

## Ash Lea School Attendance Policy

### Statement of intent

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents / carers and teachers have a shared responsibility to facilitate this. Ash Lea School aims to work with parents and carers to ensure that all its pupils attend both regularly and punctually, to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

### Good attendance is recognised as 95% or above

The expectation from the Department for Education and Ofsted, is that as a school we strive to have an overall attendance of 95% or above, and at Ash Lea we strive to ensure our pupils exceed this, whilst recognising that some of our pupils have a high level of absences because of medical and /or therapy appointments and/or illness because of their medical conditions or Special Educational Need (SEN).

### Monitored persistent absence is recognised as below 90%

Most of our pupils rely on educational transport to come to school which is not always available in extreme weather conditions. We acknowledge this within our policy.

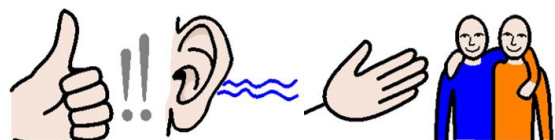
### School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.



## Responsibilities and roles

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their children.

### Parents must:

- Inform the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence, if their child is absent from school for any reason. This can be done by phone, email, or in person to the school office but not via the bus escort. As good practice, an explanation of the absence, by letter, email or note in the home-school diary, should also be sent in once the child returns to school.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school in time for registration (9.00 – 9.30) if, for any reason, the child arrives after this time, parents should report directly to the office (this does not, of course, apply if transport is delayed).
- Parents should make any request for absence in term time **in writing at least four weeks in advance**. The head teacher will only authorise this in exceptional circumstances, in line with national policy. If the child was still absent, this would be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Holiday will not be authorised and may incur fines from the local authority.

### School will

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and is an integral part of the school's ethos
- Recognise external factors which influence pupil attendance and work closely with parents and carers should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern and be as supportive as possible in improving the situation.
- Record and monitor attendance in accordance with both the statutory requirements and the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.

### Pupils will

- Attend school regularly and on time.

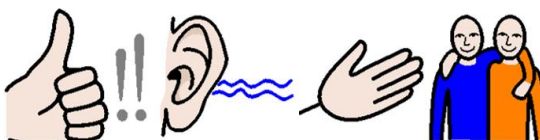
## Registration & punctuality

Registers will close at 9.30 am. Any pupil arriving after this time, without a valid reason, will be marked as late. Registers in the afternoon close at 1.30pm. There is a clearly coded system for marking of registers (see appendix A)

Any unknown reasons for absence are recorded as no reason (N) in the first instance to ensure registers can close on time. But this must be followed up as soon as possible by class teacher and admin staff. The Attendance Lead will monitor this on a weekly basis.

If a pupil is consistently late the school will:

- Contact parents to discuss the situation.
- When pupils are persistently late, contact with parents will be made and targeted support may be contacted.



NB: criteria for placements at college post 18 include punctuality and good attendance. School will be asked to supply records.

### Leave of Absence in Term Time

Families do not have a right to take their children out of school for the purposes of family holidays or trips abroad. Government Guidance instructs Head teachers **NOT** to authorise leave of absence in term time. Permission for this type of absence should only be granted in the most **exceptional** circumstances.

Requests for Leave of Absence during Term Time should be made to the school, **at least 4 weeks in advance**, using the Leave of Absence Request Form (available from the school office or on the school website). Each request will be judged on a case by case basis.

**Penalty Notices** may be issued:

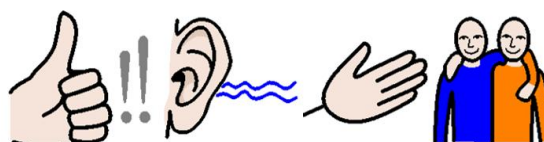
- If parents take their child out of school for a holiday or leave of absence in term-time;
- If the Head teacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway;
- If a pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation and the pupil remains on the roll of the school.

In the majority of cases, schools and local authorities will try and provide support to help you improve your child's attendance first, but if this isn't effective or the absence is for unauthorised term time holiday, parents may face paying a fine.

Under the national rules, all schools are required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

**Examples of 'authorised' absence:**

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances, e.g. bereavement
- School visits
- An immediate family member is critically/terminally ill
- Families who have been through a traumatic event
- Families where a parent/carer is able to demonstrate clearly (e.g. a letter from an employer which can be verified) that they are restricted to all annual leave within school term time
- Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive
- A pupil attends a respite provider like Rainbows where structured activities are arranged



- Where a LAC child attends a residential with their LAC provider
- Where a child attends a planned transition visit

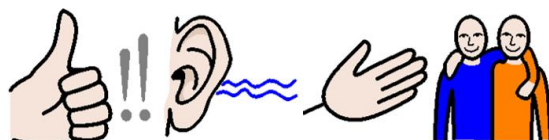
#### Examples of 'unauthorised' absence

- Shopping
- Haircuts
- Missed bus
- Slept late
- No uniform
- Birthdays
- Holidays

#### Response to absence / non-attendance

- Office staff will contact the parent/carer by text or email when a child is absent on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received by 10.30am.
- A follow up call will be made if an explanation is still missing. These will be recorded on the attendance register (School Pod)
- If there is any cause for concern they must report this to Luke Skillington with responsibility for attendance and/or a designated safeguarding lead immediately.
- If there is no response on day 2 of absence office staff to call 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> name on pupils card or any other emergency number. If still no response by 12.00, SLT and the attendance lead to be informed and a home visit will be considered.
- Attendance Lead (Luke Skillington) to meet with class teachers when pupil attendance begins to drop and input additional support where required.
- Parents will be informed termly if their child's attendance falls **below 90% and satisfactory explanations have not been received**. If satisfactory explanation has been received a review of attendance with parents may still be needed to assure appropriate support is given.
- Parents will be asked to a meeting if this happens regularly, to see what support can be offered. Referral to Targeted Support may be made to identify and support those students whose attendance or punctuality is deemed persistent e.g. below 90%.

The school makes exceptions for children who have long term illness or ongoing essential medical appointments.



### Collection of data

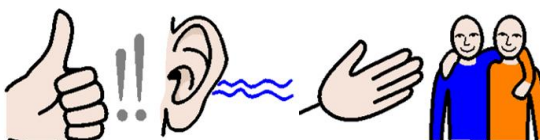
A range of attendance data will be collected and analysed in order for the school to be proactive around attendance matters.

- All registers need to be completed on time am and pm
- Missing marks should be chased up admin staff twice a day
- Any No Reason (N) marks should be chased up weekly (no longer than 5 days)
- Attendance Lead to follow up staff who continuously fail to complete the register on time
- Attendance Lead to be informed of unexplained absence by day 2 of absence
- Attendance Lead to be sent attendance figures of risk pupils/groups identified (FSM, PP, LAC, Previous persistent absentees etc)
- Half termly report to be written by Attendance Lead and risk pupils identified and follow procedures implemented.
- Termly report written for governors and a meeting with named governor arranged before full governor body to report to include statistical analysis and highlighting Pupil Premium, Looked After Children and Free School Meals pupils.
- To write an annual attendance report and identify actions for the following year.

### Reduced Timetables

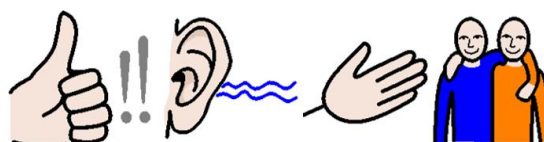
Although all pupils are entitled to a full-time education, some pupils may need some flexibility due to medical, well-being or emotional regulation needs. Pupils who are not attending Ash Lea School on a full-time basis are recorded on a NCC Reduced Timetable Agreement form. These records show the hours a pupil is in school and what they do in their off-site hours. It contains the reasoning behind the agreed flexible arrangement and a clear review date.

**Reviewed by:** Luke Skillington (Assistant Headteacher)  
**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024  
**Next Review Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026  
**Approved by Governors** 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024



### Appendix A:

Present Codes	
/\	present during registration
B	educated off site and for taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority under Section 19 of the EA 1996
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	participation in a sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip supervised by a member of the school staff
W	attending work experience under arrangements by the school or local authority
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absence	
C	absence due to exceptional circumstances, agreed by the headteacher
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable, agreed by the headteacher and parent(s)/carer(s)
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision made
I	illness (both physical and mental health related; not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed; any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being unexpectedly closed
Y4	unable to attend due to unexpected whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
Unauthorised Absence	
G	holiday or absence for leisure-related purposes (not agreed by the headteacher)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	prospective pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (e.g., holidays, Insets and polling station days)



## Appendix B:

### APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

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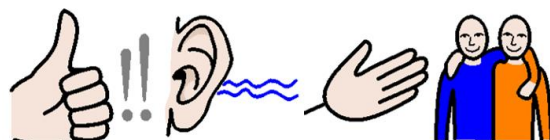
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**APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME**

Pupil Name	
Class	

I wish to apply for my child to be absent during the following dates:

From	
To	
Total number of days missed	
Reason (including exceptional circumstances)	

I make application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a penalty notice for irregular school attendance.

Name of parent/carer	
Date	
Signed	

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE**

