

# Avenue Pre Preparatory School & Nursery

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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### RATIONALE

At the Avenue Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery ('The School'), we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your son/daughter and we look to you to support this objective.

It is the policy of the School to encourage good attendance and punctuality as an integral part of the school ethos enabling pupils to achieve their potential. We believe that frequent absence and/or lateness seriously affects both the individual child and the whole class. Habits of good attendance and punctuality can only be achieved through a close partnership with the parents/carers, encouraging children to see themselves as an important part of the School community and to value and respect School life. These habits are of great importance to a child's future success in the adult world.

### AIMS

- To ensure that children have every opportunity to achieve their potential.
- To ensure that children have equal access to the curriculum and are not deprived of this through poor attendance.
- To encourage regular attendance and punctuality.
- To minimise disruption of lessons by latecomers.
- To monitor absences in order to guard against truancy, condoned absence or Child Safeguarding issues (see school's child protection/safeguarding policy).
- To inform parents of the School's Expectations.
- To ensure that Reception, Years 1 and 2 children are at school by 8.50 a.m. each morning.
- To ensure that Morning Nursery children are at school by 9.00 a.m. each morning.
- To ensure parents contact the school as soon as possible if a child is going to be absent or very late for any reason e.g. dentist, doctor etc.

- To remind parents to request permission, in writing, for holiday leave during term time.

## The Law

Parents, Schools and LEAs share legal responsibilities in respect of school attendance:

Parents of children of compulsory school age must ensure that they receive an efficient and suitable full-time education, either at school or otherwise.

All schools must keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, a pupil should be marked present or absent (Part 1 Pupils' Registration Regulations (2006) and Independent Schools Standards Regulations (2014).

The school has a duty to notify the local Education Authority (LEA) where school absences are unauthorised or where there is a pattern of children missing education. LEAs must ensure that parents are fulfilling their statutory obligations as to their children's education including, where necessary, by action through the Courts (Sections 37 and 39 of the Education Act 1944).

Pupils arriving 15 minutes after the beginning of the morning or afternoon sessions should be marked late for that session.

The provisions of the Pupil's Registration Regulations (2006) require: -

- The use of attendance registers to show whether, in the case of pupils of compulsory school age, an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Schools are permitted to computerise their attendance and admission registers subject to satisfactory safeguards to protect the integrity of the record.

## The School Day

The front door opens at 8.45am and all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are required to be in school by 9.00am. This is particularly important for the Year 1 and 2 children whose lessons start promptly after Registration. Instructions for the lesson are always given at the start of the period and it is unsettling for a child for them to miss this important process.

The side door is opened for the Morning Nursery children to enter the School at 8.50am. Afternoon Nursery children enter the School through the front door at 1.00pm. The sessions for these children end at midday and 3.00pm respectively, except during any settling-in period for the children – parents will be notified of the details separately.

The Reception children finish at 3.00pm and the school day ends for Key Stage 1 at 3.30pm every day except for Thursdays when the school day ends at 4pm for all KS1 children. Many KS1 pupils remain to 4.00pm to take part in the After School Clubs on Mondays and Tuesdays under the supervision of a member of staff. After School Clubs **do not run** in either the first full week or last week of each term.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the School during the school day unless they are participating in agreed offsite activities or are on a trip, the dates of which will have been notified to you in advance. In these cases, pupils will be accompanied and be under the supervision of staff members at all times.

### Maintaining Registers

Registers will be maintained consistently so that they can be easily reviewed, and difficulties easily identified.

- Ensure that all class teachers take the register and submit it electronically by 9.15 am at the latest with an explanation where there is an absence or lateness, stating the length of time in minutes. All authorised absences must reviewed by the senior member in charge or office administrator twice daily and have the correct code entered.
- All authorised absences must be logged within the child's communication record within ScholarPack. e.g. sickness notes from parents or phone calls received. Enter all late times, with an L symbol and the time alongside (coding system must be consistent with all staff).
- Half-hour after registers close, absence is unauthorised. If other staff receive information, put in a note for class teacher and enter it on the register then notify the school office or Head/Principal so it can be appropriately recorded in the register in line with the statutory duties of the school
- Should pupils either arrive late or leave during the course of a School day due to e.g. an appointment, school visit etc, the Late Arrival/Early Departure Book (kept by the front door) must be completed by the adult accompanying the pupil.
- A Wi-Fi enabled device is kept at the front door with access to the register in accordance with the School's Fire Precautions procedures.

### Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is defined as being:

- When a child is prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause
- On the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance.
- The school will exercise discretion to grant a pupil time off school during the term. It will do this if it is felt there are extenuating or compassionate reasons that justify the leave. All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent(s), carer(s) that the pupil normally resides with.
- With the exceptions of family holidays and employment, holidays during term will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and the amount of leave granted will not exceed a total of more than 2 weeks in any school year.
- Any leave of absence granted by the school will be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code. Periods that are refused must be recorded as unauthorised. All requests will be treated on a case-by-case basis within the broad terms of this policy. The aim will always be to give reasonable flexibility to respond to difficult circumstances whilst discouraging unnecessary absence.

Parents are requested to contact the School by 8.30am if their child is unable to attend School for that day. Good attendance is strongly encouraged; parents must however use their discretion in deciding to send children into school who are showing signs of sickness. If it is predicted that the absence will be more than 2 days, we expect notification

of the reason and expected duration. Parents will be contacted if a child in either Year 1 or Year 2 is not at school and the School has not been given prior notification of the child's absence. In the case of a child attending Nursery or Reception, the parents will be contacted if the child is absent for more than one session without prior notification. It is the class teacher's responsibility to inform the School Office if a child is absent from school as the parents' must be contacted.

School policy advises strongly against parents taking children on holiday during term time. Parents wishing to do so must put their request in writing to the Principal.

In addition to causes itemised in law, there are other situations in which the school might reasonably exercise discretion and grant leave; for example, absence following the death of a close member of the child's family.

The school has a duty to report to the Children's Services those pupils who fail to attend school regularly, except where such absences are authorised in accordance with the criteria set out above and/or covered by a medical certificate.

It may not always be possible immediately to identify absence as authorised or unauthorised. In such cases, a provisional mark should be entered in the register until clarification has been obtained. Ten days of unauthorised absence, failure to attend school regularly and deletion from the School Register when the next school is not known will be reported to the Local Education Authority in whose area the child resides as soon as possible.

### Lateness

- On occasions, exceptional circumstances will mean children arrive late at school. However, regular lateness due to poor timekeeping is not acceptable and the school will discuss with parents ways to remedy this.
- Parents are reminded regularly about the importance of punctuality and the negative effect of lateness on their child's education.
- Pupils are marked 'late after register has closed' if they arrive up to half an hour after the start of the sessions i.e. after 9.15am. Times are recorded in the register.

#### **To achieve the goals of good attendance and punctuality, the following measures are taken**

- The school requires explanations of absence on every occasion by letter, phone call or in person by the child's parent/guardian.
- Teachers must record in the registers the reason for a child's absence and if late, the time of arrival in class.
- Persistent absence or lateness of a child/children is discussed with the parent and if appropriate further action is taken.
- No child is permitted to leave the school premises before the end of the school day unless a request has been received from the parent/guardian.
- Any absence that is not explained in a letter, by phone or in person will be classified as UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE.

### Absence during School Term Times

Term dates are made available over a year in advance in order that parents/carers are able to arrange holidays without disrupting their child's education. Please note that it is the School policy not to allow holidays to be taken during term unless there are genuine reasons to allow it. Exceptions can usually be made with respect to children in either the Afternoon or Morning Nurseries. Children must attend school by Law, from the term following their 5th birthday.

Requests for absence must be made in writing and reach the school at least 3 days in advance, except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8.30am if at all possible. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the School Office at least one week in advance.

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence.

### Role of the Staff

Staff should model acceptable behaviour by always being punctual for the beginning of each lesson. Staff must be in the classroom each morning to greet the children as they arrive.

All pupils are registered twice a day by their teacher - before the start of the morning session and immediately after lunch. Children are registered electronically using the School management system - Scholarpack.

The member of staff who answers the front door to a late arrival must ascertain as to who is to be picking up the child at the end of the session and complete the "Late Arrivals/Early Departure Book" accordingly. A reason should be given for the child's late arrival and this is also noted in the "Late Arrivals/Early Departure Book".

Children should be encouraged to attend school regularly and to be punctual.

### Related Policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following School Policies and Procedures:

- Missing Child
- Child not Collected on Time
- Child Protection/Safeguarding (Policies are kept in a designated file)

## Appendix 1

<b>Register Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
/	Present AM **
\	Present PM **
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present **
I	Authorised absence due to illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site ( NOT dual registration) **
D	Dual registered (at another establishment) - NOT counted in possible attendances **
J	Approved education activity as pupil is attending interview **
P	Approved education activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity **
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip **
W	Approved education activity as pupil is attending work experience **
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
X	Non-compulsory school age absence - not counted in possible attendances **
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances **
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances **

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By Martin Ayres &amp; Mary Fysh

Every three years