

ASHTON WEST END PRIMARY ACADEMY



Attendance Policy

The Academy's Attendance Policy was reviewed in September 2017
Formally adopted by Governors Sept. 2017
Reviewed: Sept 2018
Suggested date of next review: Sept. 2020

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ashton West End Academy's Attendance Policy has been developed to ensure best possible attendance outcomes for all pupils at the school. It is also intended to provide clear structures for attendance practice and to provide guidance for parents/carers and pupils.

In its Guidance Notes on School Attendance the government expects:

- *“Schools and Local Authorities to:*
 - *Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;*
 - *Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;*
 - *To act early to address patterns of absence.*
- *Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school to attend regularly.*
- *All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.”*

At Ashton West End Primary Academy we will do all that we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full, punctual attendance are identified and acted on promptly. Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a child's attainment as all pupils benefit from regular school attendance.

We expect that all pupils on roll will:

- Attend school each day the school is open to pupils as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so
- Arrive at registration sessions and lessons punctually
- Attend all the required lessons and engage with the education being provided
- Arrive at school appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that parents/carers will:

- Discuss promptly with the Headteacher any problems that might deter their child from attending school
- Provide up to date contact details
- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that the child(ren) in their care arrive at school each day punctually and properly prepared for the school day
- Contact the school before 8.50 am whenever their child(ren) is/are unable to attend school, on the first day of their absence and
- Send a note on the day the child(ren) returns to school detailing the reasons for absence
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school
- Make written requests in advance for foreseen absences
- Collect their child promptly at the correct time.

We expect that Academy staff will:

- Emphasise the importance of good attendance and take positive steps to encourage it (awarding of certificates etc)
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily
- Monitor every pupil's attendance
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes giving a reason for the absence
- Make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending school regularly or punctually, express their concern and clarify the Academy's and the DfE's expectations with regard to regular and punctual school attendance
- Refer irregular or concerning patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service (EWS)
- Where possible offer practical support to parents/carers and their children to ensure full attendance is maintained

Definition of unauthorised absence:

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of **both** the school and the parent. Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the agreement of the parent/carer. *E.g. a holiday, if a parent/carer allows a child to stay away from school to attend a family wedding or to go on a family outing, to obtain a passport.*

Definition of authorised absence:

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. An absence is classified as authorised when the Academy is confident that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the Academy has received notification from a parent/carer. *E.g. if a child is ill and the parent telephones the Academy and sends in a note to explain the absence*, exceptional family circumstances such as the bereavement or imminent bereavement of a parent or sibling, exceptional cases of religious observance where the day must be set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.*

***Illness**

The Academy will authorise absences due to illness unless we have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt we will request parents to provide medical evidence to support the illness. We will record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of an illness and will inform parents/carers of this intention.

Holidays

Authorised leave will **not** be granted for holidays. The Academy holidays are published in advance and available on the school's website and family holidays should be booked during the school holidays.

Parents risk their child being removed from the Academy roll and their place being given to another child if they take their child out of school to go on holiday. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Should parents/carers take their children out of the Academy during term time then school work will **not** be provided for the period of absence and normal class routines will apply.

Parents who choose to take leave of absence which has not been authorised by the Headteacher may receive a penalty notice from the Local Education Authority. Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that every child receives a suitable education which includes full time education and, under the Education Act 1996, have the right to take legal action to enforce a child's regular attendance at school. Further information is available at <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>. Ashton West End Primary Academy will request the LA to prosecute parents who continue to keep their children out of school for unacceptable lengths of time.

If a child is absent from school for 10 days and a reasonable explanation has not been provided for the absence by the parent/carer, or the school has not been able to make contact with the parent/carer, then the child will be reported as a Child Missing from Education to the Education Welfare Service who will investigate the absence.

No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their child(ren) as a right.

Links with other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with, and should be read in conjunction with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- The Home School Agreement
- Inclusion
- Data Protection
- Admissions

ASHTON WEST END PRIMARY ACADEMY AND NURSERY SCHOOL NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

This policy will be applicable from September 2015.

At Ashton West End Academy we are proud of our “Good” OFSTED grading and the high standards we maintain in all aspects of school life. Regular and punctual attendance is important to a child’s education – every day that a child is absent from school they lose part of their education.

Absences during term time are only authorised for genuine illness, or under exceptional circumstances, for which evidence will be requested.

If your child is absent due to illness you must telephone the school (0161 330 4234) before the nursery session starts. If you do not let us know why your child is not in school the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. When your child returns to school after their illness you should send in a written note confirming that they have been too ill to attend school.

Unauthorised absences – definition: The following reasons for taking a child out of school during term time are not acceptable:

- Family holidays or trips to visit relatives abroad
- Absences due to the illness or death of a relative abroad
- Obtaining a visa or other official documentation
- Absences without an acceptable explanation e.g. going shopping, going to the airport, visiting relatives, going to a family wedding.

Monitoring absences: If a nursery child’s attendance drops below 94% without good reason we will inform you in writing and seek ways in which we can help you to improve the attendance rate. If no improvement is forthcoming within the following six weeks you will be asked to come to a meeting with the Assistant Head Teacher to discuss the matter and complete an Attendance Improvement Plan. If, after a period of a further six weeks, attendance levels are still causing concern we will ask you to come in for another meeting with the Assistant Head Teacher. If it is decided at this meeting that the issue cannot be resolved then your child will be taken off roll.

Unauthorised absences: A total of 20 days unauthorised absences during the school year (September to July) will lead to your child being automatically taken off roll on the day that the 20th absence takes place.

If a child is taken on holiday or a trip abroad during term time, and that absence extends to a period of ten days or more, they will automatically be taken off roll. This includes absences which start before a school holiday and continue after the school holiday (for example, if a child takes four days off immediately before a school holiday commences and then fails to return for a further six days after the school holiday ends, this will be counted as a ten day absence).

Appeals: If you do not agree with a decision which is taken by the school with regard to non-attendance by your child you should, in the first instance, write to the Head Teacher. State clearly your objections to the decision and attach any substantiating evidence.

If you are still not satisfied with the response from the Head Teacher you should write to the Head of the Governing Body, care of the school. The Governing Body will consider your case and let you know their decision within two weeks. The

operation of the Nursery School at Ashton West End is controlled by the Governing Body of the Academy and their decision is final and cannot be appealed.
The Attendance Policy for children of compulsory school age at Ashton West End Academy differs from the policy for nursery children and can be accessed on our website or you can ask for a copy from school.

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