

# Abingdon Primary School

## Attendance Policy

*“Going to school regularly is important to your child’s future. For example, children who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams.*

*Good attendance shows potential employers that your child is reliable. Research suggests that children who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.”*

*Direct.gov website*

### **Context:**

Abingdon Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her own potential.

The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All staff willingly work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school has established an effective system of incentives and rewards which motivates pupils in their work in school. Lessons and activities are carefully planned to appeal to the children who attend Abingdon Primary School and parents are informed about school events and encouraged to take part in school activities.

Activities are planned to give attendance and punctuality a high profile, including rewards and fun events.

A pupil’s absence (or perhaps persistent lateness) during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement. When tracking achievement, staff will be alert to any link with attendance issues and may voice their concerns to parents.

### **Aims of this Policy:**

- ***To ensure every child is safeguarded and their right to education protected.***
- ***To ensure the school attendance target is achieved through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.***
- ***To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.***
- ***To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.***
- ***To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.***
- ***To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.***
- ***To work with external agencies in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.***

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### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Head Teacher

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices in line with Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To support the Attendance clerk/PSA in delivering the policy on a day-to-day basis.
- To meet with the Attendance clerk/PSA regularly to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- Work with the SLT and teachers to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long term absence.
- To ensure that termly Local Authority Returns are accurate.
- To revise and amend the policy with the SLT.

#### Staff

- To ensure quality, engaging, inclusive teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learner's needs.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of attendance in the register.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance & punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

#### Attendance clerk/Parent Support Adviser

- To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- To record the names and the reasons of pupils arriving late.
- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To contact parents/carers by letter following 3 instances lateness or absence and liaise with the Headteacher.
- To maintain Attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with and report to outside agencies.
- To report to the Local Authority as requested.
- To maintain clear communication with the Headteacher regarding attendance and punctuality within their year groups.
- To report weekly attendance and mobility figures to the Headteacher
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils via the Headteacher.
- To check registers each day when returned.
- To meet the criteria set out in the Job Description for their role.

#### Parents

- To ensure that their children receive a suitable full-time education
- To be responsible for making sure their children attend school regularly (95%).
- To ensure that their children arrive on time for school every day.
- To contact the school if their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details.

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### Promoting and Rewarding Good Attendance

- **Aims:**
- To reach a whole school attendance level of 97%
- To ensure good attendance and punctuality (**above 95%**) is regularly **promoted and supported** and remains high profile across school.
- To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (**above 95%**) through **rewarding** good attendance and punctuality.

#### Attendance Assemblies

Celebrating Achievement/Attendance assemblies (pupil of the week) are held every week on Mondays. The assemblies are delivered using an interactive Powerpoint show that engages the children and promotes good attendance.

#### School Newsletter

Each half term, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives which the school is using to promote attendance and punctuality.

#### Breakfast Club

Daily Breakfast Club is free every day (provided by Greggs). This supports parents by allowing them to drop their children off from 8:00am, ensuring they are on time for school. It is supervised by staff.

#### Staff Promoting Good Attendance

It is important that teachers regularly promote good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and to celebrate this, the teacher with the best attending class is congratulated by the HT in the Monday assembly.

#### Weekly Attendance Rewards

##### Extra Break Time

The class with 100% attendance in both key stages receives 10 minutes extra break after lunch on Friday. This is supervised by their teacher.

##### Attendance Trophy

The winning class from KS1 and KS2 receive the Attendance Trophy for a week.

#### End of Half Term Attendance Rewards

100% attendance - Each child gets a special attendance certificate and book voucher, signed by the Head Teacher to take home and keep.

#### Registers

Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils, they are documents which may be required in a court of law. They will also contribute to children's annual report. For these reasons registers are required to be marked in ink and all alterations should be clear, visible and explained.

Registers should be kept in good order by:

- Being marked carefully and on time
- Daily and weekly attendance figures completed
- Running totals of authorised and unauthorised absences maintained

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### Lateness

- Pupils who are late to school should enter via the main entrance, reporting to the school office. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action will be taken.

All children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- **Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)**
- **Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)**

**Authorised absence** will have been notified to the school by means of a note or telephone message and includes:

- Visiting a doctor, dentist, hospital where appointments **cannot** be arranged for outside of school hours
- Illness which would prevent the child taking part in school activities
- Bereavement – immediate family member

**Unauthorised absence** includes:

- Absence for which a note or telephone call has not been received. The school sends out letters to enable parents to respond giving reasons for absence.
- Trivial reasons such as shopping for new shoes, birthday party etc.

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer a first day absence call will be made. The school clerk/PSA follow the system on the next page:

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If parents fail to send their children to school regularly and that absence from school is **unauthorised** parents can be prosecuted or may be made liable to a penalty notice for failing to ensure their children attend regularly at a school where they are registered pupils. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23 gives the Local Authority the power to issue Penalty Notices. These may be issued when parents fail to ensure their child attends schools without good reason, as defined by the law.

Fines are set at £120 per parent, per child, per offence. This will be reduced to £60 if the fine is paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid by the end of a 42 day period parents will be taken to court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality**

Parents are sent regular attendance data to ensure that they are kept up-to-date on the acceptable level of attendance expected by the school and other bodies.

Abingdon recognises the difficulties which many of our families find in getting children to school on occasion. To this end we employ dedicated staff to track attendance and punctuality, communicate with parents, children and staff and to liaise with outside agencies. Our dedicated attendance clerk not only makes first day calls to all absentees but tracks individual and class attendance and punctuality. It is the role of the attendance clerk to support the Head teacher in maintaining and reaching challenging targets and in liaising with all parties on improving children's attendance.

The attendance clerk works very closely with our Parent Support Advisor. The latter will make house calls to support families in getting their children to school regularly and on time e.g. we will bring a child to school where a parent might be unable to leave the house. The PSA or attendance clerk may become involved in meetings with parents and the Head teacher where greater concerns arise.

The school staff also work with the LA for cases where attendance has become a real cause for concern with regard to the child's right to access education.

Concerns about attendance and punctuality are noted in the Attendance file. If necessary further action will be taken in accordance with LA procedures. All correspondence to parents and letters should be addressed to the parent by name and hand-delivered or posted to the appropriate address.

Governors will be kept informed about attendance percentages and improvements.

### **90% attendance**

If a child's attendance drops below 90% the parent will receive a warning letter regarding the child's attendance and the need for improvement.

If attendance still doesn't improve the parent will be invited into school for meeting which could result in a Attendance Case Conference (ACC) with the Headteacher and PSA. The meetings and conference will be centred on your child's attendance and will be an opportunity to work in partnership to overcome potential barriers. The conference will detail any further action including legal proceedings.

Further absences could lead to the following action (fines) taken in accordance with the Education Act, 1996, which states it is the duty of the person(s) with parental responsibility to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their children at school. This means that they must be in attendance on time for each session that the school is open, unless they are prevented from doing so by reason of genuine illness or any unavoidable cause.