

Abingdon Primary School



This school is an academy within The Legacy Learning Trust.



Attendance Policy

Status & review	Term	Year
Last review date/Policy adopted	Autumn	2024
Next review	Autumn	2025
Lead	Mr A Cooper	



The
Legacy
Learning
Trust

Attendance Policy (2024)

At Abingdon Primary School we believe that excellent attendance and punctuality is the key to ensuring that our pupils have the best life chances and opportunities. We strongly believe that having access to and receiving a good education is the best way we can ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes, empowering them to make the best and most positive choices about their future lives. Parents have a vital role to play and at Abingdon Primary School there is a strong emphasis on maintaining home-school links and good communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Senior Leaders responsible for attendance

Miss Lambert	Assistant Head Teacher
Mr Cooper	Head Teacher

Team Around the Child (TAC) – who support with attendance

Miss Colclough	First Day response Admin
Miss Barry	Attendance admin
Mrs Bashir	Parent Support Adviser
Mr Summerton	Wellbeing Lead

Attendance link Governor:

Mrs Wallace

Attendance and the Law

All pupils of statutory school age who are registered at a school must attend regularly, in line with the relevant legislation (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013)

To report an absence, request special leave, discuss any issues related to attendance or to request support, parents/carers should contact the school via phone. Telephone: 01642 210567

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attendance encourages pupils to build friendships and develop social groups, working together as a whole team, sharing ideas and developing life skills
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork, and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying and do not miss out on essential learning and social events taking place. Good attendance is linked to greater success in terms of the personal development of pupils
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment, or training
- Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers

Whilst parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child/children attend school regularly and on time. It is the responsibility of schools, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate education suitable to their needs. As a school we will work with families to identify reasons for poor attendance and support them to resolve difficulties.

Our attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is part of all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying and Behaviour.



We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure their child(ren) regularly attend school
- Ensure that their child arrives at the school punctually at the start of the day
- Ensure that they contact the school each day that their child is absent before 9am and explain the reason for the absence
- Apply to the Headteacher for a period of absence in advance where there are exceptional circumstances
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Provide school with two emergency contacts
- Work with school staff to address any attendance or punctuality concerns which may arise
- Not ignore, agree with or condone their child's non-attendance
- Support school attendance by not taking family holidays during term-time
- Where possible, aim to make medical/dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/carers will aim to ensure that pupils attend school prior to/after each appointment to minimise the amount school missed
- Support the school attendance and punctuality policy

Abingdon School will:

- Meet and greet pupils on entry to school
- Provide a safe, nurturing learning environment where pupils want to be every day to grow, thrive and flourish
- Provide a welcoming and supportive atmosphere which enhances pupil progress and development through inspirational and innovative teaching and learning
- Promote and recognise outstanding and good attendance and punctuality through a strategic whole school initiative
- Promote and recognise improvements in attendance and punctuality through a strategic whole school initiative
- Ensure respectful relationships filled with openness, honesty and kindness where we respond to any child's or parent's concerns that may impact the pupil's wellbeing, attendance, or punctuality
- Maintain regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality; ensuring registers are taken for every morning and afternoon session within the first 10 minutes of arrival and missing pupils are reported for safeguarding reasons
- As a safeguarding priority, ensure that parents/carers are contacted when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Monitor and report whole school, cohorts, individual pupils, vulnerable group attendance to inform planning and to ensure relevant support can be put in place
- Follow up unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence
- In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, we will discuss requirements needed on an individual pupil basis
- Where a child's attendance is a cause concern, meet with parents to set targets for improvement and put attendance contracts in place with appropriate support
- Request medical evidence for absence due to illness
- Work with the Local Authority and other external partners to support pupils and their families with regards to attendance and punctuality
- Where appropriate, make referral to the Local Authority Schools Attendance Service
- Request Penalty Notices to be issued for unauthorised leave in term time



- Request Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence where in-school support and support from the school Educational Welfare Officer has failed
- Make a copy of the policy available on the school website
- Will communicate with parents/carers regarding attendance through school reports, personalised letters (where concerns arise) and Dojo

School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

Children and young people may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of Abingdon Primary school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for each child encompasses:

- Attendance, Behaviour, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying.
- A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter.
- Children who are missing education are at greater risk than those who are seen regularly in school. Examples of these risks include:
 - Child Criminal Exploitation
 - Radicalisation
 - Female Genital Mutilation
 - Modern Day Slavery Domestic
 - Violence
 - Honour Based Violence
 - Neglect
- A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. That is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Continuous Absence and Safeguarding

In cases where a child has been absent for 2 consecutive days and we have been unable to contact with the parent/carers, a senior leader or member of our TAC team may make a home visit.

Child Missing in Education

If your child has been missing for 20 consecutive days school will submit a Child Missing in Education (CME) form to the local authority. This may result in your child being removed from roll at Abingdon Primary School.

Roles and Responsibilities

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

The Governing Body will:

Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.

- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.
- Have a named governor linked to attendance.



Safeguarding and the Law

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and pupils under the age of 18.

Authorised Absence is defined as:

Absence in term time where permission has been given by the school. Examples of authorised absences include:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Headteacher's discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time only where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Head Teacher.
- The above list is not exhaustive and each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Unauthorised absence is defined as:

Absence in term time where permission has not been given by the school. This means that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time.

Examples of unauthorised absences include:

- Any absence that the school has not been informed of by letter or by telephone
- Unexplained absence. Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for an extended period (10 days) will be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education (CME)
- Other examples of where absence will not be authorised:
 - Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
 - Birthdays;
 - Family celebrations;
 - Parents' /family Weddings
 - Transport issues or car broken down;
 - Holidays in term time (following the Department for Education's Guidelines)
 - Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment.
 - Visiting sick relatives
- The above list is not exhaustive and each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Punctuality and Registers

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.

At Abingdon Primary School:

- School doors open for children in years 1- 6 at 8:35am with gates closing at 8:45am. Gates open for reception at 8:55am and close at 9:05am. All registers remain open until 9:15am. Children in year 1-6 are late after 8:45am and must enter through the main reception whereby they receive a late mark. If children arrive after 9:15am they receive a 'U' code – arrived in school after the register has closed.
- All lateness will be challenged.
- Afternoon registration takes place immediately after the lunch break, between 1:00pm and 1:15pm.



Pupils Leaving During the School Day

Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time; only urgent appointments should be attended during the school day. Parents are requested to confirm by phone, letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.

Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school at the school office.

Leave of Absence

Abingdon Primary School term times and holiday dates are published a year in advance and are published on the school website. School training days are published as soon as the school have agreed these but may be subject to change. The school will ensure they communicate any changes to parents/carers through either text, email, newsletter or on the website.

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for pupils to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Parents/carers should make any request well in advance and in writing (a form is available from the school office). Requests for absence for reasons such as compassionate leave and sporting or musical competitions should be made in the same way.

All requests are considered individually, considering the circumstances of the request. Other factors will also be considered, such as:

- the time of year the pupil will be absent
- the attendance record of the pupil
- the number of previous requests for leave of absence
- the pupil's ability to catch up
- the pupil's current year group

Parents will be notified of the decision in writing.

Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Where attendance is falling to a level causing concern parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss and address any potential in school barriers. Where barriers are out of our control, we will meet with pupils and parents/carers to enable us to understand the barriers and agree actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

Where absence intensifies, so will the support. We will work with pupils, parents/carers, the local authority, and all other relevant partners. Where appropriate, formal meetings will take place involving parents/carers, the pupil and the senior leader responsible for attendance.

These meetings will clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but, importantly, will also provide



an opportunity to continue to listen to, understand and empathise with the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available.

It is important to note that whilst our policy will be applied fairly and consistently, we will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families with regards to specific barriers to attendance. Measures described in paragraph 40 of 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' will be implemented as and when the need arises. Where appropriate we will liaise with external partners such as the local authority and/or Medical Services to ensure that all pupils are able to access education.

In very exceptional cases, and where it is in the pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. These will be discussed and agreed with the designated senior leader and will be regularly reviewed.

Persistent Absence(PA) Indicator

The Department for Education regards attendance of 90% or below as persistent absenteeism. The table below shows an indication of approximately how many days a pupil needs to miss per half term to meet the threshold of persistent absenteeism.

Average attendance of 85-90% over 5 school years equates to pupils missing half a school year of education.

Average attendance of 80% over 5 school years equates to pupils missing a whole school year. The Department for Education regards attendance of 50% or below as severe absenteeism.