

## ATTENDANCE POLICY 2018-19

### Our Ethos is:

Aston Hall Junior and Infant School is committed to the continuous raising of progress and achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance and punctuality is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the exciting learning opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good and better, punctual attendance is central to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of termly and annual awards to promote good and better attendance and punctuality. The Governors, Head teacher and Staff, working in partnership with parents and carers, have a duty to promote full attendance.

### Our targets are:

Maintain and improve an attendance rate of a *minimum* of 96.3% as this was the level achieved in 2017-18 by the school. The National Attendance for Primary school's figure is 96.0%. We would like to aspirationally target 97% attendance as we believe our children enjoy their learning to its fullest in our setting.

### Parental Responsibility:

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Poor attendance can undermine friendships, their education and can put pupils at risk of under-achievement.

### What is absence?

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines "Absence" as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 8:55 am
- Not attending school for any reason

Attendance can be further broken down into two elements:

#### An "unauthorised absence" as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays. –
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

#### An "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency (eg. bereavement or medical emergency)

School Leadership is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified. Where there is continued sickness, school may request medical evidence, e.g. Appointment Card/Prescription before authorising further absence and school may make a referral to the School Nurse. Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the home and school.

### How to report absences:

- 1) Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence and each day thereafter. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report directly to the school office.
- 2) A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school. If no contact can be made, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 3) If no contact can be made with home, the school will wait until day 3 of the absence. At this point, members of the school leadership team will make personal enquiries at the child's registered address to offer support and ensure the welfare of the child. **Please ensure your contact details are up-to-date if they have changed.**
- 4) The above step will be repeated on Day 4.
- 5) On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence where no contact has been made, the local Early Help Team will be informed for further guidance and action.

### Holidays in Term Time:

Holidays taken 'during term time' are never routinely authorised (ONLY except in 'exceptional circumstances'). The Law (Government) has made it clear that Head Teachers are NOT to authorise absence for any holidays during term time, except under 'exceptional circumstances' which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This area of policy follows Local Authority guidance and revised Code of Conduct issued from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2018, which is further based on DfE guidance around attendance in schools.

If you feel there are 'exceptional circumstances' why your child needs to be absent from school during term time, you should apply, in advance, by writing to the school explaining clearly the dates and reasons you are requesting the 'leave of absence'. If the school refuses a request for 'leave of absence' and the child is still taken out of school this will be recorded as an 'unauthorised absence' and noted in the child's attendance record.

### How to apply for leave:

- 1) Ask for a leave of absence request form from the main office.
- 2) Complete the form and return as soon as possible, preferably 4 weeks before the requested leave.

The flow chart on the next page explains and clarifies the school's response to leave of absence requests and outlines the response that will be made at each stage of the process. This guidance has been created using the legislation from the Local Authority, which has been fully accepted and implemented by the Wickersley Partnership Trust.

The following flow chart shows the possible outcomes for when leave of absence requests are received by the school, with responses split by the length of the leave requested.

**Leave of absence request submitted to school**

Requests will be answered two weeks before the date of the leave beginning.

Leave of absence is for **five or more** consecutive days

Leave of absence is for **less than five** consecutive days

Total number of unauthorised sessions from the end of the holiday period and going back 12 months is 20 or more (10 days) – issue Fixed Penalty Notice within 4 weeks of the end of the holiday – see Letter A below

Total number of unauthorised sessions from the end of the holiday period and going back 12 months is less than 20 (10 days), leave not authorised – issue Letter C

Leave of absence is considered exceptional and authorised – see Letter B below.

Leave of absence is not considered exceptional and not authorised – see Letter C, below

Leave of absence is considered exceptional and authorised – see Letter B below.

## Attendance Awards:

We promote excellent attendance as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding / improving attendance through a range of different methods.

- On a weekly basis, the class in KS1 and KS2 with the highest attendance is celebrated in assembly and are awarded our prestigious Attendance Trophy. The class with the most entries over the course of the term are awarded a special attendance winner's prize.
- Special '100% 'ers' badges are awarded for 100% attendance at the end of each half-term, with bronze badges for children with 100% attendance for 1 full term, silver for 100% attendance for 2 full terms and the coveted gold badge for 100% attendance in all three terms!
- At the end of every term, children with 97% or better attendance will receive a certificate for their great efforts!
- Excellent attendance is celebrated on the school website and class dojo through displaying the 100% attenders in our school every week!
- Y6 children with 2 or more consecutive years of 100% attendance will be rewarded at the annual WPT awards event.

Policy approved by the Local Governing Body:

Policy to be updated: Summer Term 2019



### **Application for Leave of Absence**

**Dear**

Further to your recent application for \_\_\_\_\_ leave of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. I would like to inform you that the above request has **not** been authorised.

The reasons for this decision are that the reason given for the leave of absence is not considered to be exceptional and \_\_\_\_\_ attendance is \*already below / \* will fall below the combined national average attendance percentage for the previous 12 months, including the holiday absence period.

I wish to advise you that should you go ahead with this leave of absence despite this warning I will request the Local Authority to consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 Fixed Penalty Notices are £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

Yours sincerely

Mr M.Roddison

**Headteacher**

**Letter A**



**ASTON HALL**  
JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL



WICKERSLEY  
PARTNERSHIP  
TRUST.

**Application for Leave of Absence**

**Dear**

Further to your recent application for \_\_\_\_\_ leave of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, I would like to inform you that the above request **has** been authorised.

I wish to advise you that in authorising the leave of absence the school would be concerned if \_\_\_\_\_ future attendance should fall below the school's required standard of 95.3%

Such a fall in attendance could impact future requests for leave of absence.

Mr M.Roddison

**Headteacher**

**Letter B**



**Application for Leave of Absence**

**Dear**

Further to your recent application for \_\_\_\_\_ leave of absence from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, I would like to inform you that the above request has **not** been authorised.

The reason(s) for this decision is/are .....

I wish to advise you that on this occasion I have made the decision not to refer the case to the Local Authority to request the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Yours sincerely

Mr M.Roddison

**Headteacher**

**Letter C**