

ASTON FENCE J & I SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by:
Headteacher Mrs C Dawson
Date November 2022
Chair of Governors Mrs L Jones
Date November 2022
Review date November 2024

This Policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE and LA Guidance.

Reference to parent/carer throughout this document also includes any person who has parental responsibility or who cares for them.

Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- The school is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the school.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the school and encouraging pupils to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.

Statement of Expectations

What the school expects of the pupils:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to their class

What the school expects of parents/carers

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time.
- To ensure that they contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day (equipment, completed homework etc.)

- To contact the class teacher or headteacher in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To inform the class teacher and seek authorisation for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.
- To ensure the continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period and, in exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, to request leave in term time by completing the application in advance of the holiday.
- To inform the class teacher of any reason that will prevent their child from attending school.

What parents and pupils can expect of the school

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Prompt action on any problems notified
- Close liaison with the Attendance Matters team to assist and support parents and pupils where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through reports home.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Registration Procedure

- Registration begins at 8.50am each morning and at 12.55pm in the afternoon.
- Class Teachers should insert a mark for every pupil whether it is a present mark or an absent mark. All marks must be made accurately in black ink or in accordance with computerised registration systems.
- Staff should be in their classroom at the start of the Registration period.

- The morning register closes at 9.00am and the afternoon registration closes at 1.00pm.
- If pupils arrive before 10.30am following a medical appointment, they will be deemed to be late rather than absent.
- The register will be brought to the school office by 9.00am after morning registration and by 1.00pm after afternoon registration.

Responding to Lateness

- Pupils arriving after morning or afternoon registration report to the school office. The pupils will enter through the main door.
- The school's responses for dealing with persistent lateness are: to send a letter to parents expressing concerns, to follow the attendance pathway procedures and to contact the Attendance Matters team.

Dealing with Absence

- Where pupils have a justifiable reason for absence, class teachers may authorise the absence by using the appropriate symbol in red ink.
- Class Teachers should seek guidance if they are unsure whether to authorise an absence.
- If no information is available or forthcoming regarding a pupil's absence, it will remain unauthorised unless a justifiable reason is obtained.
- Home contact will be made by the school office.

Persistent Absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The School's Response to Attendance Issues

- The school will identify and monitor pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.
- Appropriate strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual pupils.
- The school will record all attendance related incoming messages from parents, notify the class teacher and place copies in registers.
- The school will endeavour to contact home on the first day of absence in cases where no satisfactory reason has been received to explain a pupil's absence.
- When a pupil is absent and contact cannot be made by telephone, a standard letter may be sent home.
- Where the school has repeatedly failed to contact the home or poor attendance persists, the school will discuss the matter with the Attendance Matters team.
- School and year group attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The school will respond to any areas of concern identified.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

It is vitally important that parents are actively engaged in promoting good attendance.

- The importance of regular school attendance is included in the School Prospectus and in newsletters.
- The school will react positively to any parental concerns. Parents will be encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their children's attendance.

Reintegration into School After Absence

- The school will endeavour to support pupils returning to school after a long period of absence.
- School staff, and the Attendance Matters team, will liaise closely on this issue and employ appropriate reintegration strategies, incorporating Pastoral Support Programmes, Individual Education Plans and Parenting Contract Forms, as required.

- Looked After Children (LAC) will be supported following significant disruption to their education by implementing a Personal Education Plan (see school's policy on LAC). Pupils could be referred to the Education Support Team for LAC for support with reintegration, where appropriate.

Safeguarding

The school recognises that ascertaining the whereabouts of pupils is a safeguarding issue and will communicate this to parents to ensure their support with regard to early notification of absence, lateness etc. If senior managers have concerns that a pupil's non-attendance at school could be a result of, or could result in, them being in an unsafe situation, then the LA Mash team or the Police will be notified as appropriate. A pupil's attendance record will be given full consideration in any monitoring of their general wellbeing.

Staff will refer to Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Protection Procedures if they suspect there is a link between attendance and wellbeing / safety.

ATTENDANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance is Mrs Dawson, who undertakes the following:

- Develop, monitor and regularly review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers.
- Support all staff in their work related to attendance.
- Collate attendance data for the DFE, LA and Governors.
- Liaise with the LA over attendance and school strategy.
- Identify individual pupils with known punctuality/attendance problems and ensure these pupils are monitored closely.
- Refer pupils to the relevant agency when attendance gives severe cause for concern, and be aware of strategies being used with these pupils and their families, and ensuring support for these strategies within school.
- Liaise with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance.

In the headteacher's absence, these responsibilities fall to the Senior Management Team.

Class Teachers

This is an important role within the school and requires the class teacher to:

- Complete registers accurately and return as soon as possible to the school office.
- Have regular discussions with pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Collect reasons for absence from pupils, i.e. absence notes.

School Secretary/Administrator/Other Designated Person

Is responsible for:

- Telephoning parents on the first day of absence when pupils are absent without notification.
- Communicating the reason for absence to the relevant member of staff.
- Monitor individuals, as well as whole class attendance, in line with the school's procedures.
- Identify trends in the attendance of individual pupils and respond appropriately.
- Liaise regarding any queries surrounding absence, e.g. no note, odd reasons etc.
- Completing statistical returns for LA, DFE.

The Governing Body

- Receives information from the headteacher and/or Attendance Matters team on attendance.
- Will contribute to plans in response to where attendance is a cause for concern.
- Support the school in its efforts to raise attendance.
- May wish to contribute to the school's strategies to improve attendance, e.g. school based Non School Attendance Panels.

This policy has been developed with staff and governors. This policy will be reviewed in December 2024 or prior to this date if guidance from the LA or DfE is updated. Parents, staff and pupils will be made aware of this policy and periodically reminded of its contents.