

Ansford Learning Partnership Attendance Policy

Status:	Statutory
Governors Adopted:	19/11/2013
Renewal period:	
Review Date:	19/11/2017

Ansford Learning Partnership

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This Attendance Policy has been adopted by all Governing Bodies within the Ansford Learning Partnership, namely: Ansford Academy, Castle Cary Primary School, Countess Gytha Primary School, Ditcheat Primary School, Evercreech Church of England Primary School, Keinton Mandeville Primary School, Lovington Church of England Primary School and North Cadbury Church of England Primary School.

This Policy has been written to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 which came into force on 1st September 2013

2. Aims

2.1 Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

2.2 This policy has been devised in consultation with Headteachers and Governors in every school within the Partnership.

3. Being at school

3.1 School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

3.2 As a school and Learning partnership, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school on time each school day.

4. Expectations

4.1 We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

4.2 We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

4.3 Examples of what we authorise and do not authorise as absences

Authorised absences (allowed)	Unauthorised absences (not allowed)
*genuine illness of the pupil; *hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil; * major religious observances *visits to prospective new schools *external exams or educational assessments * bereavements or terminal illness of a close relative. * exceptional circumstances as outlined below	*shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park; *a birthday treat; *oversleeping due to a late night; *looking after other children / other family member; *appointments for other family members *weddings.

4.4 We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Meet regularly with the Education Attendance Officer (EAO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Attendance Officer. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Education Attendance Officer or their line managers may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Local Education Authority (LEA) after 15 days sickness.
- Will notify the Education Attendance Officer after 10 days unexplained absence.

5. Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

5.1 Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

5.2 By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.

5.3 Registration takes place at 8.55 and 1.20. Pupils who arrive more than 10 minutes after these times are recorded as late.

- 5.4 Registers close at 9.25am (morning registration) and 1.50pm (afternoon registration) and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- 5.5 Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with through the Class teacher and Headteacher and may be referred to the Education Attendance Officer.
- 5.6 Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools/colleges as necessary.

6. Pupil Leaving During the School Day

- 6.1 During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
 - Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
 - Parents are requested to confirm by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, and the expected return time.
 - Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
 - Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
 - If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

7. Leave of Absence

- 7.1 Amendments to the 2006 regulations on Pupil Registration, which came into force on 1st September 2013 make it clear that Headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term-time for exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances are set out in 7.3, below.
- 7.2 The school holiday dates, end of Key Stage Assessment dates and Exam dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.
- 7.3 In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (Appendix D), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised, except in the following exceptional circumstances:

- Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad
- Police or Fire service staff being told when they can or cannot take leave
- If a close family member has a terminal illness and it may be the last chance to be together.

7.4 Any request for term-time leave must be applied for at least one-week in advance, on the form supplied by the school 'Request for Term-Time Leave'. The decision on whether to authorise the absence or not will be communicated to the parent within 10 working days.

7.5 There is no right of appeal on the Headteacher's decision.

8. Penalty Notices

8.1 A Penalty Notice will be considered in the following circumstances (but see details in paragraphs 8.6-8.9):

- **Unauthorised Absence.** There have been at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in the last 12 school weeks and the school/academy, in consultation with the Education Attendance Service, believe this early intervention will resolve the poor attendance and stop the matter moving toward a prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- **Unauthorised Term Time Leave.** If the Headteacher does not authorise a request from a parent/carer for term-time leave, they inform the parent/carer of this and the parent still takes their child on leave. This only applies if the absence is 10 or more continuous sessions (5 days.)
- **Attendance Sweep.** A pupil is stopped on a school attendance sweep out of school without reason
- **Excluded Pupil.** An excluded pupil is found in a public place, without their parent, during the school day.

8.2 Penalty Notices will not be issued for children in care. Any concerns will form part of their PEP

8.3 For pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs an annual review will be held before considering a Penalty Notice request.

8.4 Headteachers and the Police are accredited persons able to issue Penalty Notices. It has been agreed that only the Local Authority will issue Penalty Notices (this applies to maintained schools and academies), to ensure consistency and prevent conflict with other enforcement sanctions for poor school attendance.

8.5 When a Headteacher feels it is appropriate for a Penalty Notice to be issued they will consult with the Education Attendance Service. This avoids a Penalty Notice being issued when the EAS is already instigating proceedings for irregular school attendance.

8.6 Unauthorised Absence

8.6.1 If there have been at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, the school will complete a request for a Penalty Notice to be considered (see Appendix A) and forwarded to the Education Attendance Service. A warning letter will be sent to each parent requiring they ensure their child attend school over a 15 day school period, where there should be no unauthorised absences. If there are any unauthorised absences in this period then a penalty notice will be issued to each parent.

8.6.2 If the 15 day monitoring period is passed the parent will receive a letter explaining that a Penalty Notice will not be issued on this occasion. The letter will also contain an expectation that the good attendance will continue and that if there are further unauthorised absences within 3 months following this letter, a Penalty Notice may still be issued or legal action under section 444 Education Act 1996 taken.

8.7 Unauthorised Term-Time Leave

8.7.1 Any parent who takes their child out of school for term time leave of 10 continuous sessions (5 days), not authorised by the school, may receive a Penalty Notice. The school will complete a request for a Penalty Notice to be considered (Appendix A).

8.7.2 However, this could be dealt as in Unauthorised Absence above and a warning letter used. Headteachers need to be aware that if used solely for unauthorised term time leave and the Penalty Notice not paid, they will be required to explain to court their reasons for not authorising the leave and how it meets their school attendance policy.

8.8 Following a School Attendance Sweep

8.8.1 The parent of any child found out of school, without a valid reason, may receive a warning providing this forms part of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in the 12 preceding weeks. Parents will be advised by letter.

8.8.2 Found in a Public Place during First Five Days Following Exclusion

8.8.3 If an excluded child is found in a public place, during school hours without their parent, then formal notification must be made by the appropriate school staff, Police or local authority officer (Appendix B). Parents will be advised by letter.

8.9 Payment of Penalty Notices

8.9.1 Penalty Notices will only be issued by post and not as 'on the spot' action.

8.9.2 The arrangements for paying the Penalty Notices will be detailed on the Notice.

8.9.3 Penalty Notices must be paid in full. Instalment payment is not acceptable. Once paid in full this is acknowledged by letter.

8.9.4 The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice (assumed as 2 working days following the Notice being sent by first class mail), or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the Notice.

8.9.5 If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period, the local authority must either prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the Notice. This will be done by letter.

8.9.6 The prosecution is not for non-payment of the Notice but is a prosecution for irregular school attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

8.9.7 There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

8.9.8 Revenue collected from Penalty Notices is collected by the local authority and used to help administer the process.

Appendices

Appendix A

Education Attendance Service Flow Diagram (County Hall)

Appendix B

Attendance Flow Diagram (Local)

Appendix C

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Amendments.

Appendix D

L Code Letter to Parent (Lates)

Appendix E

M Code Letter to Parent (Medical)

Appendix F

GP Code Letter (Request to GP)

Appendix G

MR Code Letter (Request to parent to disclose information from medical records)

Appendix H

N Code Letter to Parent (Unauthorised Absence)

Appendix I

PN/WPN Letter to Parent (Penalty Notice)

Appendix J

PA Code Letter to Parent (Persistent Absence)

Appendix K

R Code Letter to Parent (Referral to Education Attendance Officer)

Appendix L

CME School Referral (Letter to local authority - Child Missing from Education)

Appendix M

EME Form from School to local authority (Elective Home Education)

