



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Anns Grove Primary School

January 2021

At Anns Grove we will;

- **aim high, dream big** and do everything to the best of our ability,
- promote **sportsmanship**, school **spirit** and **pride in our school**,
- develop a strong sense of **identity**, value our community and **contribute** to it,
- share our cultural backgrounds and learn how to **live harmoniously** and **prosper** in our multicultural community.

Policy for Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality

Why do we need a policy for attendance and punctuality?

Children come to school to learn and good attendance is important if they are to gain as much as possible from their time in school. When children miss learning it is harder for them to reach their full potential. Poor attendance and punctuality can lead to children feeling unsettled at school; it can affect their friendships and reduce their confidence. Poor attendance can result in social and academic problems, reducing the long term life chances of children.

Punctuality is important so children can be registered, seated and listening to the teacher ready to start learning when the first lesson of the day begins. It is also important for the social and emotional well being of the children. Arriving a few minutes late each day has a cumulative effect which can make it harder for children to learning and progress.

It is the duty of the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996. This duty is to ensure that your child receives full time education.

Punctuality

The school day:

8.40am: School doors open and Morning Work session begins

8.50am: Morning registers are taken. Children arriving after 8.50 must use the front entrance and report to the Office.

9.15am: All class registers are closed. School gates are closed. Any child arriving after this time must enter through the gate on Hartley Street using the intercom and report to the Office. An unauthorised late mark will be recorded. This will show as an unauthorised absence for the morning on the register.

Afternoon Registers are taken as soon as the class return from lunchtime.
All registers are closed 10 minutes later.

Punctuality procedures

The Learning Mentor and Attendance Officer monitor lateness.

Late arrivals are entered in the register and entered on our computerised attendance system.

A letter is sent to parents/carers of children who are persistently late. (A persistent late attender is defined as a pupil who is late for more than 15% of all possible days.)

Parents will be contacted to discuss any problem which may contribute to a lack of punctuality.

A referral will be sent to the Multi Agency Support Team if necessary. (The Council's Multi Agency Support Team works with schools, the Health Service and Social Care to support parents and carers).

Collection of Children

The end of the school day is: Key Stage 1: 3.15 pm
Key Stage 2: 3.20pm

KS1 Children are handed over to their parent/carer from their classroom.

KS2 Children are escorted to the playground by a member of staff to meet their parent/carer.

Any children not collected are taken to the School Office to wait. If a message has not been received in advance, school staff will try to contact parents/carers to seek an explanation as to why their child has not been collected.

If a child has not been collected by 3.45pm, school will follow the procedures outlined in Local Authority's safeguarding guidance and social care will be contacted. In the event of a further delay, the Police may also be notified.

Absence

Children should attend school every day.

If a child is unable to attend school, the child's parent/carer is requested to telephone school on the first day of absence to explain why their child is not in school. The appropriate code will then be entered in the attendance register. If a parent/carer doesn't notify the school the Learning Mentor will phone them. This is known as 'First Day' absence calling. If no answer is received to this call, a text message is sent requesting the child's parent/carer to contact the school. If no reply is received, a letter will be sent to the child's home requesting a reason for the absence and a copy will be kept on file. (Please note that replies can be sent to the school using the Parent Mail Text system. If we do not receive an explanation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Authorised/unauthorised absence

It is important to note that a letter or phone call from a parent does not authorise an absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation can authorise a pupil absence.

Absences from Anns Grove Primary School may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Days of religious observance (up to two per year)
- Exceptional family circumstances (such as bereavement)
- Medical/dental appointments.* proof of appointments is required
- Pre arranged visits to another school / educational setting
- Exams (music, dance, gymnastics etc.)

* Please note that absence passes are available at the school office and should be carried by children when out of school for appointments.

Absences will not be authorised for the following reasons:

- When no explanation is forthcoming from the parent/carer
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation given
- The child is staying at home to look after siblings, mind the house or because their parent/carer is ill.
(Please get in touch with the school if your child has any caring responsibilities for you or another family member. We will work with you to help you receive appropriate support and to ensure your child's education does not suffer.)

It is important to remember that any period of '*unauthorised absence*' could result in the Local Authority taking action against the parent/carer. This could include a fine or court action. Where parents/carers repeatedly cause their child to be absent from school, the Local Authority may pursue what is called the higher '*aggravated offence*'. Aggravated offences carry higher penalties and are listed on the Disclosure

and Barring Service criminal records disclosure. This may impact on a parent or carer's ability to secure future employment, particularly if working with children or vulnerable adults.

Arrangements for medical/dental appointments.

When requesting a pass, an appointment card, letter, e-mail or text message should be shown at the school office. If none of these is available, school will supply a form for the medical professional to complete.

The school should be informed if a child has an emergency appointment and, because of this, you haven't been able to get a pass. In this case, you will need to ask the doctor or dentist for proof of the appointment, which you will need to bring in to school.

Expectations

It is expected that parents and carers will:

- Ensure their child attends regularly and on time
- Notify school on the first day of absence
- Only request a holiday in term time in exceptional circumstances
- Not keep their children away from school for trivial or minor reasons
- Accept their obligations in the Home School Agreement
- Not keep their children off school during SAT's or at times of testing.

Anns Grove will:

- Regularly communicate the attendance policy to parents/carers.
- Ensure that the Head teacher is informed about any attendance matters and is in agreement with any action taken
- Have an expectation that full time, punctual attendance will be the norm and all persistent absences/lateness will be followed up
- Monitor attendance by checking registers and the computerised attendance system
- Have a system of pupil passes for legitimate time out of school due to unavoidable appointments
- Identify and act upon problems with attendance.
- Work with the Local Authority over attendance concerns.

Monitoring

The registers are monitored on a regular basis by the school's Attendance Officer and Learning Mentor. Attendance patterns are monitored half termly. Where a child's attendance record raises concern, this will be discussed by the Headteacher, Learning mentor and the Local authority. Any issues identified will be discussed with you, as the child's parents/carers.

Information on attendance is reviewed termly by the Local Authority for monitoring purposes.

Attendance procedures

If our records show a poor pattern of attendance for your child:

- The Head Teacher will be informed
- The Learning Mentor will contact you
- The Learning Mentor and head of Key stage will meet with parents/carers to discuss and implement strategies for improving the child's attendance. Attendance will be monitored.
- If no improvement, the Learning Mentor, Head teacher, Local Authority representatives and the child's parents/carers will meet to further discuss and implement strategies for improving the child's attendance
- The Local authority will keep in contact with you where appropriate.
- If attendance does not improve, a warning letter will be sent.
- If attendance does not improve following the issue of a warning letter, the Local Authority will issue a final warning
- As parents/carers may receive a court summons.

Penalty Notices

Where a child's attendance is consistently poor (less than 90% with at least 20% of the absence being unauthorised) and all steps have been taken to rectify this (including the school and the Local Authority working with you and your child), the Multi Agency Support Team will, after consulting with the school, consider issuing a Penalty Notice (a fine).

Children missing from education

The Learning Mentor will contact and work with the Council's Children Missing from Education Team if a child is absent from school for 10 consecutive days and unaccounted for. We will also inform Social Care. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered as missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and they will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

Children in public care

A child who is being looked after by the local authority is known as a looked after child. They might be living with foster parents, at home with their parents under the supervision of social services or in a residential children's home.

The school's co-ordinators for looked after children are Samantha Fearnough, Executive Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead and Wendy Roberts, Learning mentor and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Attendance Officer will monitor the attendance of all looked after children and report this on a

daily basis to Welfare Call and, on request, to the Looked After Children Team. (Welfare Call is a service which collects and analyses attendance data for looked after children.)

Awards and rewards

Every half term, parents and carers will receive a letter informing them of their child's attendance.

- 100% = Gold letter
- 96.5 - 99.9% = Green
- 90% - 96.4% = Amber
- Below 90% = Red

Every term, all children achieving 100% attendance for a whole term will receive a special certificate. All children achieving 100% attendance and punctuality in the Autumn term will receive a bronze award. If this continues throughout the spring term, they will receive a silver award. If it continues into the summer term, they will receive a gold award. Children receiving a gold award will be awarded an extra family prize at the end of the year.

Children who demonstrate significant improvements in attendance or punctuality over time will also be recognised and rewarded with most improved certificates.

Trophies are presented to the class in Key Stage 1 and the class in Key Stage 2 that has the best attendance totals for the week. In addition, Bertie Bee is given to the most punctual KS1 class every week and Punctuality Panda to the most punctual KS2 class. Any class that reaches 100% attendance for the week is given a special treat. These results are displayed on the attendance display board's in the school's entrance area and school hall.

At the end of the school year, all children with 100% attendance and punctuality will receive a gold award and a prize. Also, all children with 100% attendance will win a prize.

Holidays during term time

Holidays in term time are not an entitlement and time off during term time must be requested in advance. Each request is considered individually by the Head teacher.

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to make the most of their educational opportunities. The Local Authority and Anns Grove Primary School has a responsibility to provide the best education possible, but we can only do this if pupils attend regularly. Taking time out of school for holidays can be disruptive and it can also be difficult for pupils to catch up on the work they have missed.

The Department of Education's most recent guidance states:

'The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in **exceptional circumstances** and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.'

The Head teacher may therefore only consider giving permission for a pupil to be absent from school in term time in '**exceptional circumstances**' and proof will be requested by the Headteacher.

If you choose to disregard this guidance, the Local Authority may take legal action Under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act which states that you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

The Local Authority's position is as follows:

"Taking unauthorised term time holidays and/or persistent absence (below 90%) may make you liable for a Penalty Notice (fine). The penalty is a **£60 fine if paid within 21 days** of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to **£120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days**. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full within the 42 day period **Sheffield City Council may prosecute**. This could result in a fine of up to **£1,000 plus costs**.

At Anns Grove, we are committed to raising the profile of attendance and its link to achievement. It is important therefore that you work with us by ensuring that your child attends school on time, every day and by not taking your child out of school for holidays during term time.

If you feel that there are exceptional circumstances, which prevent your holiday being taken during school holiday periods, please complete a leave of absence request form (available from the school office) and return this to school at least 20 days before you intend to take the leave. A written response will be sent to you within 10 days of the request being received

Extended visits to a child's country of origin

Extended holidays to a child's country of origin follow the same rulings as Exceptional leave requests during term time (See advice above). Children who do not return to school by the agreed date of return, or take unauthorised leave, are at risk of losing their place at the school.

We will, however, do our best to support children returning after long periods of absence. The Head teacher, Learning Mentor and MAST will liaise closely to employ appropriate reintegration strategies such as Individual Education Plans, action plans and phased returns where appropriate.

Policy review

This Policy will be reviewed every year, or in accordance with changes in local authority or government guidance.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Headteacher

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chair of Governors.

ANNS GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Please complete the section below and return to school.

We ask that you keep the rest of this document for your information.

I have read and understood the school's attendance policy and agree to make sure any of my children at Anns Grove attend school regularly and punctually. I also agree to inform the school if my child is going to be absent.

Your child or children's names: _____

Signed (parent/carer): _____ Date: _____

Parent/carer contact number: _____

Mobile telephone number: _____