



Ashby Fields Primary School

Attendance and Leave of Absence

Policy

The staff and governors of Ashby Fields Primary School recognise that good attendance and punctuality is essential in order that children reach their full potential at school. We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and punctuality and providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities it is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. In order to achieve these aims the school will:

- Ensure that children are stimulated, motivated and keen to come to school.
- Remind parents it is their responsibility to ensure children who are physically well are in school on a regular basis.
- Remind parents to inform the school office promptly **by 9am**, if their child is absent for any reason.
- Monitor absences closely and involve the Attendance Officer in encouraging parents to view attendance as important.
- Inform the Education, Inclusion & Partnership Team (EIPT) if there are extreme concerns.
- Inform parents termly concerning their child's attendance figures and report on annual attendance at the end of the school year.
- Encourage parents to ensure children arrive at school punctually and are picked up on time.

Expectations of the school

The school expects its parents/carers to:

- encourage their children to attend school every day, on time (**8:45am-3:15pm**);
- ensure children are prepared adequately for the school day;
- contact the school on the first day of absence and to keep us informed daily if necessary;
- arrange holidays outside of school hours;
- arrange medical appointments outside of school hours, where possible;
- comply with the school policies and procedures;

Strategies to support good attendance and punctuality within school

- Ensure registers are accurate and recorded by the teacher at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions electronically (or by paper where necessary).
- Registration data is checked by the administrative staff.
- Telephone messages and reasons for absence are recorded on the electronic data management system.
- Any concerns about an individual child are communicated to the Headteacher.
- Where particular concerns have been highlighted the teacher will notify the office immediately of an absence.
- The school attendance team will closely monitor attendance of all pupils and follow the school's attendance concerns procedure shown on the parent flow chart.
- Where attendance is between 90-95%, the attendance team regularly monitor and send a reminder about attendance to parents and guardians.
- Where attendance is between 86%-89%, parents will be invited to attend a meeting with members of the school's attendance team.
- Monthly attendance certificates will be sent home regularly and a meeting will be organised between the Parents/Carers and the Attendance Team to discuss issues that the family may be experiencing.
- An Attendance Contract will be put in place to monitor attendance over a fixed 4-week period for attendance below 85%. Parents/Carers may be asked to provide medical evidence if persistent absence is due to ad-hoc illnesses. If attendance improves within the 4-week monitoring period then the Attendance Contract can be terminated. If, however, attendance does not improve during the fixed period, then it can be extended, at the discretion of the Head teacher.
- If attendance does not improve following an Attendance Contract, and/or Parents/Carers do not engage with the process, a referral may be made to the SASS for irregular term-time attendance, if it fits the criteria. A fine may be issued.
- The Attendance Officer/Family Support Workers will be asked to intervene and support families where persistent attendance is a concern.

Recording Attendance (Safeguarding procedures)

- On the first day of absence: a telephone call to the parents must be made, including if necessary, an SMS or a letter via email.
- Day two: a follow-up telephone call must be made to the parents, including an SMS and email.
- Day three: a telephone call must be made asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. The parents/carers will be given **2** further working days to make contact. If you are aware that English may not be the parents' first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.
- **If the child is still absent from school after 5 days and non-contact has been made: Attendance officer and Parent Support Worker to arrange an unannounced home visit ensuring that risk assessments are in place.**
- If the child has not been seen and the parents/carers have not made contact either, school must contact SASS via the on-line form to alert them to the possibility that there is a child missing in education.
- SASS will arrange a home visit to assess the situation and will be in contact with the school for further steps to be taken.
- If parent/guardians take their child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions am/pm) (90.0%) over a period of six weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action.

This could include;

- A Penalty Notice payable of up to £160 fine without further reference to you for a penalty notice, this warning is valid for 12 months.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1000.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500

and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Lateness/Punctuality

- Parents will be reminded about school times (8:45am-3:15pm) and the importance of good punctuality.
- Parents will be asked to sign their child in using the electronic signing-in system in the foyer giving the reason for lateness.
- If there are more than five occasions of lateness a letter or Seesaw message will be sent to parents reminding them of their responsibility to ensure children arrive on time.
- If lateness persists following a further five late occasions an appointment will be made to see the Attendance Team. An Attendance Contract may be put in place and possible referral to SASS.

- At the end of the day children who have not been collected after ten minutes will be brought to the school office. Names will be recorded and they will then be asked to wait in the office area.
- If there is no contact from a parent by 3:30pm a call will be made to ascertain the reason why a child has not been picked up.
- School will monitor this and follow the safeguarding procedures in school where concerns are raised for late collection.
- If a child is consistently late being collected then a record will be kept and the parent asked to see the Attendance Team to discuss the reasons for this.

Illness

- If your child is ill you should let the school know as soon as possible, by the latest 9am. You can report absence on the school's telephone number, by the Seesaw app to Mrs Rush or in person. Please let us know when your child is likely to return to school and **ring every day of your child's absence** unless you advise us initially of the length of time they will be absent for.
- The school is guided by Public Health guidelines so there may be occasions when your child must stay away from school in line with these guidelines. If your child is sick or has diarrhoea, they must not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea. This is to ensure the infection does not spread to other children. If your child is sick or has diarrhoea at school we will ring you and ask you to come and collect your child.

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

- If we feel that your child is not well enough to come to school we reserve the right to ask you to come and collect your child.

Leave of Absence

Young children in particular often suffer from early childhood illnesses (e.g. chickenpox) and to offset absence caused by these unavoidable times off school it is important that all unnecessary absences are avoided.

Schools cannot authorise leave of absence for holidays. We urge parents to consider very seriously whether any time off school is absolutely necessary.

If parent/guardians take their child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions am/pm) (83.3%) over a period of six weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action.

This could include;

. WNC Legal Services have advised that all school policies should define what they deem as irregular attendance. Please see the example below. School's policy should also state their attendance expectation.

If you take your child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) (90%) over a period of 10 weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action.

This could include:

- ***a Penalty Notice payable up to £160 fine***
- ***prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000***
- ***prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment***

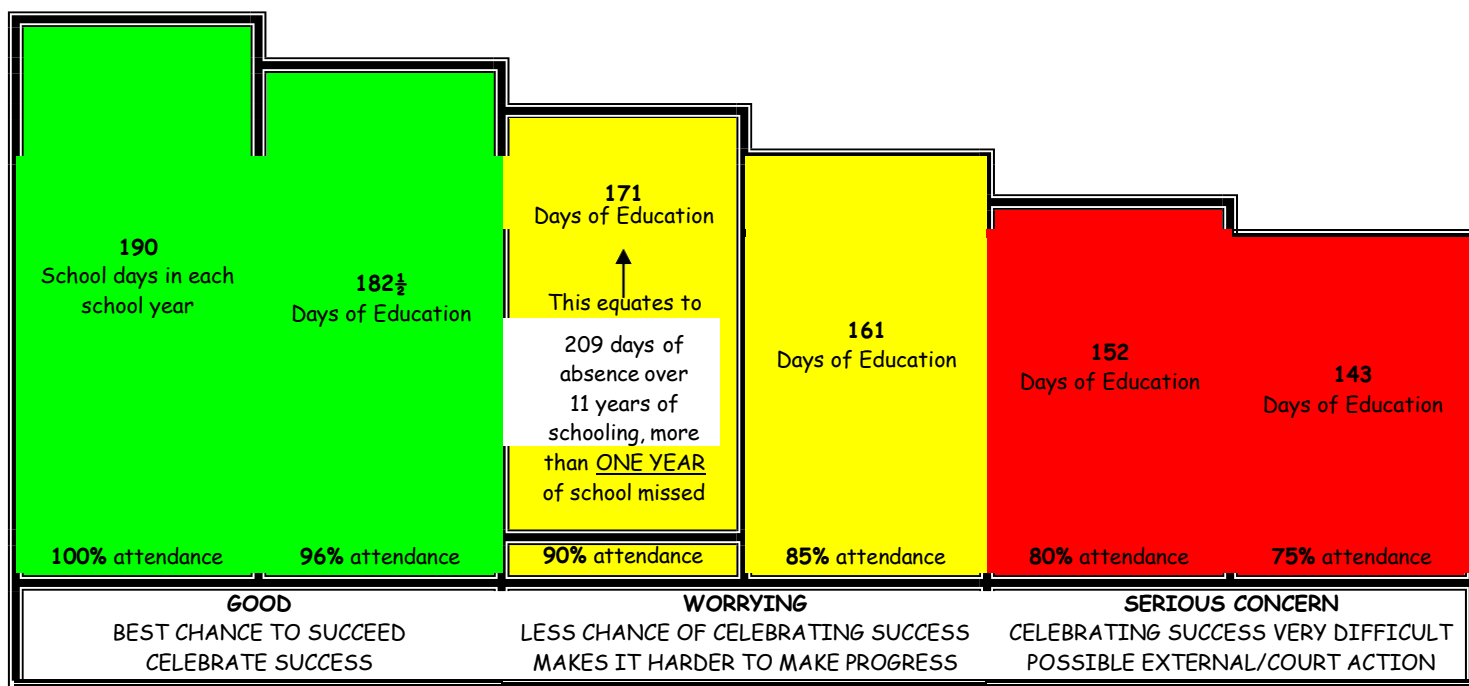
Further information can be found on West Northamptonshire's website using the link below.

[Support for schools - help with a child's attendance issues | West Northamptonshire Council](#)

If parents wish to apply for a leave of absence they should follow this procedure:

- Read the school’s attendance and leave of absence policy thoroughly.
- Note the school procedure in relation to authorising absence.
- If there are exceptional or compassionate reasons for applying for a leave of absence then they should complete a leave of absence form & make an appointment to see the Headteacher/Deputy Head.
- It is at the Head teacher’s discretion whether a leave of absence is authorised or not. Only where there are strong compassionate reasons or extenuating circumstances is any leave of absence likely to be authorised. **No term time holidays will be authorised.**
- No leave of absence will be authorised unless an appointment has taken place with the Headteacher/Deputy Head.

There are 175 non-school days each year to use for family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments



Policy date: September 2024. Next Review date: September 2026.