

Awsworth Primary & Nursery School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Principles

- At Awsworth Primary & Nursery School we believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school.
- We seek to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximizes opportunities for them to reach their true potential.
- We are committed to providing a high-quality education for all our pupils.
- High attainment requires good attendance and punctuality.
- All school staff support and promote a positive whole school culture of excellent attendance by acting as role models, providing a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.
- We recognise that occasionally a pupil's absence or lateness may not be his/her fault and in these circumstances, it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not make him/her feel guilty.
- Where appropriate we give allowances for religious belief and individual family circumstances.
- Attendance at school can contribute substantially to young people's optimal development and long-term outcomes. School absenteeism and mental health problems are linked. Good attendance can promote pupils' mental health and reduce anxiety.

Linked Policies

This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our schools.

- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour Management
- Disability Equality
- RSE and Mental Health Wellbeing
- SEND
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1)
- Safeguarding policy

Links to Local Authority Policies

- Pathway to Provision
- Guidance where children are at risk of missing education
- Escalation Policy

Rights Respecting School

We have been awarded the United Nations UK Rights Respecting School Award (Level 1) and therefore recognise that all children have the right to be treated with dignity and fairness, to be protected, to develop to their full potential and to participate. The United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the rights for anyone under 18 years of age. With this in mind and with regard to Attendance the school will focus on:

Article 3 (best interests of the child).

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 28 (right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this in order for a child to have this right, good attendance is crucial.

Legal Requirements

Parents / carers have a duty to ensure that their children receive a full-time education. Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 states, "If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence."

Legal action may be taken against parents / carers whose child's attendance is unacceptably low and where they are failing to fulfil their responsibility. Parents / carers must notify the school of the reason for a child's absence. The school then decides if the absence can be authorised.

The school is required to maintain an accurate register for each session as a legal document and is also obliged to provide a termly Census Report to the Department for Education which records:

- Authorised absence as a percentage
- Unauthorised absence as a percentage

Term-time Holidays

Our policy is not to authorise term-time holidays, except in the most exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances can not be given retrospectively and must be made clear at the time of application for holiday requests along with any supporting evidence.

Term-time holidays will have a significant impact on achievement and progress, therefore higher attainment may depend on good attendance. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By unavoidable we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

If a holiday is taken during term-time without being authorised as described above, then the absence will be referred to the Local Authority who may issue a fixed penalty notice or proceed to prosecution in line with the Nottinghamshire Local Code for Penalty Notices Issued in Respect of Truancy and Excluded Pupils.

The local Authority may take formal action against failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued. If repeat offences are made, prosecution may be considered.

Penalty Notice;

1. Each penalty notice is £60 per child per parent (including step-parents). Failure to pay within the first 21 days may result in a rise to £120.
2. Prosecution. This can lead to fines up to £2500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Support

The Headteacher and Attendance Officer & Welfare Officer will meet to discuss attendance levels and any concerns. The Attendance Officer & Welfare Officer will contact parents / carers via telephone or letter regarding these issues. We may also speak to the pupil to help identify and support with any attendance problems. Wherever possible, we will work on preventing cases of low attendance and persistent lateness. Cases will be highlighted and monitored. Home visits are carried out when necessary, along with other agency support. The Local Authority will pursue fixed penalties / prosecution should attendance not improve. A Morning 'Late Gate' is operated and pupils who have two lates in one week will be monitored over the following six weeks. If a pupil has 7 or more lates in a rolling 6 week period, this may be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement. If no improvement is made, parents will be invited into school to attend a meeting to discuss the issue.

Attendance Meeting

When the school has identified problems with attendance we will invite parents / carers to an attendance meeting. An action plan to support the child will be agreed and a review date set. If attendance improves, the Attendance Officer & Welfare Officer will continue to monitor until satisfied and only then will the case be closed. If there is no significant improvement, a referral may be made to the Local Authority, who may choose to prosecute.

Children who are not yet compulsory school age (3-4)

Our fundamental principal is that pupils achieve better, when they are at school. Nursery and foundation stage pupils are developing good learning habits and social skills needed to be successful later in life. By deny children this, it may present a barrier for them later on in their education. Absence for no compulsory school age children will be monitored half termly. Parents will be contacted in there are any concerns around absence and punctuality. If we deem that poor attendance is negatively impacting on a child's safety, we will make referrals to Nottinghamshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Team.

Working With Parents / Carers

Parents / carers are required to notify school immediately of any absence and the likely duration. On returning to school the absence should be confirmed in the pupil's organiser. Awsworth Primary & Nursery School expects all parents / carers to co-operate with staff, keep in contact with school when any issues arise and respond to any contact made. The school will involve parents / carers regarding any attendance issues as soon as possible and regularly update parents / carers on attendance levels including any improvements. We encourage parents / carers to be involved in their child's attendance by welcoming them in to discuss any

issues and offer support in helping them overcome any problems. We may include outside agencies in these meetings to help with professional guidance.

Role of the Headteacher

- Ensure all staff, pupils, parents and governors are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Have a system in place for parents to report a child's absence;
- Remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- Publicise good attendance during assemblies and the schools communication app (Weduc);
- Work closely with the Attendance and Welfare officer and Governing Body;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy;
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to parents in each child's Annual Report with reference to the following:

Attendance	
Exceptional	Attendance is 99% or higher. Always in school on time.
Good	Attendance is 96% or higher. Never / very rarely late to school.
Room for Improvement	Attendance falls below 96% and / or occasionally late to school.
Cause for Concern	Attendance is below 90% and / or frequently late to school.

Role of the Attendance & Welfare Officer

- Implement the policy with the Headteacher;
- Undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance by using the schools MIS system Scholarpack;
- Monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities;
- Report attendance figures and progress to the Head Teacher and Governing body;
- Refer cases as appropriate to the Local Authority for fixed penalty notices / prosecution;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of the policy;
- Monitor individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- Operate the 'Late Gate' every morning, accurately record late arrivals and monitor patterns of persistent lateness;
- Contact parents/carers regarding concerns about their child's attendance or punctuality;
- Keep the Head Teacher informed of attendance figures and trends;
- Contact parents if they have not reported a child's absence;
- After three days of no contact, conduct a safe and well check;
- Follow procedures for Looked After Children;
- Organise and accurately record meetings with parents / carers regarding attendance and / or lateness.

Role of Parents / Carers

- Ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly;
- Ensure that they contact school by 8:45am on the first day of absence, stating the reason for non-attendance;
- Ensure that their child/ren arrive/s at school on time.

Headteacher.....

Attendance officer.....

Governor.....

Next Review Date: Summer 2025