



Abbey Road Primary School

Attendance Policy

January 2017

Introduction

At Abbey Road all of our pupils are encouraged to **'take care and be proud'** – of each other as well as themselves; of the work they do and their school environment - and our dedicated staff team make the time to get the best from each child ensuring individuality is nourished and nurtured. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Aims

- For all children to attend school as often as possible.
- For the average attendance percentage to be significantly above the national average (96%)
- For our persistent absence percentage to be below the national average (2.7%)

Everyone in school has a responsibility to improve or maintain excellent attendance and adults in school should model these expectations as well as encouraging them (i.e. by not being late to class or to pick up their classes from the playground).

Daily Actions – (as per authority guidance)

- School starts at 8:45 am.
- Attendance register opens at 8.45 and is kept in the classroom until 9am.
- Children arriving in school between 8.45am and 8.59am will be given a preset mark (/).
- Any child arriving in class between 9:00am and 9.25am will be given a late mark (L) in the register. (At this point the register will be in the school office.)
- Any child arriving after 9:25am should be given a U mark denoting an unauthorised absence.

- Any child arriving late needs to be brought to the school office so that they can be signed into the late register and the reason for their late arrival recorded.
- If a child is absent, school should be informed as soon as possible so that the reason for their absence is known and can be recorded in the register correctly. Parents should inform school each day of their child's continued absence.
- If the class teacher is told directly they must insert the correct code into the register. The class teacher is responsible for the correct administration of the register and must put the correct code in wherever possible. Staff should be aware that this is a legal document and ensure it is completed correctly at all times.

Parents

If we do not hear why a child is absent, the school office will begin to make contact with parents/carers to find the reason for a child's absence. It is vital we know that your child is safe with you or an appropriate carer, and not in a situation that may endanger them, as well as understanding the reason for the absence.

In the case of sustained periods of illness, or regular days being taken ill, we will ask if there is any support or help we can provide to help your child attend school or if there are any difficulties we should be aware of in the interests of your child's safety and attendance at school. If we feel it is appropriate, we have an obligation to suggest when a child should really be at school rather than being kept at home. The school does not have to accept reasons given for absence and may ask for proof of (eg) medical appointments and may record absence as unauthorised if we believe it to be the correct course of action.

At all times we will act in a fair and consistent manner, adhering to the principles within Nottinghamshire's Code of Conduct and their Improving Attendance Toolkit.

Weekly actions

Each week attendance is recorded by the school office administration team. The school office manager monitors these records fortnightly.

Positive rewards

Attendance is rewarded at the end of the school year, with awards for pupils who have achieved 100% attendance.

Actions taken when attendance/punctuality is causing concern

Attendance is beginning to cause a concern when a child is absent for a number of unjustifiable sessions, has an identifiable pattern of absence (e.g. most Fridays) or changes suddenly without explanation.

Every half term, pupils whose attendance or punctuality are causing concern are identified and discussed with the school's Family Link Worker, alongside/in addition to the Head Teacher.

Children with attendance below **90%** will be highlighted by the Family Link Worker who, under direction from the Head Teacher, will provide the most appropriate level of support, treating

each case individually. If necessary, school will work alongside parents to organise support and guidance from outside agencies such as the school nurse or mental health professionals. If appropriate, and with parental consent, Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings will be organised to discuss and review relevant actions with purpose to increase attendance.

Home School Communication

At the end of the autumn and spring term, children whose attendance is below 90% will receive a letter identifying the issue and requesting improvement (See appendix 1) along with a detailed attendance record of the child's attendance to date. These letters are sent out in January (after the Christmas break) and April (after the Easter break) in order to obtain a complete record of attendance for the previous half term up to the last day.

After the Easter break, Children whose attendance has increased above 90% are sent a letter stating this is the case and a request for this to be maintained. (See appendix 2)

Children whose attendance has increased but not yet above 90% are sent a letter to state an increase has been achieved, and requested to keep improving the percentage to above 90%. (See appendix 3)

If attendance is still decreasing after an initial letter, then the parents will be asked to arrange a time to come into school to discuss their child's attendance in a meeting with the Head Teacher and/or Family Link Worker. At this meeting, the issues around their child's poor attendance / punctuality will be discussed and possible support, as mentioned above, will be offered where appropriate.

If the parents do not engage with school throughout this period, parents/carers will be informed that the school has been left with no option but to refer to Nottinghamshire County Council's Targeted Support.

If, at any time, there are wider concerns about the child's welfare then safeguarding procedures will be started immediately in line with our child protection policy.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Government has made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013. These state that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases, it is the Head Teacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school, if leave is granted.

As a consequence of these changes, school is no longer able to approve requests for holiday absence for reasons that are not considered to be exceptional such as:

- Availability of cheap holidays or travel arrangements
- Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term or INSET days
- Day trips
- Sporting fixtures or shows

- Holiday dates of siblings at other schools
- Parents leave of absence from work cannot be in school holidays

If you are looking to take your child out of school during term time, you must apply for permission in advance using the 'leave of absence' request form – available from the school office and website. All requests will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Applications will not be authorised retrospectively.

Fixed penalty notices

While the Head Teacher now has the authority to issue fixed penalty notices, this school intends to use Targeted Support to issue notices in line with their procedures and support systems. Further details on the issuing of penalty notices are in the Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices Issued in Respect of Truancy and Excluded Pupils.

Home visits

It is the policy of Abbey Road Primary School that staff do not make home visits except in exceptional circumstances and then, never alone.

Recording

Any contact with parents/carers, including meetings, regarding this matter will be noted, signed and dated, along with copies of letters sent to the family. All these will be retained in the child's record. If Targeted Support become involved, the child will have a concern folder kept in accordance with the school's child protection policy. At this point, all attendance documentation will be filed in the child's concern file.

January 2017

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Letter requesting improvement of attendance

Appendix 2 – Letter stating an increase in percentage and request for this to be maintained

Appendix 3- Letter stating an increase has been recorded, although an increase to 90% has not been achieved, along with a request for this percentage to continue increasing.

Appendix 4 – Nottinghamshire County Council's 'Improving Attendance Toolkit'