The Asfordby Hill School

Pupil Attendance POLICY

This Policy Links With: Equal opportunities policy	
Recommended:	
Statutory:	Y
Date Reviewed:	November 2026
Date of Next Review:	November 2028
Committee Responsible for Review:	QEHS
Date the QEHS agreed	3.11.26

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a ***minimum*** of 97.5% per child and overall as a school
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing/Emailing on the first morning of all absences, by 9:20am, with the reason and saying when the child will return
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls on the first day of absence and letters where required
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, web-site and school brochure
- Let parents know of their child'd/children's individual attendance rate termly
- Publish our whole school attendance rate regularly to allow parents to see how near our 97.5% minimum target we are
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance, for example; by holding meetings / sending letters with current attendance rates
- If we continue to have concerns, make a referral to the Local Authority's attendance team, who work alongside families and schools to review and support attendance matters

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example if a child is ill, close family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are ***rare*** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically. We ask parents to complete the 'Application for authorised leave form' to request absence during term time. These requests will be considered by the Headteachers on an individual basis, in line with the policy.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are ***not*** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Unapproved holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.

The Local Authority Attendance Team may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has a number of unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

Morning registration begins at 8:45 am. It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day. If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Many lessons begin at exactly 8:50 am and late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence or as a 'U' for arrival after the register has closed.

We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.

Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if not collected or the school contacted by school closing time. Please let us know if you are going to be unavoidably detained.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the head teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the board of governors.

It is our policy:

- That the school does not allow leave of absence for holidays in term time, unless under exceptional circumstances. As stated above, this permission will be given by the Headteachers in accordance with the school policy.
- If the school does not agree holiday leave, and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A *good* understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known
- Let us know when you move
- Provide us with contact details for your child's new school so that important records may be transferred

Children Missing Education
When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education.** This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Penalty notices
Under the revised Working together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, the government have introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence . The new regulations will came into effect on **19th August 2024.**

The National Framework aims to:

- Prioritise the support first approach by expecting support to be used in cases where it is appropriate and using penalty notices in cases where support is not appropriate (e.g., a term time holiday), has not worked or has not been engaged with.
- Make penalty notices more effective by ensuring they are only used in cases where they are the most appropriate tool to change parental behaviour and improve attendance.
- Improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered.
- Improve the deterrent effect of a penalty notice by increasing the amount and introducing a new national limit of 2 penalty notices within a 3-year period to break cycles of repeat offending.

Head Teachers are not allowed to authorise holiday absence, unless under exceptional circumstances, and are asked to inform the Local Authority if children have 5 concescutive days of unauthorised absence, or have 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a ten-week period.

In line with the new National Framework recommendations, from August 19th 2024, the Local Authority will increase penalty notices to £160 per parent per child (discounted to £80 if paid within 21 days). If there is occasion to issue a second Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence within a rolling 3-year period, it will be issued at the higher rate of £160 per parent per child, with no opportunity to pay at the lower level. A Penalty Notice cannot be issued if there is a third occasion of unauthorised leave of absence in the rolling 3-year period and it is highly likely that the local authority will take direct prosecution action in the Magistrates' Court.

Legal Note
Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The Local Authority aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.