



Asterdale Primary School



Attendance Policy

Written by	Ian Dewes
Approved by	David Evans, September 2023
Review date	January 2026

Contents

Expectations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Our school's processes for attendance:.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
EWO service.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Different levels of attendance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Authorising an absence	3
Part-time timetables.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Penalty notices	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Roles of different people/groups.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix: Proformas	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Expectations

At our school we will work with families and other relevant agencies to the end of pupils having high rates of school attendance. This means we will:

- Expect – Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
- Monitor – Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
- Listen and understand – When a pattern is spotted, discuss this with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- Facilitate support – Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school.
- Formalise support – Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. This may include formalising support in some circumstances.
- Enforce – Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Our school's processes for attendance:

At Asterdale Primary School we have the following processes:

The school's day-to-day processes for managing attendance	The school office contact families of absent pupils Schools will request a reason for absence on a daily basis School sends home herringbone charts from Integris for pupils involved with EWO The school must keep the register open for 30 minutes after the start time. The school will look for patterns in attendance – where attendance may be high, but their attendance is poor on specific days. See appendix for letter proforma for this.
How to inform the school of an unexpected absence	Parents must Telephone the school office in a timely manner in advance of the school day where possible Parents can also use School Dojo as a secondary back up to report absence
How to request a leave of absence for a pupil	See appendix for proforma. School will only authorise absence for appointments if evidence is provided.
The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.	Headteacher, Mr David Evans School Learning Mentor
The name and contact details of the member of school staff who parents/carers should contact about support for attendance on day-to-day basis (this may be the same person as the strategic lead).	School Learning Mentor 01332 662323
How the school promotes and incentivises good attendance.	School highlight good class attendance in a weekly assembly, the reward is a trophy for the week and a treat determined by the class teacher School give an end of academic year 100% attendance award

--	--

EWO service

The school buys in support from Derby City's Education Welfare Service who provide an Education Welfare Officer (EWO). This services means:

- The school gets a visit every half-term, at which the EWO and school will draw up a list of children causing a concern. The required actions will be discussed and agreed.
- The EWO Officer will usually get involved with pupils whose attendance is below 90%
- The CEO of the trust will meet with the EWO manager to review the quality of the service received by the school on a termly basis.
- Where fines are issued to parents/carers, this will be carried out by the EWO.
- Where there are concerns about a child's attendance or concerns for the welfare of a child the EWO will be requested by the school to visit the home
- Home visit requests outside of the referral process may be undertaken where a child has not attended for 3 school days and there has been no contact from parent. Details including school's concerns and any known risks associated with the property should be shared

Different levels of attendance

% of sessions attended	What attendance at each level means
Above 97	Attendance is good. School highlight good class attendance in a weekly assembly, the reward is a trophy for the week and a treat determined by the class teacher
95.1-97	While attendance at this level is not considered to be particularly high, it is unlikely that there will be any concerns for pupils at this level.
93.1-95	Attendance is lower than it should be in most cases. The school will not usually intervene at this point, but parents/carers should be mindful that most pupils should have a higher rate of attendance and the school, will be tracking carefully pupils at this level of attendance. The school may no longer approve absence for illness unless evidence ¹ is submitted.
90.1-93	In all but a few cases, attendance at this rate is too low. School will make contact to raise concern (see appendix for proforma) and offer support. School will actively consider no longer approving absence unless evidence is submitted.
75.1-90	This is classed as persistent absence. The school will consider accessing support from the EWO service.
50.1-75	When attendance is at this rate the school will inform parents that their child is at danger of severe absenteeism (see appendix for proforma). A meeting will be held. The school will almost all cases access support from the EWO service.
Below 50	This is classed as severe absenteeism. The school will prioritise support (including from the EWO service) for any pupils with attendance at this level.

The school may take action from the table above, even if the level of attendance hasn't been reached, if the school is concerned about the child's attendance.

Authorising an absence

An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:

- An absence for illness for which we have granted leave

¹ Evidence may include correspondence from doctor surgery, prescribed medication, evidence of appointments. For more examples see appendix for letter with "no longer authorising without medical evidence".

- Medical or dental appointments may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency
- Religious or cultural observances for which we have granted leave. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents/carers. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

Penalty notices

Penalty notices are served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences, which should usually be the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.

Penalty notices may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents/carers will be notified by the school at the time of the exclusion the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

The school adheres to Derby City's Local Authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

Roles of different people/groups

	Parents are expected to:	School is expected to:	Those responsible for governance ² are expected to:	Local Authority/Education Welfare Officers are expected to:
All pupils	Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school by 9am through telephoning the school office when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance using the form in the appendix. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and retain these for three years from the point of data entry. Have robust daily processes to follow up absence. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance. Mr David Evans, Headteacher and also the Learning Mentor. The school can record an absence as unauthorised if there it is reasonable for the school to doubt the reason given.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance. School attendance will be reported to Local Governing Boards on a termly basis, with the Board of Trustees' Education Committee receiving an termly report on all schools in the Trust to identify common issues and barriers and ensure effective practice is shared between schools.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. The EWO team will work with the school to remove barriers to attendance. A named point of contact will be provided.

² The Board of Trustees is responsible for governance, however some duties are delegated to Local Governing Boards. See the Trust's [Scheme of Delegation](#) for more information.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent	<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support. Parents can contact the school Learning Mentor.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. Notify all parents/carers whose child's attendance is below 95% Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners.</p>	<p>When receiving termly attendance data, Local Governing Boards review the numbers of pupils whose attendance is between 93% and 90% and ensure school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. Trustees' Education Committee to receive report on numbers of pupils across the trust whose attendance is between 93% and 90%.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners.</p>
Persistently absent pupils (below 90%, but above 50%)	<p>Work with the school and EWO to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent through EWO and where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care. Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended of pupils and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>When receiving termly attendance data, Local Governing Boards review the numbers of pupils whose attendance is below 90% and ensure school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. Trustees' Education Committee to receive report on numbers of pupils across the trust whose attendance is below 90%.</p>	<p>As part of the service level agreement, focused case work for pupils below 90% where required. Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders. Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils (less than 50% attendance)	<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and ensure school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>
Support for cohorts of pupils	<p>NA</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.</p>

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families. Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.
Support for pupils with a social worker	Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Both at Local Governing Board level and Trustee (Education Committee) level, attendance data on pupils who have an allocated social worker.	Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area. Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children. Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.
Monitor	Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. Report to all parents/carers termly on their child's attendance rate.	Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.

Appendix: Proformas

Click on the link below to access the follow letter proformas. Do no edit until you have downloaded them:

[Head Teachers Request for Penalty Notice.doc](#)

[Schools response to Holiday request.doc](#)

[EWO Guidelines for Penalty Notices.doc](#)

[Attendance concern 93-95 percentage.doc.](#)

[Attendance concern 90-93 percentage.docx](#)

[Attendance concern less 75 percent.docx](#)

[application-for-leave-of-absence.pdf](#)

[No longer authorising without medical evidence](#)

[Letter informing the parent the EWO may be contacted](#)

[Letter informing the parent the EWO has been contacted](#)

[Letter for where there is a pattern of absence](#)