

Attendance Policy



Approved by: Mr S Sykes

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1. Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Almondbury Community School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its children. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement, low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

We firmly believe that any school time missed is a missed educational opportunity. As such we are committed to achieving the highest standards of pupil attendance and punctuality at our school. This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the schools commitment to attendance. To that end we will have in place systems and procedures which:

- Encourage full attendance and punctuality to school and lessons;
- Collate and provide relevant attendance data to staff;
- Involve other agencies (Attendance and Pupil Support Service etc) when appropriate;
- Inform parents of absences and involve them of any attendance concern for their children.

Consistency is the key to success of this policy. It must be shared with ALL staff and children, through staff meetings, handouts and the whole-school assembly programme. An abridged version should be shared with all parents at meetings and/or through the Pupil Planner at KS2, KS3 and KS4 and a full version made available online on the schools website.

The schools Attendance policy will operate in conjunction with other policies, namely:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Curriculum and Assessment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Aims

The policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which children feel safe, secure and valued.
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum.

3. Registration

- Children are registered twice each day, once for the morning session at the start of the day and once for the afternoon session after lunch. Children in Year 7 to Year 11 also register at the beginning of each lesson.
- The school registers electronically using Lesson Monitor provided through the School Information Management System (SIMS).
- Children in Nursery to Year 2 who arrive late to school must be signed for by their parents at the Greenside Centre. Year 3 to 11 are required to sign in at the main entrance of the Fernside Centre to ensure that their registration mark is recorded for that session.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The school expects the following:

Children:

- To attend school for every possible school session.
- To bring a letter from home/note in planner explaining the cause of any absence, signed by a parent/carer.
- To arrive on time for registrations and all lessons or to give the class teacher/form tutor/subject teacher a note signed by the appropriate adult explaining why this was not possible.

Parents/Carers:

- To encourage and support their children to attend school for every possible school session.
- To contact the school on the first day of absence and all subsequent days of absence, if not a prearranged and pre-authorised absence in order to provide an explanation.
- To ensure that a written and signed explanation of pupil absence is sent to school on the return of the child. This may be communicated through the pupil planner in KS2, KS3 and KS4.
- To contact school, in confidence, when problems occur that may impact on attendance and punctuality in order to help the school to best manage and support the needs of the pupil.
- To attempt to make all medical and/or essential appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible then attendance is required both before and after the appointment as is appropriate. When appointments are made in school time, written medical evidence must be provided.
- Agree to the Attendance Policy by signing the summary in the planner (KS2, KS3, KS4).

Class Teacher/Form Tutors (FT):

- Complete an accurate and timely register for their class/tutor group.
- Request notes from parent/carer who have been absent from school immediately upon their return to school. The notes should then be taken to the attendance officer.
- Monitor attendance and enter appropriate codes for pupil absence when notes have been received from parents to authorise absence.
- Mentor/advise children of attendance and punctuality concerns.
- Ensure effective communication and liaison with the appropriate staff member, children and parents, informing of non co-operation and persistent issues.
- Inform the appropriate member of staff relevant to key stage of any attendance issues or concern eg. PA children on the first day of their absence (under 90% attendance), to ensure a more proactive and timely response to their needs.
- Provide attendance and punctuality statistics to parents on a regular basis. This should also be completed at the end of each Champions of Learning cycle.

In KS3/4; Specifically FTs:

- Receive a weekly absence report for the children in their form. This details children whose absence from school requires authorisation and/or follow-up. If necessary, FTs will place the pupil on report for attendance, feeding-back to House office as required.
- Apply consistent sanctions for lateness:
Year 7 to 11 children who are late to school sessions (am or pm) on two occasions in any week will be required to complete a 15 minute detention with FT. These children will be identified by the FT on a daily basis and parents will be informed the following week by text.
Persistent lateness will result in parent/carer being invited into school to explain the lateness.

KS3/4 Subject Teachers and Heads of Faculty (HOF):

- Subject teachers and intervention staff are required to complete the electronic register for their class. This should be completed every lesson during the school day.
- HOFs will initiate appropriate interventions/actions for key children causing concern for their attendance and punctuality to that subject.
- Liaise with Form Tutor/Inclusion/Associate Leaders/AO to discuss and share best practice for dealing with key children.
- Subject teachers and/or HOF to hold punctuality detentions, when punctuality is lesson specific.
- Subject teachers should record attendance or punctuality concerns in planners and contact parents if this becomes a significant/regular cause for concern.

Attendance Officer (AO):

- Contact parents/carers of any pupil on their first day of any absence that has not been pre-authorized or arranged. This is completed by telephone/SMS. If no contact can be made, a letter will be sent to the home address informing parents of the absence.
- Act appropriately upon any absence of Persistent Absentees (<90%) including first day contact home or home visit, letter as required.
- Provide the appropriate member of staff with the following weekly reports:
Children with attendance of 90% and below.
Overall percentage attendance by class/tutor/year group.
Children with two or more late marks to am/pm sessions each week (By Monday of the following week, Year 7 to 11 only).
- Keep absences under review and keep the appropriate member of staff informed of developments and interventions made, and their impact.
- Maintain a record of all home visits.
- Attend weekly attendance and punctuality meetings with Associate Leaders. These meetings will establish priorities for the Inclusion Team with regard to attendance and allow strategies to be developed. See *appendix 1* and impact measured each half term.
- Meet with the Inclusion Lead fortnightly to discuss trends and causes for concern.

Associate Leaders and Inclusion Team:

- Monitor the attendance and punctuality of children in their key stage/year group. Children causing concern will be identified through the weekly attendance and punctuality meeting with the AO.
- Make appropriate and timely interventions to improve attendance and/or punctuality of children in their year group.
- Monitor the impact of intervention each half term.
- Apply consistent sanctions for lateness:
ALs will monitor the consistency of sanctions applied by form tutors.
These children will be identified by the AO who will inform the form tutor and arrange to record in detention book.
Children who regularly attend late will be required to meet with Inclusion and AO.

- Monitor any Attendance Group Intervention and liaise with AO with regard to the running of this intervention.
- Attend weekly attendance and punctuality meetings with the AO.
- Support staff in developing strategies for improving the attendance and punctuality of children.
- Systematically meet with parents/carers of PA children half termly to proactively set and review targets.
- Review the attendance and punctuality for their year group every term and report to the Every Child Matters committee.

Inclusion Lead:

- Responsible for whole-school attendance and punctuality.
- Hold responsibility for the annual review of this policy.
- Report whole-school attendance and punctuality to the Steering Group on a termly basis.
- Hold fortnightly meetings with the Attendance Officer.
- Support all staff with procedures, analysis of absence/lateness and appropriate intervention.
- Provide/coordinate any required training and/or support for all staff to ensure the accurate recording and reporting of attendance and punctuality policies and procedures.
- Set targets for whole-school attendance, in consultation with the associate leaders, attendance officer, the Steering Group, the Governors and the LA.
- Manage current school roll, ensuring children are added to, or removed from roll as required in conjunction with the school's data manager.

5. Strategies to Promote Good Attendance and Punctuality

- Good attendance and punctuality will be celebrated.
- Children with good attendance and punctuality will be praised individually by their class teacher/form tutor and/or HOH/AL.
- Children whose attendance/punctuality has improved will be recognized with similar praise.
- Good news cards will be sent home and positive comments are logged on a child's achievement record on SIMS.
- 100% attendance certificates will be issued to children every term and annually.
- Half termly/termly rewards for pupils and parents.

Reception to Year 2:

- "Every Day Counts" poster displayed around the Greenside Centre.
- Every Day Counts leaflets given to all new parents.
- Fortnightly – The attendance for each class is displayed.

Reception to Year 8:

- Fortnightly – The class with the most attendance is presented with the "Attendance Trophy" in assembly.

Year 7 to Year 11:

- Termly attendance data will be recorded in every pupil's planner.

6. Term Time Absences

All requests for term time absence must be in writing addressed to the head teacher. If parents have not sought permission from the head teacher before taking their child out of school a penalty notice may be issued.

The decision to authorise term time absence is at the head teacher's discretion. If an event can be scheduled outside of term time (175 days) then it would not be normal to expect a request of absence to be authorised.

It is important to note that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence. If authorised and failure to return as specified may result in a penalty notice being issued.

Unauthorised leave may result in:

- A penalty notice being issued to each parent for each child.
- The possibility of losing their school place and the unlikelihood of being re-admitted to the school.
- The possibility of prosecution under Section: 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offenders.
- The possibility of a fine up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment for non-payment of a penalty notice should the case go to court.

APPENDIX 1

Name:	Date:
Form:	Time:
Staff:	

Details of Visit:

Action:

