

At Allanson Street Primary School, we give every child the life chances they deserve regardless of their starting point or the obstacles they may encounter.

Children leave us well equipped with the knowledge, skills and values needed to become happy, confident, productive citizens ready and willing to make a positive contribution to the world.

Basic needs fulfilled

Relationships

Outstanding teaching and learning

Authentic, high quality curriculum

Development of core values

Family and community engagement

Aspirations



Attendance and Absence Policy.

Issue Date: June 23

Review Date: June 24

The importance of good attendance on ensuring that children can fulfil their potential, both socially and academically, cannot be understated. Poor school attendance is a major barrier to learning and one of the obstacles that we, at Allanson Street School, aim to work collaboratively with parents/carers and outside agencies to help our children overcome. We will continuously promote good attendance through a clear framework and procedures which are shared with all stakeholders as appropriate.

Our Attendance and Absence policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils that are registered at our school on the school website.

Aims & Objectives

This Attendance and Absence Policy ensures that all stakeholders are fully aware of, and clear, about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve children's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 96% for all pupils, although we realise that this may not be possible for children with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents/carers and children of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception age children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Recognise that first quality teaching and highly engaging learning opportunities together with excellent relationships between staff, children and parents / carers are key driving factors in developing good attendance for all children.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

All pupils' school attendance and absence is managed through the use of Arbor. Registers are completed electronically each morning and again at the start of the afternoon session. Pupils who leave site during the school day are signed out at the front office with the use of the newly installed "Inventry" system.

Responsibility of School

- Maintain daily accurate registers of attendance.
- Monitor registers daily, sending “First Day Response” texts to parents / carers if no message / phone call has been received regarding their child’s absence. Reasons for absence chased by the Attendance Team in line with the flow chart.
- Monitor attendance registers weekly and act on any concerns, contacting parents/carers and EWO as appropriate.
- Send out regular info to parents about the importance of good attendance, highlighting the detrimental impact of poor attendance. Also, regularly share with parents / carers the importance of informing us of the reasons for their child’s absence.
- Maintain regular communication between class teachers and children / parents / carer to ensure reasons behind potential attendance issues are known and attendance remains high priority.
- Reward good (96%-100%) and improving attendance.
- All class teachers and members of Attendance Improvement Team will be provided with, and monitor, updated lists of persistent absentees (below 90%). Agreed action points will be shared with class teachers to ensure full implementation.
- Letters sent to parents/carers of children whose attendance has dropped below 90% and those who are on the threshold of this figure at the earliest opportunity.
- Encourage parents / carers to share any barriers to good attendance and offer them appropriate support.
- Meet with parents / carers to offer support and agree action to improve attendance. Ensure parents / carers understand consequences of non-improvement.
- Refer significant attendance and punctuality concerns to the EWO and work collaboratively with the EWO to draw up and monitor Attendance Support Plans and Parental Contracts. Work closely with identified families until attendance improves.
- Report attendance data to the LA and DFE as requested.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed more than six months of schooling.

Punctuality

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

- To ensure that their children arrive to school on time. Departmental doors open at 8:40am until 8:45am.
- If their child is late, to register them at the school office using the “Inventory” system which will automatically update class registers with an L code and their time of arrival.

- To be aware that morning registers will close at 10:30am, any arrivals after this that are not linked to a medical appointment (M) will be coded as U and will be counted as an absence.
- To ensure that children are collected promptly at the end of the school day (3:15pm) and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this. For children not collected by 3.30pm, with no word from parents / carers, please see Uncollected Child Policy.

Absences

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To notify the school on each day of absence before 8:30am or as soon as possible. Parents / carers can report an absence by telephoning the school office, emailing or via the Class Dojo absence reporting account.
- To provide medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g., a sick parent/carer.

Parents/carers of children for whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted by text message after registers have been taken (first day response). If there is no response or reason provided by parents / carers, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Illness/Medical absences

In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for all further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

The school may request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday.

Absence for Holidays

Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday during the school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education.

If there are exceptional circumstances, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence request form two weeks in advance of the absence, or as soon as practically possible. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher, she will use her discretion whilst applying government recommendations.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To obtain a leave of absence form from the school office.
- To complete and submit the form at least 14 days prior to the period of absence if possible.

If parents/carers decide to take a holiday without authorisation, the child's absences will be marked as unauthorised. **Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued by the Education Welfare Service for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. This fine is payable at £60 per child, per parent / carer.**

Absence for Other Reasons

Absences for reasons such as religious observance or close family bereavement *may* be authorised. These requests must be discussed with the school.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To inform the office, in writing, of the need for leave in circumstances which are known in advance.
- To inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that the appropriate code can be recorded in the register.

Unexplained Absence

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and further investigations carried out.

Regular monitoring is carried out by the Attendance Leader and Attendance Team in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss absences/ punctuality. Appropriate support which may improve the child's attendance/punctuality will be offered.

Parents/carers may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority if the level of unauthorised absence meets the set criteria.

Role of the Education Welfare Officer

- To investigate any unexplained absence which causes attendance to fall below 96% and support parents/carers to improve attendance.
- To investigate persistent absence (more than 10%), and to hold attendance meetings with these parents/carers as required.
- To investigate unexplained absence of vulnerable pupils (Child in Need/Child Protection) including making home visits.
- To investigate persistent lateness and support parents/carers to improve punctuality.
- To ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.

- To offer parenting contracts in order to identify appropriate intervention and support.
- To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite intervention and support from the school and Education Welfare Officer.
- To report accurate whole school and individual attendance data when required.

Children Missing in Education

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least 5 consecutive days, the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a total of 10 days, the family will be referred as a CME case to the Local Authority.

Celebrating Good Attendance

Good attendance is celebrated both at an individual and class level.

Each week, all classes are made aware of their overall attendance for the previous week. The winning class for each department is given a small reward such as an extra ten-minute break time. A points system operates during the year and the class with the most attendance points at the end of the school year receives a prize.

Each half term, pupils receive a small reward for attendance above 96%.

At the end of the school year, pupils with attendance over 96% receive certificates and rewards, including medals for 100%

Throughout the year attendance raffles are held to promote and rewards good attendance.

Linked Policies

Uncollected Child Policy

SEND Policy

Safeguarding Children Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Exclusions Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Medical Needs Policy

This policy has been produced in line with the following Department for Education documents:

- **School attendance parental responsibility measures -updated May 2020 (statutory)**
- **Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance- Feb 2023 (non-statutory)**
- **Working Together to improve school attendance May 2022 (non-statutory)**