



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**2016 - 2017**

## **This Policy will aim to:**

- demonstrate a strong attendance ethos
- demonstrate effective, non bureaucratic systems for monitoring attendance
- clearly state procedures for parents/carers to follow
- use attendance data and other information to improve school and pupil performance
- promote the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- intervene early when individual pupil absence gives concern
- have support systems in place for vulnerable pupils
- reward and celebrate good and improved attendance
- Make best use of additional support for pupils and parents/carers with greatest needs.

## **Legal interventions**

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and respond to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school, or other wise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006 require schools and academies to take an attendance register twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, their parents/carers are guilty of an offence.

## **Penalty Notices** (Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2013)

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England (Amendments) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force in 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at a school or academy, or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion. From the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, parents must pay within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster in prosecutions.

The procedure for issuing Penalty Notices will be in accordance with the Manchester Local Authority's Penalty Notice Protocol.

### **Categorising absence**

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents /carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received. Parents/carers should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected day of return.

### **Illness**

Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.

### **Medical/ Dental Appointments**

Parents/carers are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments outside the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school part of the day. Parents/carers should show the appointment card to the school to confirm the appointment.

### **Other Authorised Circumstances**

This relates to occasions where there is a cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or part-time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

### **Leave of absence**

#### **Term – time holiday**

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 allowed Head Teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time, in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. The regulations also allowed Head Teachers to grant extended leave for more than ten days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations have removed references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave of absence for exceptional circumstances is granted.

### **Religious Observance**

Abbott Community Primary school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British Society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. Consideration will be given to authorising absence or special leave for religious observance. Parents/carers are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

It is reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may request that a penalty noticed is issued.

### **Deletions from the Register**

In accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school/academy on a School Attendance Order
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and the procedures have been completed
- The death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools or academies
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school- age
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- A pupil has left the school but is known where he/she has gone after both and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.

The school will follow the Local Authority's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Through our core principles of inclusion, respect and valuing education, we will develop our students into happy, well rounded and educated young people with the desire and drive to succeed. We will ensure that each and every student is given the very best opportunities to achieve his or her personal best, to flourish in and contribute positively to our global society.

At Abbott Community Primary School the Head Teacher Miss P. Wilson and the Governing body have overall responsibility for attendance. The day to day responsibility for managing Attendance lies with the Attendance Officer Mrs Janet Warrington.

### **The Governors support the school with promotion of good attendance by:**

- Holding an annual meeting between Full Governors and the Attendance officer to monitor and review the school attendance performance, discuss new initiatives and identify future targets in respect of attendance.
- Having a named Governor with a responsibility for attendance.

**The Senior Leadership Team** aim to ensure that there is a whole school approach, which reinforces good attendance. They will:

- Annually monitor and review the Attendance Policy and make certain all staff are aware of it.
- Ensure the school has strategies in the place for collecting and analysing attendance data.
- Report attendance to the local Authority, DFE and the school's governing body as required.

- Promoting the importance of good attendance to parents/carers and pupils through regular letters and information sent home, and by issuing a parent friendly copy of the attendance policy.
- Seeking to promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and parents/carers during assemblies and at parent/ carers events.
- Ensuring safe and structured learning environments for pupils.
- Delivering informative lessons that are set to pupil's needs
- Providing extracurricular activities
- Ensuring all staff have strategies in place for recording, monitoring and responding to students with attendance concerns.

The **Parents/Carers** of our pupils are asked to support the school and instil the value of education progress by:

- Talking to their child about school life and taking a positive interest in their child's educational progress.
- Contacting the school before 9.00am if their child is absent to let us know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Trying to avoid unnecessary absences- wherever possible making medical appointments outside of the school hours.
- Asking the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties and informing the school of any circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

## Abbott Community Primary School's Approach to Attendance

All Pupils should strive to achieve 100% attendance

Pupils whose attendance is within these parameters will be congratulated and receive positive encouragement to maintain high levels of attendance. Actions at this level are the responsibility of the Head Teacher and the Attendance officer.

**Celebrate class achievements, celebrate individual achievements, give verbal praise to pupils, and give certificates of attendance and prizes.**

Speak to parents/carers to provide advice and support to ensure pupils' needs in the school are met.

**Speak to parents/carers about the reasons for absence, speak to parents/carers about concerns, set individual targets, send letters of concern to parent/carers, warning letters sent for unauthorised absence and penalty notices.**

From September 2015 children with attendance 90% or lower are considered a Persistent Absentee.

There are serious concerns over attendance at this level and the pupil is at risk of becoming persistently absent (PA). The Attendance officer takes the lead role in working with parents/carers to ensure they support their child's attendance.

**Attendance panels, Completion of an EHA (Early Help Assessment), Parenting Contract with targets, warning letters sent home, identify key TA/PSA to support pupil, commission casework from One Education, support from school nurse and issue Penalty Notice.**

A pupil with this level of attendance is in a high risk group and will be identified as persistently absent (PA). A key member of staff is allocated, who may have area of expertise or skill, (e.g. SEN, safeguarding) or who may have a strong relationship with the pupil, to ensure that the support is available. Consideration should be given to organise a Child in Need meeting or legal interventions to ensure parents accept their legal responsibilities to ensure attendance and punctuality. A formal warning letter should be sent to parents detailing possible legal actions.

### Summary

**The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.**

**All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.**

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I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at Abbott Community Primary School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

