






Aston Hall  
Junior & Infant School

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**ASTON HALL  
JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL**  
Church Lane, Aston, Sheffield, S26 2AX

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**HEADTEACHER:** Mr S Holmes



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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **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 is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the learning opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good and better, punctual attendance is fundamental 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 attendance and punctuality. The Governors, Headteacher and Staff, in partnership with parents and carers, have a duty to promote full attendance.

Full attendance is essential to the all-around development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law.

### **Our targets are:**

Maintain an attendance rate of a *minimum* of 96%. We would like to aspirationally target 97% attendance.

### **Parental Responsibility:**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Poor attendance undermines their education and can put pupils at risk of educational under-achievement and encourage anti-social behaviour.

### **What is absence?**

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines “**Absence**” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

Attendance is 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.
- Other absences deemed exceptional that are assessed on a case by case basis by the Headteacher.

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, schools can request medical evidence, e.g. Appointment Card/Prescription before authorising further absence and schools can make a referral to the School Nurse. Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent 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, preferably by 9am.
- 2) Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office.
- 3) 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.
- 4) If no contact can be made with home, 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.
- 5) The above step will be repeated on Day 2 and further steps in-line with our school's attendance handbook and safeguarding policies will be followed.

## Holidays in Term Time:

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 LA guidance and Code of Conduct material issued from September 2024, which is further based on DfE guidance around attendance in schools including the new National Framework. The LA code of conduct can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/4h75hhr39>

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) Complete the online form on our website here: <http://tiny.cc/1xrtxz> or by scanning the QR codes in the school office / main entrance door.
- 2) Complete the form and return as soon as possible, preferably 4 weeks before the requested leave.

From 19th August 2024, the Government have introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Under the National Framework all schools will be required to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons within 10 school weeks.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices sets out that a **maximum of 2 FPN's per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period.** If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool will be used.

The first FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

The second FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days

The third occasion in a 3-year period: A FPN will not be issued, and the Council will consider alternative enforcement such as a court summons.

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 made using the legislation from the Local Authority, which has been fully accepted by Wickersley Partnership Trust.



School receives an application for a 'Leave Of Absence during term time. The request will be considered by the Head teacher and parents/carers notified in due course.

**Letter A: EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The Leave of Absence is granted, by the Head teacher, due to the 'exceptional circumstances' of the request. NB: Each request is considered on a case by case basis.

Attendance over the past 12 calendar months will be considered in this and future requests for leave of absence.

**Letter B: LOA LESS THAN FIVE DAYS**

The Leave of Absence request is unauthorised by the school but NO further action is taken. The request is for FIVE school days of less.

Attendance over the past 12 calendar months will be considered in this and future requests for leave of absence.

**Letter C: LOA UP TO TEN DAYS**

The Leave of Absence request is unauthorised by the school BUT school will need to consider the total number of unauthorised sessions following the child's return back to school (after the holiday period) and if going back 12 calendar months their attendance is below the national combined average, school may well issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. If 2 FPNs have already been issued within a 3 year rolling period, the LA may take legal action via the magistrates court as a 3<sup>rd</sup> FPN cannot be issued.

**Letter D: LOA IS TEN DAYS OR MORE.**

The Leave of Absence request is unauthorised by the school AND because the total number of unauthorised sessions, due to the holiday period, automatically takes a child's attendance below the national combined average, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. If 2 FPNs have already been issued within a 3 year rolling period, the LA may take legal action via the magistrates court as a 3<sup>rd</sup> FPN cannot be issued.



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HEADTEACHER: Mr S Holmes

## Application for Leave of Absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

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

The reasons for this decision are that the reasons given for the leave of absence is not considered to be exceptional. I wish to advise you, that due to the number of days leave requested, whilst considering [redacted]'s attendance over the previous 12 calendar months, 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 19th August 2024, the Government have introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Under the National Framework all schools will be required to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons within 10 school weeks.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices sets out that a **maximum of 2 FPN's per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period.** If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool will be used.

The first FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days.  
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

The second FPN in a 3-year period: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days

The third occasion in a 3-year period: A FPN will not be issued, and the Council will consider alternative enforcement such as a court summons.

The updated Rotherham Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct can be found here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/4h75hhr39>.

Thank you,

Mr S Holmes

Headteacher





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HEADTEACHER: Mr S Holmes

## Application for Leave of Absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

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 their future attendance should fall below the school's required standard of 96%.

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

From 19th August 2024, the Government have introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Under the National Framework all schools will be required to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons within 10 school weeks.

**If the absence is for an unauthorised term time holiday**, parents may receive an FPN. FPN's are used as an alternative to prosecution.

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You can read more information on the government changes here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3vhxjsmf>

The updated Rotherham Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/4h75hhr39>.

Thank you,

Mr S Holmes

Headteacher





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HEADTEACHER: Mr S Holmes

## Application for Leave of Absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

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 for this decision is the request is not due to exceptional circumstances as detailed in school / national policy.

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. I wish to advise you that the school would be concerned if their future attendance should fall below the school's required standard of 96% **and any further requests for leave of absence within a 12 calendar month period would likely result in an FPN being issued.**

From 19th August 2024, the Government have introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Under the National Framework all schools will be required to consider a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons within 10 school weeks.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices sets out that a **maximum of 2 FPN's per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period.** If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool will be used.

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Thank you,

Mr S Holmes

Headteacher

A proud member of

WICKERSLEY PARTNERSHIP TRUST

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