

DERBYSHIRE LA

ASTON ON TRENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy approved by Governors on 24 February 2020

This policy has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies, including the Disability Equality Scheme.

Minute No: _____

Signed: _____

Governor

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Headteacher

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Introduction

At Aston on Trent Primary School we place great importance on high attendance for pupils. We believe that an effective attendance policy will contribute to the general welfare of the children and help them to meet the challenging targets for achievement set by the school and so, their life outcomes.

Although the Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance issues, all members of the school community will work together to promote excellent attendance.

Aim

Attendance at the school has been in excess of 96% for the last three years. Our aim is for this excellent attendance to continue.

Attendance policy into practice

1. Attendance registers are marked according to national and local guidelines each morning and afternoon at the start of the session via RM Integris. If an electronic register cannot be taken, a paper version is taken.
2. Parents are requested to inform school about any absence on the first morning either by telephone or email. The message is recorded and transmitted to the relevant teacher/s.
3. If a parent has failed to contact the school on the first day of absence, the school office will make contact with the parent, or other family member if it has not been possible to telephone the parent. Should this be unsuccessful, a Parenthub will be sent to parents so that the absence can be explained.
4. The school business officer and the head teacher monitor absence throughout the year, looking for regular patterns of absence, unauthorised absence and long-term absence. Particular attention is paid to vulnerable groups of children e.g. disadvantaged pupils and those 'looked after'.
5. Where attendance falls below 95% the head teacher may contact parents to discuss reasons for absence, or to invite them to a meeting.
6. Where attendance falls below 90% parents/carers may be invited to an Attendance Panel Meeting with the head teacher, where targets will be set and support offered. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken. A referral to the Multi Agency Team may also be made.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher

- Has overall responsibility for attendance issues
- Ensures that electronic system is updated
- Monitors attendance
- Keeps teachers, parents and governors informed about attendance issues

Class Teacher

- Is responsible for completing the register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions to meet legal requirements and comply with fire regulations. Children should be entered as present, absent or late. Absences should be marked as authorised or unauthorised (see definitions below). If it is unclear whether an absence should be authorised, the head teacher should make the decision.
- Monitors attendance on a day-to-day basis and inform head teacher of any concerns.

School Office staff

- Enters data into MIS system (RM Integrus)
- Monitors absence, liaising with Headteacher
- Follows up unexplained absences on first day
- Records late arrivals after register has closed (after 9.10 a.m.)

Parents/Carers

- Have a statutory duty to ensure regular attendance and punctuality.
- Inform school on the first day of absence by 8.30am
- If taking a holiday in term time, fill in a holiday request form at least two weeks in advance.
- Keep school informed of any health, social or emotional issues that may affect their child's well-being and attendance.

Governors

- To oversee and monitor the operation and effectiveness of the policy.

Main Categories of Authorised Absence

- Sickness
- Medical or dental appointments, by necessity made in school time
- Domestic circumstances that could include death of a close relative, house fire or other traumatic event.
- Annual holiday in term time – if granted for exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised Absence

- Truancy-where the child is away from school without permission from an authorised person. A parent is not an authorised person and the school may refuse to authorise absences (for example, shopping expeditions, birthday treats etc).
- Late after the register has closed. This will be ten minutes after the register has closed which will be classed as a half-day absence.
- Annual holiday in term time – no exceptional circumstances.

Attendance Strategies

- The importance of good attendance will be discussed at the meeting for new parents.
- Newsletters will be used to remind parents about the school policy and the rules about holidays in term time.
- Prompt investigation of any issues that may be affecting a child's well-being and attendance.

Holidays

The Department for Education expects schools and local authorities to promote good attendance and reduce absences, including persistent absence. This is because we know that missing out on lessons leaves children/young people vulnerable to falling behind.

Children/young people with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary schools.

As a school we work hard to support all children/young people and their families so as to ensure that all children/young people have good attendance.

The Government made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which come into force on **1st September 2013**. These state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases, it is the headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

As a consequence of these changes approval will not be given to requests for leave of absence for reasons that are not considered to be special or exceptional such as:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements
- Days overlapping with beginning or end of term

Parents needing leave of absence for **exceptional circumstances*** should complete a form at least two weeks before the anticipated start date. The reason for the request should be given in detail. Applications should be made before the leave is arranged. Absences may not be granted retrospectively.

This is Government policy and parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the School Attendance Service. Parents could be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

*Examples of **exceptional circumstances** as agreed by Aston on Trent Primary School's governors.

- Accredited Exam – ballet/music (extra-curricular)
- Gifted & Talented opportunity (part in the pantomime, Wimbledon ball person etc)
- Bereavement
- Serious family crisis
- Wedding – close family relative (parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt/uncle)
- Religious Day
- Other exceptional circumstances to be considered on an individual basis

Reporting

Levels of authorised and unauthorised attendance published by the DFE.

Safeguarding

Any attendance issues which may be related to safeguarding and child protection issues will be followed up in accordance with the Child Protection Policy

Related Policies

Child Protection

S.E.N.

Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Equal Opportunities & Inclusion

February 2020