



Abberley Parochial V.C. Primary School
Rooted and Ground in love
Attendance Policy

Date reviewed: September 2021

Next review: September 2023

Our school vision is based on Paul's writings to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 3:17-19

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Based on this vision, our curriculum is founded on the following key principles:

1. People in our school will learn to love and feel loved
2. People will be taught to comprehend through a breadth of opportunity and with significant depth of understanding
3. All people are entitled to live a fulfilled, enriched and joyful life and our curriculum will seek to enable this

Intent

In order to achieve our vision our intention towards attendance is:

1. To provide a safe place in school where students feel loved and nurtured and can grow in confidence, developing independence and deep and enriching friendships with peers. We believe this can only come through regular and consistent attendance
2. Pupil's comprehension will develop as they participate in the full programmes of study and complete sequences of learning. This is mostly securely established when pupils attend each day.
3. To enable pupils to fully participate in our school's enrichment opportunities and to develop their talents and interests through each opportunity presented to them.

Introduction

Abberley Parochial Primary School can only achieve the desired outcomes of the school's vision and values, if individual pupils attend school regularly. In order for children to have good attendance, measures have been put in place to monitor and address concerns over attendance and absence. Parents are notified about the school's policy on attendance through newsletters sent to all parents at the start and throughout the academic year.

Safeguarding

Poor attendance at school puts pupils at risk and long-term poor attendance is detrimental to their well-being. It is therefore a safeguarding concern of itself, but also puts pupils at great risk of other potential risks and detrimental factors. When taken alongside these other factors, it will be considered when ascertaining the level of need of support a pupil will have. It is particularly concerning when the whereabouts of pupils is unclear or the reasons for absences lack consistency or transparency. In such cases, the headteacher will refer to the safeguarding policy to determine the procedure to follow.

Registration

A register is taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session by the teacher responsible for the class for that teaching session. The register is on SIMS so it is saved directly to the central school data management system, ensuring that we can monitor the attendance of pupils quickly and address any missing marks for pupils. National codes are used to record attendance and absence in a consistent way. Staff enter the marks to show that pupils are present. Lateness is also recorded with two difference codes to indicate if the time of arrival was before or after the close of registers.

Pupils who arrive late are signed in at the sign in station in the school office by their parent or guardian. Parents submit a reason for lateness and is recorded in the school's data management system. SIMS is automatically updated to reflect pupils who have arrived late.

Pupils who need to leave school early or during the day are signed out by their parent or guardian on the sign in/out station in the school office. Parents or guardians submit a reason for leaving school early or during the day. This automatically updates the school data management system.

Absences for Illness or Medical Appointments

Parents have been advised to book medical appointments outside of school hours where possible. The formal end of the school day is 3.15pm providing the opportunity to book medical appointments in most circumstances after this time. If this is not possible, parents are asked to notify school before the appointment so that teachers can prepare to support pupils who will have missed elements of the sequence of learning in the curriculum.

If a child is unwell and cannot attend school, parents should inform the school office by phone 01299 896332 or e-mail office@abberley.worcs.sch.uk by 9.30am (please note that the office opens at 8.30am)

If a pupil is absent and parents have not informed school, the school will call parents by 12.00pm to determine the reason for the pupil's absence. If no legitimate reason is provided the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If there are significant concerns about a child's attendance through persistent illness then the school reserves the right to request medical evidence.

Leave of Absence

Occasionally, parents request leave of absence during term time. DFE and WCC policy states that leave of absence cannot be granted by Headteachers unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests should be made to the Headteacher at least 4 weeks in advance of the absence by collecting a leave of absence form from the office and each application will be considered individually before any leave is granted. According to County policy, permission should be granted in accordance with arrangements made by the Governing Body of the school. There is no right to any leave or holiday in term time.

The granting of leave of absence in school term is, by law, a matter of consideration and decision by the school. Leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. DFE guidance states that, as a general guide, any activity, holiday or event that can be arranged during the annual 13 week holiday should not be authorised. When considering leave requests, the school may liaise with other schools where siblings may attend. This allows for a consistent approach to authorising absence.

In accordance with DFE policy, leave of absence due to religious observance will be authorised.

Penalty Notices

In line with our school's vision, we trust our parents to support the school and to value their children's education. However, if continued unauthorised absences result in a child's attendance continuing to impact negatively on their education and following procedures outlined below, a referral will be made to Worcestershire's Education Investigation Service (EIS).

Parents may then be issued with a Penalty Notice – one per parent per child, payable at £60 within 21 days and increasing to £120 within 21 to 28 days. Failure to pay the £120 within this time period may lead to court proceedings. The fines are issued by the local authority and the money from the fine is not received by the school.

Referrals can also be made to EIS if there are significant concerns regarding attendance and unauthorised absence.

Monitoring of Attendance

The attendance of children from Reception to Year 6 is monitored:

The following systems are in place for addressing attendance:

- The headteacher produces an attendance report for discussion at each Full Governing Body meeting.
 - Children whose attendance is below 90% are reported as persistent absentees. A letter will be issued from the headteacher and sent via e-mail to parents advising them of their child's low attendance. It will outline measures expected to increase attendance and the challenges that low attendance puts on the school.
 - If attendance of a child is below 80% or if it remains below 88% for two consecutive reporting periods, with little sign of improvement, the headteacher will request a meeting with parents.
 - If attendance of a child does improve following this or parents do not wish to attend such a meeting a referral will be made to Worcestershire's Education Investigation Service (EIS).
- This will not be the case in the first full governors meeting of the academic year as small gaps in attendance have a greater impact on attendance.
- This process is at the discretion of the headteacher. If a child has a long-term illness or is on an organised reduced timetable the above is not applicable in these cases.

The purpose of these meetings are to:

- Make parents aware of their child's attendance and/or punctuality.
- Ensure parents are aware that a referral to EIS may be necessary if there are a significant number of unauthorised absences.
- Discuss reasons for absence.
- Look at additional support that may be available, eg. Family Support, School Nurse.
- Look at strategies for promoting good attendance, eg. Reward charts.
- Raise awareness of the impact of good attendance on pupil outcomes.
- Ensure that parents understand the impact and possible consequences of further absence.

If a child has not been at school and no contact has been made with parents, then the headteacher may attempt a home visit, particularly if there are any additional safeguarding concerns.

If a child is absent from school for 10 days and cannot be located then the child will be reported to the local authority as CME – a child missing in education.

There is also a statutory obligation to report any child to the local authority if there has been an absence for 10 or more days unless the school is made aware of circumstances.