



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

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### Introduction

At Ayscoughlee Hall School, attendance is viewed as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education and look to parents/guardians to support this objective.

Attendance at school is a legal requirement. The school undertakes to comply in all matters relating to admission and attendance with ISI Regulatory Requirements (Part 3, paragraph 17) and the DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' (May 2022).

All pupils are required to be in school before registration at 9.00am. The school day ends at 3.20pm for all children – the only exception to this will be Kindergarten children who are not yet in school on a full timetable or children for whom a reduced timetable has been agreed. Many pupils remain beyond 3.20pm to take part in extra-curricular activities under the supervision of a member of staff or outside provider who has been checked and vetted by the school. If a child is not attending a previously booked after school club for any reason the school must be informed by the parent or carer to comply with our safeguarding requirements.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by members of staff or a parent/guardian for a trip/visit or sporting fixture. Details of any such occurrence will have been provided to parents/guardians in advance.

### What is an acceptable attendance rate?

Ayscoughlee Hall School expects attendance to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. 90% attendance or below is classed as persistent absence and the school is obliged to engage with the local authority in such cases.

Poor attendance at school can seriously affect a child's:

- Learning and attainment in school.
- Relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships.
- Confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others.

### Responsibilities of the School

- In compliance with DfE 'Working together to improve attendance guidance', the school maintains attendance registers. Codes are allocated to show reasons for absence (detailed in the school registration policy).
- The school recognises its legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the local authority – specifically, an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of ten days or more (other than for reasons of sickness or an authorised leave of absence), failure to attend regularly, and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known. In this last case, the school is required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority in which the pupil lives.
- The school will monitor and report on attendance to staff, parents and the local authority.
- The designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is Mrs Theresa Wright (Headteacher) [twright@ahs.me.uk](mailto:twright@ahs.me.uk).

We encourage all parents to give a high priority to regular school attendance and work with us to ensure positive attitudes towards attendance are developed. Attendance related help, support and advice is available from school.

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly, at the school at which they are registered.
- Children must attend every day that the school is open (unless they are sick, or permission has been granted in advance).
- Parents must ensure their child is in school prior to the morning register being closed at 9.00am, after which they will be marked as late.
- If a child is unwell, parents/guardians should telephone the school office before 9.00am on the first day of absence and either telephone or email on [absence@ahs.me.uk](mailto:absence@ahs.me.uk) for each subsequent day until the child returns to school. On return to school, parents are required to email giving a reason for absence (if this has not already been done during the absence period). Please use the email address [absence@ahs.me.uk](mailto:absence@ahs.me.uk). The school will always telephone on the first day of an unexplained absence. Parents or guardians should provide a minimum of two emergency contact telephone numbers.
- Requests for absence must be made in writing and reach the school at least 2 weeks in advance.
- Requests for exceptional absence (i.e., absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent the Headteacher at least two weeks in advance.
- The school will always aim to send parents/guardians details of term dates at least a year in advance so that family holidays can be arranged without disrupting a child's education. The general policy of the Board of Governors is **not** to allow holidays to be taken during term time, in keeping with DfE 'Working together to improve attendance' guidance (May 2022).

### **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given.

These include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school after the registers have closed without a reasonable explanation.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. Parents who are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems.

## **Persistent Absence**

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will considerably impact on a child's education and have a lasting effect on their learning. We monitor absence thoroughly; where absence is seen to reach the persistent absence mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark, parents will be informed of this immediately as follows:

- Absence below 93% will result in a letter warning that attendance is below acceptable levels.
- Absence below 90% will result in a request for a meeting with the headteacher to discuss how we can assist in improving attendance.
- Absence below 85% will be flagged up by the local authority and may result in further investigation.

## **Lateness**

Punctuality is very important, and the school expects children to be in the classroom and ready for registration before the 9.00am bell sounds unless there is an unavoidable delay. If a child misses the start of a school day, they can miss work and vital information relating to the day ahead. Late arrivals also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help the children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

## **How We Manage Lateness**

Registers are marked twice daily (at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions). A child will receive a late mark if they are not in school by the correct time. Registers close 15 minutes after being taken. In accordance with regulations, if a child arrives after the close of registration they will be recorded as 'late' in the register, and this will count as an unauthorised absence. Parents who are unexpectedly held up in the morning for any reason should contact the office to let school know that their child will be late. This will not be classed as an unauthorised absence.

## **Championing Good Attendance**

To encourage and champion excellent attendance, the school will apply the following incentives for the children:

1. Each week in assembly a class will be awarded the attendance certificate. This will be calculated on average attendance for the class over the week.
2. At the end of each term a certificate of 100% attendance will be given out to children who have no absences for that term. One term's full attendance will achieve a bronze certificate, two term's full attendance will receive a silver certificate and 3 term's full attendance will receive a gold certificate.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The registration policy
- Parent Handbook
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

***Any reference to the word 'School' implicitly includes all its associated clubs/activities including Kids Club. This policy also applies to EYFS***

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