



ABBOTS FARM INFANT SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

School Day – Main School

Doors open	8.45 am
AM Registration	8.55 am
Morning Break	10.30 am
Lunch time	Reception 11.45 am – 1.00 pm Year 1 12 – 1.15 pm Year 2 12.15 – 1.30 pm
PM Registration	Reception 1.05 pm Year 1 1.20 pm Year 2 1.35 pm
End of School Day	3.15 pm

School Day – Pre School

AM Registration	8.45 am
Lunch Club	11.45 to 12.30 pm
PM Registration	12.30 pm
End of School Day	3.30 pm

PHILOSOPHY

The aim of Abbots Farm Infant School's attendance and punctuality policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Abbots Farm Infant School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a School we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our School to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our School will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Our school takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and punctuality and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils, and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

If there are problems, which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

OBJECTIVES

At our school we endeavour to:

- Improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils in the school.
- Reduce Persistent Absence in order that all pupils are assisted in reaching their potential.
- Maintain a high quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Maintain and promote a positive and safe learning environment for staff and pupils ensuring all staff access annual safeguarding training.
- Implement and maintain a clear system of rewards and sanctions for attendance and lateness to motivate pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, staff and Governors.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Establish and maintain clear systems for regularly monitoring and reporting attendance and punctuality issues to parents/carers, staff and Governors.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- Work closely with parents/carers, Governors and the local community to promote positive relationships and working partnerships.
- Promote effective partnerships with the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service and other services and supporting agencies.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Use the data to support developing good practice within all attendance monitoring procedures.
- Encourage full attendance and punctuality across the school community and ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence.

STATUTORY DUTY OF SCHOOLS

Legal framework

The Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age —

- (a) when he attains the age of five, if he attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year —

- (a) if he attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- (b) if he attains that age on that day, or
- (c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

PRINCIPLES

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

- We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.
- We will consult with all members of the School, Governors and the Attendance Compliance and Enforcement Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
- We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.
- Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.
- We will promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.
- We will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by staff and governors.
- Attendance will be an important feature of the School Improvement Plan.
- Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.
- We will ensure the inclusion of attendance information is contained in school documentation e.g. the prospectus, reports, home – school agreements.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole School.

Governors

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff
- biannually review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and children to implement the policy effectively
- nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children, and staff
- take time at governor's meetings to review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year
- ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance
- use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future.

Headteacher

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Headteacher will:

- be active to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement
- coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an biannual full policy review
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues
- ensure that government legislation on attendance is complied with and that the leadership team are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them
- monitor on a monthly basis individual pupils, where attendance drops to 90% or below and whole school attendance and punctuality on a half termly basis.
- To ensure parents are well informed about attendance and lateness via the prospectus and newsletters.
- report to the governing body and the lead governor for attendance termly on attendance records, data and provision
- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively
- To write/telephone parents/carers regarding concerns the school has about their child's attendance and arrange meetings to set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

Class Teacher

- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily
- To ensure registers are marked at or before 9.05 am in the morning and after lunch in the afternoon.
- To make an attempt to acquire an explanation as to why a child has been absent.
- To record the reasons for absence, so that the register shows whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness/extended holiday.

PreSchool Staff

- to provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class

- to ensure registers are marked at or before 8.45 in the morning and 12.30 in the afternoon
- Pre School registration is a computerised registration; which should be completed accurately and sessions marked green for attended, blue with a comment for illness, and red for further investigation
- to make an attempt to acquire an explanation from parents as to why a child has been absent.
- to record the reasons for absence, on the computerised spreadsheet
- to respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff.

Administration Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the SIMS Attendance Manager System and prepare the Pre School register.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
- To contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Head teacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- monitor on a monthly basis individual pupils, where attendance drops to 90% or below and whole school attendance and punctuality on a half termly basis.

Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance
- To support, when requested, the whole school response to attendance through the monitoring of individual children's attendance and meeting with parents.

Parents/Carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- notify the school, of the reason for absence on the first day of absence, and maintain regular communication with school staff during their child's absence and include an expected date for return
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital

that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance

- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the headteacher
- sign a home-school agreement.

PROCEDURES

The School uses Attendance Manager provided by SIMS to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.

- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.
- Telephone messages will be noted, and together with parental letters of explanation will be retained for a minimum period of one year.

ABSENCE

Authorised/Unauthorised

- Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.
- When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. For a prolonged absence, this should be followed up with a written note from the parent/carer of the child.
- Authorised absence means the school has been notified a child is ill or has permission to be absent. In certain circumstances of poor attendance, the parent is required to provide a medical certificate of the child's illness, before authorised absence can be permitted.
- Unauthorised absence means no information has been received or permission has not been given, eg parents have asked for holiday but this has not been permitted.

Lateness

- Pupils arriving after the classroom doors have been closed must enter the school via the Reception and School Office and parents required to complete the late book giving reasons for lateness
- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8.55 am, will be marked with an authorised late mark
- Pupils arriving after 9.25 am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment
- Staff will complete the number of minutes late
- Parents/carers who continue to arrive late at school with their children, will receive a letter informing them of the total number of occasions that their child has been late to school and be asked for improvement
- Parents/carers of pupils that continue to be persistently late will be invited into the school to discuss the situation.
- Afternoon registration is immediately after lunch. Close of registration for the afternoon is 15 minutes later

- The Office must keep a list of late pupils to use as a reference if needed during a fire drill.

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence.
- Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone/text on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Head teacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.
- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence.
- Parents/carers are advised that pupils are required to attend school either side of medical appointments where possible.

Leave of Absence

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013-09-05

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Application for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

All absences both authorised, unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

RECOGNISING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- The class/es that achieve maximum attendance each week will be presented with a certificate and an Attendance mascot during the Celebration Assembly.
- Children who achieve maximum attendance are presented with a certificate and sticker at the end of each term and also at the end of the academic year.
- Good and improved attendance is rewarded in a tangible way with, for example, positive comments, certificates and stickers.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Attendance data will be collated regularly to establish any patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with: Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised absence; and all children with attendance below 90%. When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
 - Punctuality has improved
 - Parental response to absence has improved
 - The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
 - Parents are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school.
- The Head teacher will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Head teacher will recommend a realistic attendance target to the Governors.
 - The Governors will set an annual target of attendance in conjunction with the LA and review this annually.

NAMED PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL		
POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE
ATTENDANCE GOVERNOR	Debby Short	
HEADTEACHER	Jeanette Lovejoy	
ATTENDANCE LEAD	Justine Tucker	
ATTENDANCE OFFICER	Laura Drummond/Zoe Furnival	