



## **Attendance Policy**

Abingdon Primary School and Children's Centre seek to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their own potential. The Governing Body also emphasise the prime importance of school attendance to support pupil's progress.

Parents/Carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16 attends school regularly.

The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. Children should be ready to start the school day by 8.55am each morning.

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, parents/carers are informed about school events and encouraged to take part in school activities.

A pupil's absence, or in some circumstances, persistent lateness, 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 after they 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**

To encourage regular attendance

To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils

To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school

### **Reporting an Absence**

To report a child's absence parents must contact Abingdon Primary School and Children's Centre on Tel: 01642 210567. All Absences must be reported before **9.00am**. In the event of failure to report an absence the school office will contact parents and carers from 9.30am to ascertain the reason for absence.

Absences from school are carefully recorded in the registers and the reason for absence shown.

N.B If a child is absent due to vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not return to school until they have been free of symptoms for 24 hours.

### **Attendance Procedures**

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. Proof must be provided by the parent/carer.
- Illness which would prevent the child taking part in school activities.
- Bereavement.

Parents are strongly urged to book holidays outside of term time. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for longer planned absence. All such cases should be discussed with the Head Teacher. The school has a “request for absence form” which should be completed and given to the Head Teacher.

**Unauthorised absence** includes:

- Absence for which a note or telephone call has not been received.
- Trivial reasons such as shopping for new shoes, birthday party etc.

### **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. Once registers are closed, children will be marked accordingly.

### **Lateness**

Pupils who are late to school should enter via the main entrance, with a parent or responsible adult, 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.

### **Raising the Attendance Profile**

Staff will take every opportunity to encourage and praise regular attendance and punctuality. Regular written communication with home will aim to remind parents of the need to ensure children attain maximum attendance.

Children who have attended school every day for a term will receive a certificate. Children who achieve full attendance for a whole year will be awarded with a prize and a certificate. Classes with a week of 100% attendance will receive a free playtime.

### **Leave of Absence Request**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory 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 will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. However, this leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

The request for an authorised leave of absence must be made in writing, on the ‘request for leave of absence’ form, obtained from the school office. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the Head Teacher, the parent will be informed in writing of the outcome.

According to the local authority’s code, taking an unauthorised term-time holiday is grounds for issuing a penalty notice, and, if the leave of absence for holiday is not authorised by the school, either the school or the local authority may issue a penalty notice.

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 penalty notices regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force in September 2013.

The 2013 amendments reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120. Where there is more than one child, each parent could be issued with a penalty notice for each child. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

*Updated September 2020*

### **Important Information for Parents**

Parents are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure their child attends school regularly. There is no automatic right to take a child out of school during term time but the law allows Head Teachers to consider individual requests to authorise a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

The Head Teacher must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances justify an authorised absence and it is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information and evidence in order to establish this fact.

The request for an authorised leave of absence must be made in advance and the Head Teacher may invite the parent into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.

If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the Head Teacher, the expectation is that the child's attendance will be of a satisfactory level both prior to and after the date covered by the request.

If the request for leave of absence is refused and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Head Teacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued against you.

A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if the notice is paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 days period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies.

Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a penalty Notice in respect of each child.

As a parent/carer you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed, which may ultimately affect exam and test results.