularly monitoring attendance and punctuality
- Working with families and the LA to support pupil attendance
- Deciding whether absence requests are authorised or unauthorised

- Requesting that the LA issues penalty notices for unauthorised absence as detailed in the National Framework for penalty notices

## **Administration staff**

Administration staff are responsible for:

- Marking the registers accordingly when parents have contacted the school regarding their child's absence
- Making contact with parents by 9.30am each school day morning if a pupil is absent and parents have failed to contact the school with a reason for the absence
- Review and monitoring school attendance regularly with the Headteacher
- Asking parents to provide evidence of medical appointments during the school day

## **Parents**

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school every school day if they are fit and well
- Contacting the school before 9am each school day if their child is absent
- Attempt to make medical appointments for their child outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, parents should provide evidence of the appointment

## **Registration**

The school doors open at 8.45am and children are expected to be in school by 9am this gives plenty of time for all pupils to come into their classroom and be ready to learn when lessons start.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for marking the attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved in line with the relevant retention schedule

## **Lateness**

Children who are persistently late after close of register soon fall behind with their learning.

Any pupil who comes into school after 9.05am will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Any child who arrives for school later than 9.05am will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.05am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

## **Absences**

When a child is absent from school parents should contact the school with a reason for the absence before 9am each day that their child is absent. School admin staff will then mark the register accordingly.

## **First Day Contact**

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any contact from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers each morning to identify those pupils who are absent without explanation and, as a safeguarding requirement, make contact with the parents of these children by telephone.

## **Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time**

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers **must not** give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on a 'absence during term time request form' available from the school office and on the forms section of the school website and handed in two school weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. (Attendance code G).

## **Addressing Attendance Concerns**

The school expects attendance of at least 95%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

The school employ both a Family Support Worker and a Pupil Support Worker. If parents are concerned about an issue that they feel is negatively impacting on their child's attendance in school, the parent should contact the Headteacher who may refer the parents/pupil for support in school.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

## **National framework for penalty notices**

The new national threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including lates after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G).

If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the Local Authority.

### **Unavoidable School Closure**

In exceptional circumstances the school may need to close the school at short notice ie heavy snow, rain, gas or electricity failure or leak. In these circumstances that school will write to parents via Arbor. If the closure occurs during the school day, parents are requested to make arrangements for their child/children to be collected from school as soon as possible. Home learning will not be provided on such occasions but pupils are encouraged to read their reading books, practise on Numbots/TT Rockstars or complete a homework activity from their class homework list which is available on the school website.