



Abbot Beyne School

Policy:	Attendance Policy
Person Responsible:	Mrs F Airey
Governors' Committee:	Student & Personnel (FGB)
Adopted Date:	12th July 2013
Revised Date:	May 2021
Next Review Date:	May 2022
Signature:	
Accepted by Staff:	

Attendance Policy

Principles

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote excellent attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. This is reinforced in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Good attendance by students will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Some children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parent/carer and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never advisable to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the wellbeing of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.

This attendance policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students. Under the Education Act (Student Registration) Regulations 1995 schools have a duty to refer to the Local Authority any child of compulsory school age who is continuously absent from school for two weeks without explanation or whose attendance is irregular or whose punctuality is an issue.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day. This shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parent/carer. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or another unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "permission" has been given.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily including holidays
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Leave of absence taken during term-time (see Appendix 1)
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

School responsibilities

- We will work with parents to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance and will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Workers where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.
- Wherever possible the school will take action to improve a student's attendance and address any underlying cause of problems before making a referral to the EWO.
- We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all students through ensuring parents and students receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern.

The Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance is Mrs F Airey.

The Senior Attendance Officer is Mrs L Lynch.

Parents or Carers responsibilities

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – following Government guidelines we are unable to authorise this.
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment:

- The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams (February 22nd 2015 Department of Education). The research is based on data from all schools in England going back several years.
- The results are very clear – missing even small amounts of time from school can have a significant effect on achievement.
 - For example, at the end of the 2012/13 Academic year 94% of students who were present all the time achieved 5+ GCSE A* - C or equivalent.
 - Where attendance dropped to between 85 and 90% only 75% of students achieved these results.
 - This equates to an absence of around 1 week per year during Years 10 and 11 and clearly illustrates the impact of attendance on attainment.

Admissions Register:

- School keeps an admission register which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details including those of their parents and of their previous school.
- All schools (including academies) must keep a record of attendance register entries for at least 3 years and inform their Local Authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register.
- A student can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they;
 - Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
 - Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
 - Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period;
 - Or have been permanently excluded.

Elective Home Education:

If the school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority via Entrust at enquiries@entrust-ed.co.uk of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

School Procedures

The following “in-school” procedure is followed for monitoring children’s attendance:

- The Attendance Officer monitors all students whose attendance is less than 95%.
- In the first instance, where there are concerns, students are spoken to regarding their attendance.
- Attendance continues to be monitored and if there is no improvement parents are informed and support offered.
- Where there is still no improvement, parents are invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer
- A referral to the EWO will be made on all students whose attendance drops below 90% and there is no known genuine reason for the absence. They will try to resolve the situation if other ways of trying to improve the child’s attendance have failed. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education act 1966 s.444.
- Parents who are subject to a penalty notice have 3 choices:
 - A fine of £60 if paid within 28 days 2.
 - A fine of £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. 3.
 - In the case of non-payment of the fine the Notice will be withdrawn and Magistrates’ Court proceedings will start. This could result in a fine of up to £1000 for each child whose attendance is causing concern and for each parent involved in the prosecution. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months’ imprisonment.
- EWOs can also seek an Education Supervision Order or School Attendance Order on the child.
- Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. EWOs are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. The duty number is 01283 239671 or call First Response on 0800 1313 126.

General absences

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- We have a dedicated telephone line for parents to report reasons for absence. This is 01283 759007 option 1.
- If your child is absent for 1 day: telephone the absence line, clearly stating your child's name, year group date of absence and reason for absence.
- If your child is absent for more than 1 day: telephone the absence line again indicating how long your child is likely to be absent.
- We would ask that, wherever possible, doctor and Dental appointments are made outside the school day. If this is not possible, your child's attendance record will be marked 'M'. This represents an authorised absence. The student should sign out at Reception before attending such an appointment and must sign in when returning to school following the appointment. 5. In the case of an enforced closure or school transport difficulties due to bad weather the "Y" code is used, which is not classed as an absence. This can be applied to students for whom getting to school is problematic due to adverse weather even if the school is officially open. Ordinarily, relates to students who live beyond walking distance of the school.

Lateness

Morning registration is 8.30 am. Children arriving after this time must sign in at Reception and will have an 'L' recorded on the register. This counts as a present. Continued lateness will result in referral to the EWO. The morning registers close at 9.00am.

Students arriving after 9.00 am will have a 'U' (unauthorised absence) recorded on the register, unless there is an acceptable reason verified by a parent/carer. Where a student does arrive late, it is ESSENTIAL, that they sign in at reception stating the time of arrival and reason for lateness.

Please note that in order to improve punctuality, the code of conduct now states that you need only 10 unauthorised lates (U code) within a 12 week period before a request is sent to the local authority to begin statutory action to address persistent lateness.

Planned Absences

The Governors' Policy is not to allow holidays during term time. Should the request be for other planned absences such as participation in County sporting or other educational representative activities the parent/carer should contact the school

Requesting a leave of absence in term time

Amendments to the 2006 regulations in January 2018 also removed references to family holiday and extended leave. Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Changes to unauthorised leave during term time no longer requires there to be 10 days of unauthorised leave but now only requires there to be a period (ie one day or more) of unauthorised leave before school will notify the local authority.

The amount of the penalty is £60/£120 in accordance per parent per child. If you pay this penalty within the time limits set out below, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence as set out in this notice. Payment should be made within 21 days from date of issue. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty is doubled to £120 per parent per child.

Other circumstances: It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day.

School Attendance Targets for Abbot Beyne

The attendance target for Abbot Beyne School is 95%.

We always aim for 100%. Registers are inspected termly by the Authority and the school is given the on-going % figure after each inspection.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs Fiona Airey – Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Lorraine Lynch - Senior Attendance Officer

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

REGULAR LATENESS = ABSENCE

- Over a School Year
- 5 minutes late every day = 3 days absence
- 15 minutes late every day = 19 days absent

REGULAR ATTENDANCE = INCREASED ATTAINMENT

- It is generally accepted that attainment is better if attendance is high.
- Over a school year
- 90% attendance = 19 days absent
- 85% attendance = 29 days absent (half a term)
- 80% attendance = 38 days absent
- 75% attendance = 47 days absent

Appendices:

1. Staffordshire Code of Conduct for Issuing Fixed penalty notices (updated January 2018)
<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/Attendance/home.aspx>
2. Department for Education Guidance –Student Attendance including use of national codes to record attendance or reasons for absence in registers
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>