



Aire View Infant School Attendance Policy

Reviewed: November 2016
Next Review: November 2017

Aire View Infant School Attendance Policy

Aims & Objectives

The school recognises the clear link between attendance and attainment and encourages the highest possible levels of attendance for individuals, groups and the school as a whole.

We aim to:

- Make excellent attendance a priority so that all pupils can achieve their potential
- Keep pupils safe from risks associated with poor attendance
- Achieve and maintain national attendance figures and persistent absence figures
- Involve parents/carers as partners in ensuring pupils do not miss school unnecessarily
- Maintain procedures on the use of class registration
- Tackle unauthorised absence and persistent absence effectively
- Use data effectively to identify and address attendance related issues
- Ensure that the school has an effective partnership with the Education Social Work service and other relevant agencies

Roles & Responsibilities

Pupils

- Attend school each day and on time
- Talk to parents/carers or teachers about any problems that might make staying at home tempting

Parents

- In line with the home-school agreement, ensure pupils attend school on a daily basis and on time. The aim is for 100% attendance.
- Inform the school office if a pupil is going to be absent from school
- Avoid taking holidays in term time. The school is no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time.
- Make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible
- Inform the class teacher/Head teacher/Parental Involvement Officer of any issues that might affect a child's attendance

Class Teachers

- In line with legal requirements ensure the register is taken each morning and afternoon
- Ensure that lessons are well planned, appropriate and interesting
- Report any unexpected absences immediately to the Parental Involvement Officer
- Liaise with the Head Teacher/ Parental Involvement Officer if patterns of absence are noted

Parental Involvement Officer

- Follow up any absences and report to Head Teacher
- Reinforce the message on excellent attendance in all dealings with parents/carers and staff
- Provide appropriate rewards for excellent attendance and celebrate outstanding attendance
- Monitor the attendance of groups and individuals using data to identify and tackle issues
- Target pupils for further intervention in line with the guidelines for tackling poor attendance
- Engage with parents/carers to address any identified issues
- Monitor messages and registers and record on absence sheets
- Contact parents/carers on the first day if no explanation has been provided for a child's absence (no later than 11.00 a.m.)
- Encourage parents/carers and pupils to aim for the highest possible levels of attendance
- Liaise with Head Teacher and Education Social Work service where appropriate to tackle attendance problems with individual pupils
- Provide data analysis for staff and parents/carers
- Use SIMS analysis to discover patterns of non-attendance & keep accurate records in individual cases

Encouraging Good Attendance for All

Provision of an appropriate and personalised curriculum, effective teaching and learning and excellent pastoral care all underpin this policy. Students are encouraged to enjoy their education and therefore want to attend.

The school engages parents/carers as partners and ensures that they are fully aware of the link between excellent attendance and high achievement through the home school agreement.

Home reward – Certificates will be sent home termly for the children who receive the following:

100% attendance (and a small gift/prize)

Improved attendance-class attendance

The class with the best weekly attendance receive a class certificate, a sticker and they are able to wear non uniform the following Monday

A letter will also be sent home to parent/carers every term to update them on their child's attendance percentage with recognition if their child's attendance has improved.

Exceptions will be made for students absent for lengthy periods with a certified medical condition.

Monitoring attendance

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be constantly aware of children who are absent, to communicate where possible with parents and to pass on concerns to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher may decide on a course of action which involves the Education Welfare Service. The Head Teacher will carry out random checks on the completion of registers and on pupils' attendance.

Children whose attendance drops below 90% or whose attendance is of concern should be referred to the School's Monitoring Group. The group may consider a contact by the Parental Involvement Officer to discuss attendance and offer support if required, a letter of concern from the Head Teacher and/or referral to the Education Welfare Officer. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the group to note improvement.

Where attendance is not improved by these means we will make a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer who will issue a formal warning leading to prosecution if required.

Requests for a change in routine: If anyone rings school to ask a child to leave school early or to do anything which is not part of the child's usual routine (go to a friend's house; Grandma's etc.) and we do not know the person as a regular carer, we will phone the child's parent to confirm the arrangement.

Reporting Attendance:

Each pupil's attendance record will form part of the curriculum report to parents, sent home at the end of the summer term. The number of possible and actual authorised and unauthorised absences will be detailed.

Encouraging a positive attitude to attendance:

Throughout the year we encourage parents to view attendance positively. This is achieved by: displays in school regarding attendance; letters making parents aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance; certificates or award stickers for good attendance. Regular school attendance will be valued and acknowledged informally by class teachers.

Procedures

1. Head Teacher/ Parental Involvement Officer to monitor whole school attendance half termly. Poor attendance monitored on a weekly basis
2. Letter sent to parent/carer to make aware of concerns
3. Head Teacher/ Parental Involvement Officer to monitor individual attendance below 85% on a more frequent basis
4. Invite parent/carer into school to discuss issue with Head Teacher/PIO
5. Further monitoring period introduced and if no improvement referral to ESWO
6. Attendance figures including rates of authorised & unauthorised absence are reported to the Pupil Progress and welfare committee and via the Head Teacher's report to the Full Governing Body

Authorised / Unauthorised Absences

The legal requirements are that school must indicate in the register whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. A pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher. The criteria which the school uses for authorising absence are in line with legal requirements and advice provided by the Local Authority and are as follows: -

Reason for Absence	Remarks
Illness, medical and dental appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is authorised absence. Pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card is advisable if a pupil is an irregular attender. • If a pupil is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, or returns home because of illness, no absence need be recorded for that session. • Schools should keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency. • If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools and EWOs can consult the School Health Service, or the pupil's GP. • A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'.
Days of religious observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. • Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.
Dual Registration involving Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or special schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law allows for dual registration of pupils at both a PRU or special school and another local school. This helps, for example, to ease a phased return to mainstream education. • Where a pupil is dually registered at institution X and Y, institution X marks the pupil authorised absent while they are attending institution Y and vice-versa. Both institutions share responsibility for the child. • Failure to attend either institution at the proper time without good reason is unauthorised absence.
Family holidays during term time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents should not normally take pupils on holidays in term. • Following the statutory regulations from September 2013, the Head Teacher will not authorise leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents will need to write to the Head Teacher explaining these exceptional circumstances and request leave of absence. Cost and convenience of holidays do not constitute exceptional circumstances. • Leave of absence requests should be completed using the school pro-forma by

	<p>the child's parent/s at least 10 days before the proposed absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the head teacher does not agree absence and the pupil goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised. • Parents could be liable to a Fixed Penalty Charge if their child's absence is unauthorised. • If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised. • Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.
Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pupil excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress • If a permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupil's name should be removed from the school roll on the school day either: after the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion; or on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made; or, if before that, the pupil takes up a place elsewhere. Meanwhile absence should be recorded as authorised. • Teachers are responsible
Traveller child when the family is travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help ensure continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. This means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. • While the Traveller is away, the base school holds the place open and records absence as authorised. • Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.
Family bereavements, or child caring for a sick or disabled family member (Young carers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals or associated events and have discretion to authorise such absences. • Similarly, schools may authorise limited duration absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made.
Special occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. For example, attending the wedding of a family member would be acceptable, but a day's absence for a birthday or a shopping trip in school hours would not. • Schools should consider: the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the pupil's overall attendance pattern.
Public performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Authority must licence a pupil to take part in a public performance. • Agreed participation should be treated as authorised absence.
Lateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival which could provide grounds for prosecution. • Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open. Thirty minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable, but schools can set shorter periods. • In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period.

Guidance for staff on registration

1. Bell rings at 8.50 am in order for lessons to promptly start at 9.00 a.m.
2. All children who are present in the registration period from 8.50am to 9.00 am are marked Present.
3. All children arriving after the register has been sent to the office or after 9.10 a.m. must be sign in at the office and time of arrival recorded.
4. Children arriving between 9.00am and 9.10am are marked late ('L').
5. Children arriving after 9.30 are marked with a U – ('Late after register has closed').
6. All these late children will receive a mark in both the absent and present columns of the register.
7. On Friday afternoons the school's office staff will adjust the registers to indicate lateness and other reasons for absence.
8. Consequently, all children physically in school at any one time will have some sort of mark in the register in case of fire or other emergency.
9. All registers are saved on the system (SIMS) immediately after both morning and afternoon registration.
10. If a child goes home early with an adult, the adult must sign the child out at the school office giving the reason.

Additional Sources of Information:

Department of Education – School Attendance Guidelines October 2014
City of Bradford MDC – Leave of absence, holidays in term time, penalty notices procedures & guidance - <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/school-holidays-and-term-dates/family-holidays-during-school-term-time/>

The above link is available via the school website