





Aston Lodge
Primary School
Show Pride • Reach for the Stars

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2022/23

**ASTON LODGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Written by Sarah Cronin

Date written: 30th October 2021

Date to be reviewed: 30th October 2022



WICKERSLEY
PARTNERSHIP
TRUST.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE and Local Authority Guidance and adopted by the Wickersley Partnership Trust.

Reference to Parent/Carer throughout this document also includes any person who has parental responsibility or who cares for children.

Aston Lodge Primary School will work effectively to improve attendance working with various partners, parents/carers and pupils. Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the school and encouraging pupils to achieve good attendance levels.

An understanding that non-school attendance is a safeguarding issue. Only when a pupil is in school can a true responsibility be taken for safeguarding all the interests of the pupil.

There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement. Aston Lodge Primary School is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils. This policy intends to boost attainment and achievement levels by increasing and maintaining high levels of attendance.

Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit from academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the School. A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.

Aston Lodge Primary School will take appropriate action to promote good attendance.

Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- The School is committed to maximising the achievement and attainment of all pupils.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the Aston Lodge Primary School.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting Aston Lodge Primary School and encouraging pupils to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the Aston Lodge Primary School.
- Aston Lodge Primary School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- National target for attendance is 96%. Aston Lodge Primary School individual targets are in Appendix A.

Statement of Expectations

What Aston Lodge Primary School expect of the pupils:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to reception/attendance office when late.

What Aston Lodge Primary School expect of the parents/carers:

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend the Aston Lodge Primary School regularly and on time.
- To ensure that they contact the Aston Lodge Primary School on the first day their child is unable to attend giving a valid reason for absence and also each day the child is absent from school.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day.
- To contact Aston Lodge Primary School in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from Aston Lodge Primary School.
- Work in partnership with the Aston Lodge Primary School and other agencies as and when appropriate to resolve issues relating to non-attendance/punctuality.
- To inform the Aston Lodge Primary School of any forthcoming appointments, giving copies of letters and appointment cards to Aston Lodge Primary School and where possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.
 - Where appointments are booked for after registration time pupils must attend the Aston Lodge Primary School first.
 - The pupil needs to return to school as soon as possible after the appointment, where this is possible

If a pupil leaves the school premises for any reason during the school day, staff will ensure that this is recorded, to comply with Health & Safety Regulations.

What Parents and pupils can expect of the Aston Lodge Primary School:

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at Aston Lodge Primary School.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance with a rewards system in place.
- Efficient and accurate recordings of attendances and punctuality with strategies to improve.
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend Aston Lodge Primary School and also subsequent days.
- Any barriers to attendance, dealt with efficiently.
- To respond promptly to any issue that may lead to none or irregular attendance with support from the attendance team.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the individual parent/carer. This will be reflected in the ways in which attendance issues are addressed. For example, Aston Lodge Primary School should recognise that some parent/carers have difficulty understanding written communications, (Aston Lodge Primary School will also recognise the reluctance of some parent/carers to come into the Aston Lodge Primary School).
- Be alert to critical times for example, return to Aston Lodge Primary School after a period of long-term sickness or traumatic event.
- A whole Trust attendance policy which is consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parents/carers.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance. Information is on display in Aston Lodge Primary School.

- Close liaison with the Education Welfare Service Team to assist and support families where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of attendance through letters home and meetings in Aston Lodge Primary School.
- When a pupil's attendance falls below 96% in a half term, parents will be sent a letter advising that their child's attendance is of concern and support will be offered to improve attendance.

It will also state that failure to attend the Aston Lodge Primary School regularly and on time could result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act. If there is no improvement parents/carers will be required to meet with Aston Lodge Primary School's Attendance Panel.

What the Trust and Aston Lodge Primary School within it can expect of the Education Welfare Service:

- The Education Welfare service has a key function in working closely with Aston Lodge Primary School and families in order to promote excellent levels of attendance and punctuality at school, thereby contributing to raising pupil attainment.
- To support the Aston Lodge Primary School to fulfil their legal responsibilities with regard to pupil attendance.
- To take register inspections on visits, and discuss matters with the Attendance Officer.

Leave of Absence Requests

Section 7 of the Education Act states that:

“Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential in order for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Rotherham Education Welfare Service will continue to investigate cases of regular absence from school and, following appropriate casework intervention, will instigate legal action if applicable”.

In line with amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 with effect from 01 September 2013, the following will now apply:

- No requests for leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time can be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances in which the Head of School has to establish how many days a child may be absent.

The definition of exceptional circumstances is:

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year. **This must be evidenced with written proof from the employer at the time of application.**
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a child or parent's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. **Evidence must be produced from a doctor or professional body.**

If a parent/carer takes their child out of Aston Lodge Primary School during term time, without authorisation, the Head of School will have to make a request to the Local Authority to issue a **Fixed Penalty Notice**.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days. After that time, it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the Aston Lodge Primary School. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Should a request for Leave of Absence need to be made, a Leave of Absence form must be completed and brought in for the Head of School's attention, including any evidence as stated above.

Understanding Different Types of Absence

Only Aston Lodge Primary School can authorise absence, not parents/carers. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required to ensure a pupil's attendance is correctly categorised.

Authorised Absences = Mornings or afternoons away from the Aston Lodge Primary School for an acceptable reason, for example, illness and/or medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in the school day, emergencies or other unavoidable reasons and compassionate leave at the Head of School's discretion.

Unauthorised Absences = Absences which Aston Lodge Primary School do not consider to be reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These include:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absence that has never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive in Aston Lodge Primary School too late to receive their mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday in term time that have not been agreed with the Head of School

Whilst most pupils will be away from Aston Lodge Primary School because of illness, some individuals can be reluctant to attend. Any such problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the Aston Lodge Primary School and the family.

If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend Aston Lodge Primary School, then we encourage the family to work with all involved to understand the root problem. When necessary we engage the support of other agencies such as the School Nurse and Education Welfare Service.

- Each day counts for 2 (am/pm) marks of attendance or absence.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Registration procedure

- Foundation Stage 1 sessions are 8.30am until 11.30am morning only. Another session is at 12.00pm until 3.00pm
- Foundation Stage 2 registration begins at 8.45am each morning and at 1.00.
- Key Stage 1 registration begins at 8.45am each morning and at 1.00.
- Key Stage 2 registration begins at 8.45am each morning and at 1.00.
- Any child to arrive in Aston Lodge Primary School after these times stated above, dependant on which Key Stage, will have to report to the Aston Lodge Primary School offices to receive their mark.
- Class teachers should insert a mark for every pupil whether it is a present mark or an absent mark.
- The register will close at the start of the session and any child not present at that point will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Unless a medical appointment has been attended and evidence provided, where a medical mark will be made.
- The register will be brought to Aston Lodge Primary School offices immediately after morning and afternoon registration.

Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving after morning or afternoon registration will report to Aston Lodge Primary School offices, where the late book will be filled in with the time and reason for the lateness.
- When lateness becomes a concern letter 1 of the punctuality section will be sent, if there are no improvements in lateness a second letter will be sent. Parents/carers will be invited to a meeting with the Head of School and Attendance Officer. If there are no improvements then a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer.
- From time to time the Education Welfare Officer will do a 'Late Gate'.

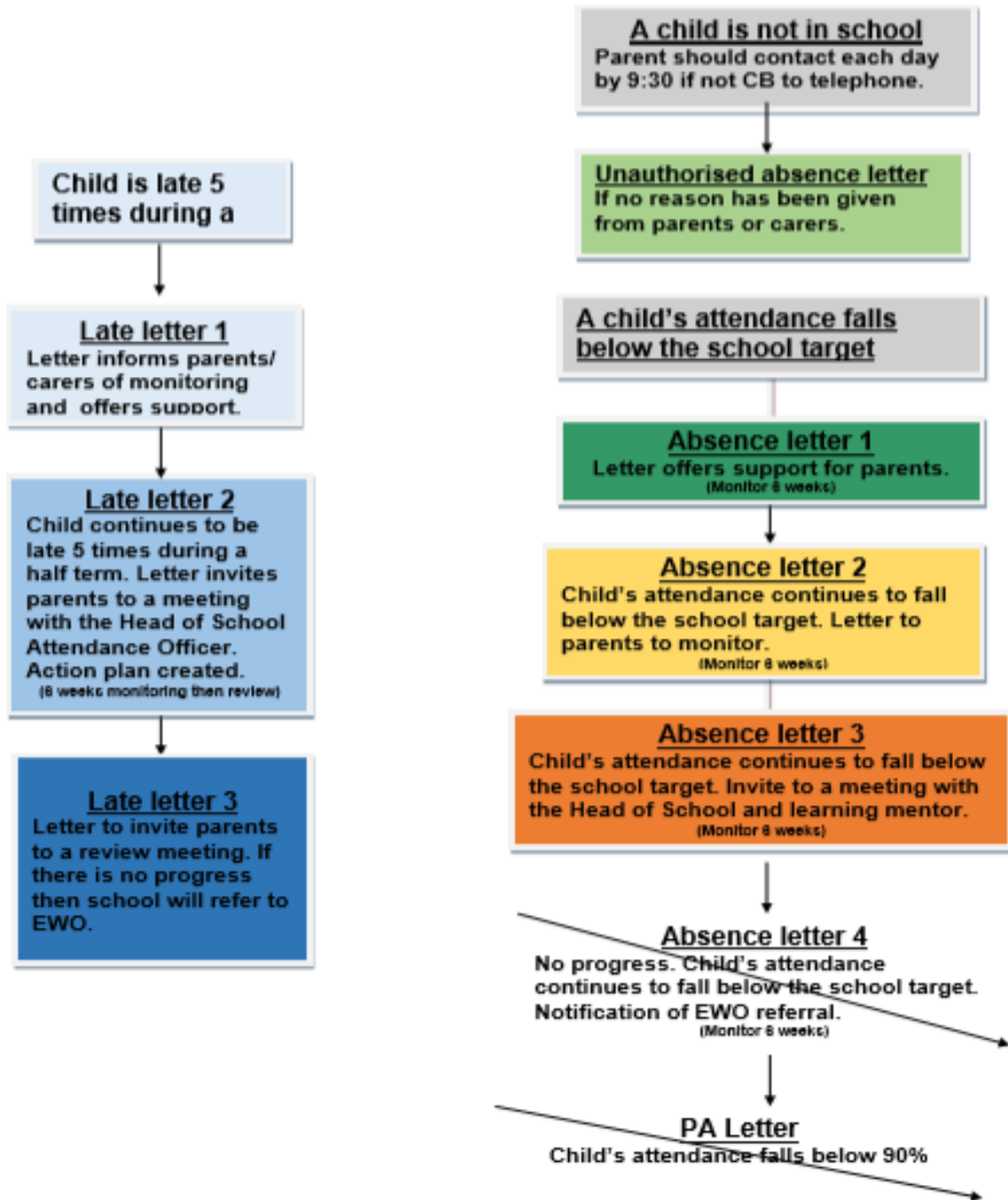
Response to attendance Issues

- This policy and procedures document to improve attendance will be reviewed each Spring Term.
- Aston Lodge Primary School will identify and monitor pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern. This being 96% or less.
- Returns on persistent absences will be made to the Local Authority each half term.
- Appropriate strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual pupils.
- After long periods of absence, reintegration procedures will be followed.
- Attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The Trust will respond to any areas of concern identified.

Safeguarding

- School attendance is a safeguarding issue – see the individual Aston Lodge Primary School Safeguarding policy. It is therefore vital that ALL registers must be marked correctly and up to date.

Appendix A – Academy Attendance Process



The Policy Updates and Implementation are the responsibility of the following people:

Aston Lodge Primary School: Headteacher & Attendance Officer Mrs Cronin