

Ashton CEVC Primary School Attendance Policy



Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Regular attendance at Ashton CEVC Primary School is 95%.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

School procedures

Attendance Register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DFE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55 a.m. on each school day. The classroom doors open from 8.45 a.m. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55 a.m. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 p.m.

Unplanned Absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00 a.m. or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents should contact the School on 01604 863189 where there is also the facility to leave a message. Parents can also email the administrator on bursar@ashton.northants-ecl.gov.uk.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parents should notify the school in advance of appointments by writing or phone.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found later in the policy.

Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. If a child is repeatedly late, the head teacher and or Attendance Manager will speak to the Parent and see what support we can give.

Following up Absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Reporting to Parents

Parents receive notification of their child's attendance within their annual written report.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' for example as a day for a wedding, funeral, exams, previously agreed absence.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- A holiday during term time will not be authorised unless supporting documents from other professionals e.g. consultant deem the absence necessary.

Legal Sanctions

Schools can refer parents to the Local Authority to issue warning letters fines for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Local Authority, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Attendance figures are reported on the weekly newsletter for each class and colour coded. At the end of the Autumn term, each child with a 100% attendance and punctuality record receives a Reward Certificate. This continues after both the Spring and Summer terms, with subsequent Reward Certificates being issued. Each child achieving 100% for the whole academic year is treated to a special attendance lunch.

Attendance Monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a monthly basis after the first half term.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see earlier).

Parents are expected to call each day a child is ill unless directed by the office.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will initiate a Parent Contract which may involve an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Attendance monitoring for each child below 90% is recorded in an attendance monitoring file, maintained by the school administrator. This is updated after each monitoring period when relevant letters are sent to parents (see Appendix 2). If there are particular concerns regarding a child, the Head Teacher will become involved to offer intervention and support.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis and this is always included in the Headteacher's Report. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and fixed-penalty notice referrals, where necessary.

The Attendance Officer/Administrator

The attendance officer/administrator:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and if necessary the Local Authority.
- Works with Education Entitlement Service to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Submit referrals to the Local Authority for fines.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis via the registers in class, using the correct codes. This is then sent to the office and inputted onto SIMS.

Administrator

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. Office staff will contact the parent/s direct if no absence explanation is received by 9.30 a.m

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Headteacher and Administrator. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Links with Other Policies

This policy is linked to our safeguarding policy.

Appendix 1

Attendance Codes

These attendance codes are taken from the DfE guidance on school attendance

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Absence Procedure

Flow Chart

Child is absent - no message received by 9.30am

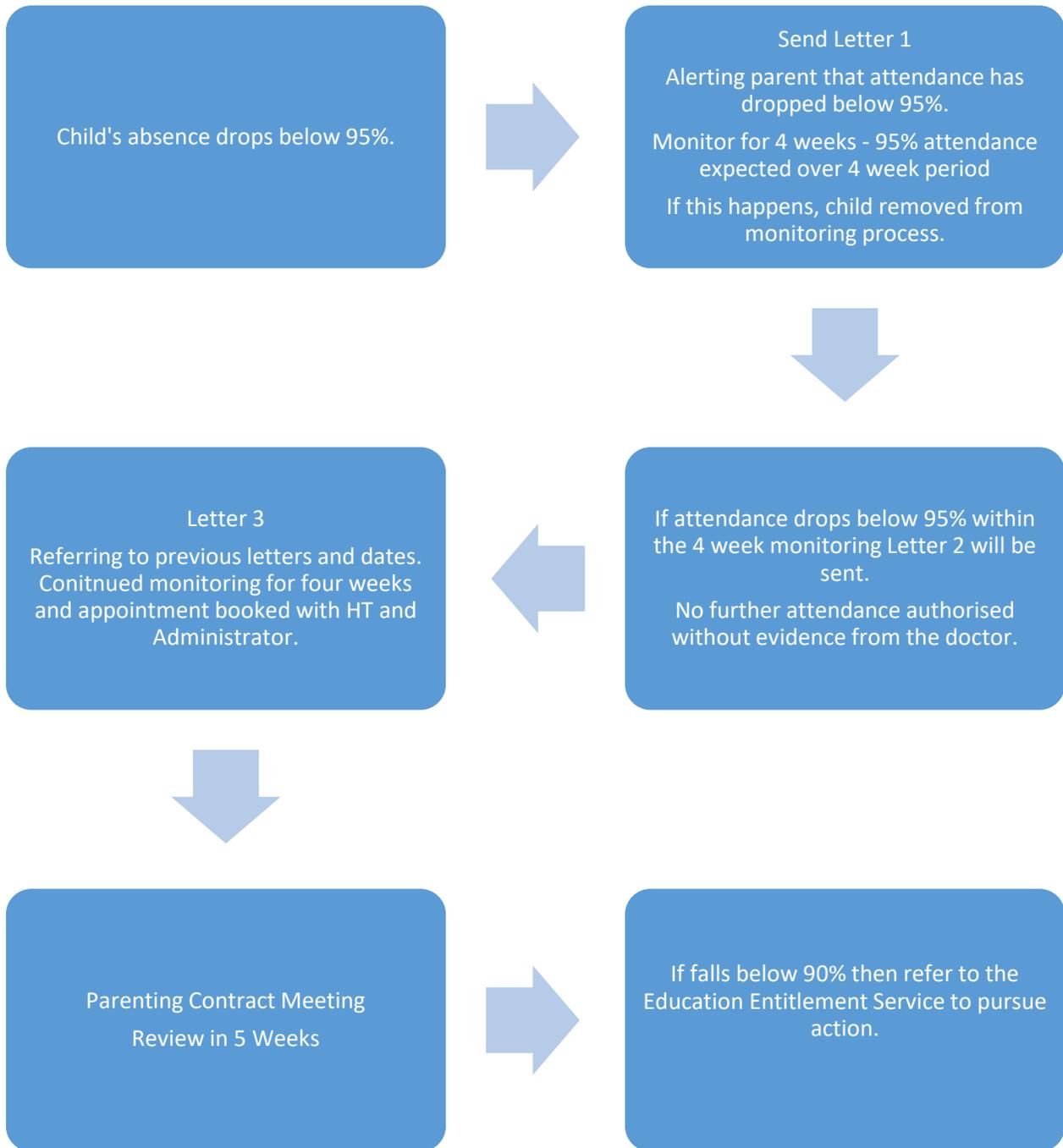


First Day Phone Call 9.30am
If no answer, leave a message, try again at 1.15pm



Follow the same procedure on day 2.
If deemed necessary and no contact received, a home visit should be carried out to check on child's welfare.
Follow up with parent on return to school. Ensure conversation is noted.

Attendance Monitoring Process and Letters



Letter 1



Dear _____

Child's Name _____

Attendance _____

The school target of 95% attendance is set so that each student can achieve their full potential, as good attendance is closely linked to good achievement. _____ attendance is a cause for concern as his/her attendance is currently _____. A copy of _____'s Registration Certificate is attached.

We would like _____'s attendance to improve and as such the school will be monitoring his/her attendance closely over the next four weeks. The target over this period will be a minimum of 95%.

Please try and make all medical or dental appointments outside of school hours and ensure that holidays are not taken during term time, noting that all holidays are unauthorised.

Making sure that you child is in school every day will make a big difference to their progress and overall outcomes.

Thanking you in advance for your support,

Yours Sincerely

Jude Busari

Head Teacher

Letter 2



Dear _____

Child's Name _____

Attendance _____

As you are aware, we have been monitoring _____'s attendance over the past four weeks and we set a target for 95% during this period. Upon review _____'s attendance during this period was _____%.

We are unable to authorise any further absence unless we are presented with an appointment card or medical certificate from your GP or Dentist or other official document providing a reason for absence.

We shall continue to monitor _____'s attendance over the following four weeks and hope to see an improvement.

Yours Sincerely

Jude Busari

Head Teacher

Letter 3



Dear _____

Child's Name _____

Attendance _____

I am writing with disappointment following _____'s attendance over the last 4 week monitoring period. As outlined in our letter dated _____, we sent an attendance target of ____% for _____. Unfortunately between the dates of _____ and _____, _____ attained ____%, failing to reach the expected target.

We will continue to monitor _____'s attendance for an additional 4 weeks and would like to arrange with you to meet with myself and the Administrator to discuss our concerns and how we can work together to improve _____'s attendance. Please contact the office to make a convenient appointment.

Please be aware that if _____ is absent from school between _____ and _____ these absences will continue to be unauthorised unless you are able to provide medical evidence.

Should you wish to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours Sincerely

Jude Busari

Parent Contract Meeting Format



Pupil		DOB	
Address		School and Year Group	

Parents' Names

1. _____ DOB: _____ Gender _____ Ethnicity _____

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes/No

If yes, please state _____

2. _____ DOB _____ Gender _____ Ethnicity _____

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes/No

If yes, please state _____

Siblings Names and Dates of Birth

_____ DOB _____ School _____

_____ DOB _____ School _____

Are there attendance issues with these children?

Name of the Chair of Meeting _____

Purpose of Agreement: To improve the above pupil's attendance record and avoid legal action being taken.

Summary of Involvement:

Over the last _____ weeks school involvement has been as follows:

Action	Number
Home Visits	
Phone Calls	
Letters	
Meetings	

Multi-Agency Involvement: YES/NO

If yes, give details

If No, Offer EHA – Accepted/Declined

Summary of Areas of Concern

Issues Raised	Yes	No	Issues Raised	Yes	No
Alleged Bullying			Staff Relationships		
Medical			Academic		
Home Related Issues			Behaviour		
Transport			Community/Other		

Details of Areas of Concern

Agreed Action :

I/We the parents agree to address the following target areas for improvement in attendance or punctuality and to cooperate fully within these aims:

1. Attendance between _____ and _____ is a minimum of 90%.

Actions:

1	
2	
3	
4	

If I am concerned about any aspect of this plan I will contact Mrs Busari without delay.

Timescale: The Parenting Contract will be reviewed within 5 school weeks.

Date : Time: Venue:

If targets are met then this contract will be reviewed. If there is significant improvement and support has been put in place that needs to be monitored the Parent Contract Meeting can be extended with a further review for a further 5 weeks. However, if the targets are not met and there is no legitimate reason for the non attendance of _____ then a contact will be made to the Education Entitlement Service. This may result in:

- A Fixed Penalty Notice payable up to £120 without further reference to you. For a penalty notice, this warning is valid for 12 months.

Alternatively, you may be subject to proceedings by way of:

- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1000.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Parents Signature _____

Also Present: Pupil _____

Head Teacher _____

Others Present _____

Date _____

Parent Contract Meeting

Review Meeting



Pupil's Name _____ DOB _____

Purpose of Original Agreement:

To improve the above pupil's school attendance record and avoid legal action being taken by the Authority.

Since the parenting contract made on _____ in the monitoring period set _____ has attended on ___ out of _____ occasions = ____%.

Therefore, whilst _____'s attendance remains acceptable, no court action will be taken against the parents at this time.

1. Are there any additional issues since the last meeting to be addressed?

Issues Raised	Yes	No	Issues Raised	Yes	No
Alleged Bullying			Staff Relationships		
Medical			Academic		
Home Related Issues			Behaviour		
Transport			Community/Other		

Details

Are there any additional proposed actions?

Signatures :

Parents: _____

Pupil : _____

Head Teacher: _____

Others : _____

Date : _____

