

**ATTENDANCE POLICY
ANSTEY FIRST SCHOOL**

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on a regular basis.
The policy was last reviewed on behalf of the Governing Body on 22/1/2020. It is due for review on 22/01/2022

The Governor completing the review was: Kate Oxley

Signature Head Teacher Date

Signature Chair of Governors Date

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1. Introduction

Anstey School is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for individual children. Underpinning this commitment is the belief that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Anstey School works closely together in partnership with parents in order to achieve excellent levels of school attendance and punctuality for all pupils.

2. Responsibilities – Parents and Carers

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school.

Parents whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.

Parents should:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy
- impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings
- work in partnership with the school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify the school if they are absent. This should be done on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed - preferably in writing - when the children return to school
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- should not book holidays during term time

3. Responsibilities – The School

The school is responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance. The School Business Manager has overall responsibility for attendance issues.

The school takes a register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. If the register is called at the end of the afternoon session the school will ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils do not leave school between registrations. The school will ensure that pupils can be accounted for in an emergency and that a pupil removed from the school at lunchtime will not go unnoticed.

Registers record whether each pupil is present; attending an approved educational activity; absent; or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. In the case of a pupil of compulsory school age who is absent the register will also indicate whether the absence has been authorised by the school.

Registers open and close at regular, set times and this information is available to parents.

When calling the register, the appropriate mark and/or symbol will be placed against each pupil's name - gaps will not be left so that entries can be made later. In marking registers, the national set of symbols as advised by the Department for Education (see Appendix 2) will be used.

When the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the beginning of a session, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and any subsequent correction to the register made as soon as practicable after the reason for the absence has been established.

The school will:

- work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole
- have clear procedures in place to address persistent absence
- have clear procedures in place to address the attendance of vulnerable groups
- support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- be sensitive to the needs of individual parents and this will be reflected in the way in which attendance issues are addressed. We recognise that some parents have difficulty understanding written communications. We also recognise the reluctance of some parents to come into school.

Punctuality

The school takes steps to actively encourage excellent levels of punctuality. Lateness is monitored and followed up.

School policies, brochures and website clearly state the time at which each school session begins and finishes, including the time at which registers open and close. The school will not keep a register open for the whole session.

When a pupil arrives late and the register is still open he/she will be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session.

When a pupil arrives after the register has closed and parent provides a satisfactory explanation, he/she will be marked as 'authorised absent' for that session using the correct code.

When a pupil arrives after the register has closed and their parent fails to provide a satisfactory explanation, he/she will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session. (Code U)

When a pupil arrives late having missed registration, his/her presence on site will be noted on the fire sheet in that child's class which would be used for the purposes of emergency evacuation.

4. The Use of Legal Action

If a pupil, who is registered at Anstey School, fails to attend the school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the Local Authority Attendance Officer and the school fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action. Any exceptional mitigating circumstances relating to the pupil's absence will be taken into account, when considering legal action. '

5. Admission & Attendance Registers

The rules governing the maintenance of registers, including removal from roll, are contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016.

It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to-date. The school will regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, through existing communication channels such as regular emails and newsletters. This will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school is required to record in the admission register:

- a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- b) the new address; and
- c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, the school must record in the admission register:

- a) the name of the new school; and
- b) the date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

The school is required to notify the local authority **within five days** via school admissions - <http://www.intra.thegrid.org.uk/admissions/seam.shtml> when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point. The school is required to notify the Local Authority of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, or who has been absent for a continuous period of more than 10 school days, without a legitimate reason.

For further guidance see - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/csf/admissions.shtml>

Registers - Retention

Registers are kept in a secure place for a period of not less than 3 years. When a computerised registration system is used, a print-out of the register will be made not less than once a month, bound in a single volume and retained for a period of not less than 3 years.

Removal from Roll

If the school decides to delete a pupil's name from the admission roll the school will notify their Local Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

If a pupil has left the school without explanation and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare the school will contact the local Attendance Team immediately.

If the school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff will establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Confirmation will then be sought from the receiving school. When this information has been obtained, the school will

complete a Removal from Roll form and return it to the local Attendance Team office. Whenever a pupil leaves the school a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

If the school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has “disappeared” the matter will be drawn without delay to the attention of the Local Attendance Team.

Further guidance and a referral form is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

6. Authorising Absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence will be treated as unauthorised and the parent informed. The school will keep all absence notes for at least a term and when a pupil's absence is a cause for concern, retain the notes until there is no longer a concern.

Absence will be authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with leave (defined as ‘leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school’)
- the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- the school is not within walking distance of the child's home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following: the child's transport to and from school; boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school; enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents who are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending alternative provision
- there is a close family bereavement
- leave of absence has been applied for in advance and has been granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application. (Parents are

reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will grant leave of absence)

- leave of absence will be granted to allow a pupil to take part in a performance within the meaning of s37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (c) for which a child performance licence has been issued. Before granting a licence the local authority must be satisfied that the child's education will not suffer. A school letter is requested as part of the licence application as confirmation of this. If the school believes a child's education will suffer as a result of taking part in a performance the school will provide reasons to the local authority in writing. The absence will be recorded as code C.

Further guidance is available at -

<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

- Absence will be unauthorised if no explanation is forthcoming from the parents or if the school is dissatisfied with the explanation

7. Administrative Codes

There are a number of administrative codes which are not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. They must only be used in the circumstances described:

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Code Y)

This code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes but is not counted as a possible attendance It may be used when:
the school site, or part of it is closed due to unavoidable cause; or
the transport provided by the school or the local authority is not available *and*
where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

- Not required to be in school (Code X)

is used to record sessions that non –compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

- Pupil not on admission register (Code Z)

enables the school to set up a register in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. The school must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

- Planned whole of partial school closure (Code #)

should be used for closures that are planned or known in advance eg holidays, curriculum planning/training days (up to five per year) or the use of the school as a polling station.

- Different Term Dates for Different Pupils (Code #)

can also be used to record staggered starts or induction days. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

8. Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

Pupils who are engaged in off-site educational activities will be recorded as attending (or absent from) an approved educational activity using the appropriate code.

The key features of approved educational activity are that they must be:

- educational *and*
- approved by the school *and*
- supervised by the school or someone authorised by the school

A pupil will be recorded as approved educational activity if he/she is attending:

- a field trip or educational visit (Code V)
- an approved sporting activity approved by and supervised by someone authorised by the school (Code P)
- the pupil is attending an interview with another educational establishment (Code J)
- an off-site educational activity (Code B)

Note: The B code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately the school is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. By using code B, the school is certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils.

- Dual Registered – at another educational establishment (Code D)

Note: This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. This code should be used where pupils are attending an ESC, hospital or special school on a temporary basis or for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children where they are known to be registered at another school for the session in question. The school will only record the attendance/absence for those sessions where the pupil is expected to attend and will ensure that the all absence is followed up in a timely manner.

The school will ensure that in the event of a fire drill or other emergency evacuation staff are able to carry out an immediate headcount as to the number of pupils physically present on-site.

9. Flexi-schooling

The Head teacher can agree to flexi-schooling arrangements where the parents take on the responsibility for their child's education for part of the school week. The Head teacher will consider any such requests from parents very carefully before agreeing to them and draw up a written agreement with the parent. Where agreement has been reached, pupils will be marked authorised absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education. (Code C).

10. Part-time time-tables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs. A part time timetable must be time limited and must not be treated as a long term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. The school will mark the sessions were the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

Guidance on part-time timetables is available at -
<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

11. Requests for Family Holidays During Term time

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the Headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Appendix 1

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) Including Covid	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances

Detailed advice on the use of these registration codes can be found at www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance

Appendix 2

Attendance During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

All pupils are required to attend school. As such, the arrangements set out in the main body of this policy (above) will be adhered to. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government [guidance](#) to set out the additional measures that have been put in place to support pupils' attendance at school.

The school will have due regard for the DfE's '[Recording attendance during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)' guidance when recording attendance during the pandemic.

1. Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory for all pupils. This means the usual rules on school attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- The school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, in line with the procedures in the main body of this policy.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the LA's code of conduct.

The school will ensure pupils do not attend the school site where they are displaying symptoms of, or have tested positive for, coronavirus, or are quarantining following travel abroad, or are in a household, childcare or support bubble with an individual who is displaying symptoms of, or has tested positive for, coronavirus.

2. Shielding or self-isolating pupils

The school will stay up-to-date with all relevant national and local public health advice regarding shielding and self-isolation, communicating any relevant changes to all stakeholders.

Absences relating to pupils following clinical and/or public health advice will not be penalised. Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, they will be immediately offered access to remote learning, in line with the Pupil Remote Learning Policy.

Absences due to shielding or self-isolation will be recorded with Code X. The school will request a copy of a shielding pupil's medical letter to confirm their status where necessary.

The school will follow the measures set out in the Infection Control Policy in all circumstances where self-isolation is required.

Where a vulnerable pupil is required to self-isolate, the school will notify their social worker (if they have one), ensure a method of maintaining contact with the pupil, and ensure the pupil has access to remote education.

3. Reluctance to return to school

The school will remind parents of their legal duty to ensure their child attends school, and parents will be advised to contact the school if they have concerns about their child returning to school.

If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the school.

4. Monitoring attendance

The SBM and Head officer will monitor the school's attendance rates once the school is open to all pupils in September. Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to reengage affected pupils with the school.

The school will place particular emphasis on supporting the attendance and re-engagement of vulnerable pupils, pupils at risk of PA, and pupils who have not engaged regularly with school during the coronavirus pandemic.

The SBM will complete the '[Educational setting status form](#)' on a daily basis, based on the information on the attendance register.

The school will use the DfE's list of sub-codes in the management information system (MIS) to record non-attendance related to coronavirus.

5. Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

The SBM and SENCo will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Having regular teacher reviews.

- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Consider using fixed penalty notices.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of PA, the school will:

- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead **weekly** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

6. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence.

A **telephone call** will be made to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the SBM/Head/SENCo. The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below **85 percent**, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.