

Attendance @ Airy Hill Primary School



The Yorkshire Endeavour Academy Trust holds a Trust Wide Policy which outlines the overarching approaches used to support children's attendance. The Trust believes that *"Pupils need to feel supported, to have their attendance valued and noted, and to be helped by the school to participate successfully. The majority of pupils want to attend school to learn and to achieve and may not be able to do so for reasons beyond their control, which the school needs to identify and investigate."*

This document is intended to support the Trust policy and contains the procedures used at Airy Hill Primary School to achieve the agreed principles, and work towards meeting its attendance targets.

We will ensure that our pupils and families are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them; we will use a variety of strategies to intervene at an early stage to encourage improved attendance of individual learners.

Section 1. Encouraging Good School Attendance

Universal Approaches

- The school provides an exciting and engaging curriculum with regular enrichment opportunities for all children.
- The school regularly communicates the inextricable link between a good school attendance and wide ranging positive educational outcomes.
- Whole school attendance is monitored weekly with small, cumulative awards for all children.
- Children achieving 100% in a single week are entered into a weekly attendance draw for a small, social award with peers.

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Targeted Approaches

- Class teachers provide children with individual rewards and incentives such as additional classroom responsibilities.
- Airy Hill loyalty card is used to promote consistently positive attendance.

Short term non-attendance

Universal Approaches

- If a child is absent and the family have failed to contact the school by 9:30am, the school Attendance Officer will attempt to make contact by telephone to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- If contact cannot be made on that morning (for vulnerable families) or the next day (for other families), the Attendance Officer will visit the family home to check on the children's wellbeing.

Targeted Approaches

- If a persistently absent child does not attend school, the Attendance Officer may seek to make contact with the family, even if they have already reported the absence to school. The reason for non-attendance will be checked and the Attendance Officer will seek to find ways to engage the children in learning that day.

Persistent Absence

Universal Approaches

- The attendance of all children is rigorously monitored and when this falls below 90%, parents are invited into school to meet with the Attendance Officer. The purpose of this meeting is to establish any underlying causes of non-attendance and offer any targeted support that is required.

Targeted Approaches

- An Early Help Assessment may be undertaken in consultation with the family in order to put in place a plan to support a better school attendance.
- A referral may be made to the Healthy Child Team or the Early Help Team in order to offer personalised support.

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- When a family has failed to meaningfully engage with school, a more formal route will be pursued which in extreme circumstances, may result in legal action being taken.

Links to safeguarding

Universal Approaches

- The school has a safeguarding duty to ensure that each child is accounted for daily. When contact cannot be made via telephone, a home visit may be made by the school Attendance Officer and/or another member of staff.
- When the school are concerned for the welfare of a pupil, a policy welfare check may be requested.
- The school will welcome back all pupils absent for 3 or more days. This will be in the form of a meeting with the school Attendance Lead and/or Head or Class Teacher and will include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to other pupils.

Targeted Approaches

- School attendance is always reported as part of any child protection procedures. Unnecessary poor school attendance is considered neglectful due to its negative impact on children's ability to thrive and achieve their wider potential.

Section 2. School Procedures

Any pupil who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as another approved absence.

Authorised absences will be given for:

1. Personal illness (for pupils with less than 80% attendance, absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless in exceptional circumstances and medical evidence is provided).
2. Religious festivals
3. Circumstances authorised by school (such as family bereavement)
4. Medical/dental appointments.

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Medical/dental appointments should be made out of school hours, however where this is not possible the school will require notification prior to the absence. It is expected that the child will return to school immediately after the appointment wherever possible.

A child who has been sick or has diarrhoea should be kept away from school until the child has been clear of the problem for 48 hours.

If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised and unexplained and will be promptly followed up by the school Attendance Officer, as part of our early intervention and safeguarding strategies.

2.1 Reporting of Absences

- Children are welcome on school grounds from 8:40am each morning. All children must be in school at 9:00am. In the afternoon school starts at 1pm.
- Parents are asked to inform the school by 9:00 **each day** a child is unwell and will not be attending school. This can be done by;
 - Telephone - 01947 602688
 - Email - admin.airyhill@yeat.co.uk
 - Text - 07852 985990
 - Message via My Child at School (MYCAS)
- When reporting an absence, you must provide the child's name and class year, their reason for absence and the anticipated date of return.
- If a child is absent and the family have failed to contact the school by 9:30am, the school attendance officer will attempt to make contact by telephone to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- If contact cannot be made on that morning (for vulnerable families) or the next day (for other families), the Attendance Officer will visit the family home to check on the children's wellbeing.
- The locality children services team will be notified of unexplained absences of more than two days of a pupil on the child protection register, or one day following the weekend.

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2.2 Leave of Absence from School during Term Time

The Department for Education (DfE) requires schools to implement government regulations regarding the taking of Leave of Absence in term-time.

Applications for leave during term time must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the Head Teacher in exceptional circumstances. Each leave application is considered individually by the school taking into account any factors presented by the family.

When a child is taken out of school for the purpose of Leave of Absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be marked as Unauthorised and as such may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice which are applied by the Local Authority and as such are not at the discretion of the Head Teacher or Attendance Officer.

Application forms for Leave of Absence during Term Time are available from the school office.

2.3 Punctuality

Good attendance and punctuality are essential if children are to achieve their maximum academic potential. They are also important as they establish good habits for the future.

- Registers are taken at 8:50am, all children must be in school at this time.
- Gates to the playgrounds will be locked at 9:00am. Children arriving after 9:00am will need to enter school via the main entrance order a school dinner if required and provide a reason for lateness.
- Children arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be marked as Late for the morning session.
- Children arriving after 9:20am will be marked as an Unauthorised Absence for the whole morning session (*as based on the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006*).

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Parents and carers are reminded that the Local Authority (LA) may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for persistent lateness after the close of the register in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct, if in excess of 10 sessions.

Section 3. Attendance @ Nursery

At Airy Hill School Nursery we believe good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them throughout school.

At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Regular and punctual attendance is paramount so that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Aims

- To create a culture where good attendance is 'normality' and valued
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive
- To be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures

The impact of non-attendance at nursery and early years care significantly increases gaps in knowledge and understanding for children. Research has shown that this has a huge impact on their attainment, achievement and future life choices.

The schools are required by law to maintain an accurate record of the attendance and absence of each child and parents are asked to assist in this process by keeping informed if their child is absent for any reason.

3.1 Nursery Procedures

Children should be at nursery, on time, every day that the child is booked into nursery, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Parents are expected to inform school of an absence. The register closes at 9.15am and 1.00pm. Messages of absence from parents are passed to the nursery staff.

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If a child is absent without an explanation for 2 sessions, the Attendance Officer will contact parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. In some cases, absence from the first session will be followed up. If the child is known to Social Care, this service will be informed of the unauthorised absence.

If this does not produce a satisfactory explanation and/or absence continues, the Attendance Officer will invite parents or carers to an appointment to discuss the matter further.

3.2 Persistent Absence from Nursery

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. We recognise that starting school nursery can be a big change and that children could sometimes be reluctant to attend. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Cooperation between home and school is the best way to support children's well-being needs. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together.

Parents of children whose attendance is inconsistent and generally poor will be contacted by the Attendance Officer and their future attendance monitored. If there is cause for concern, the health visiting service and/or Multi-agency Team may be contacted in order to ascertain if family support may be needed. In more urgent cases, social care may be contacted.

If persistent absence continues parents or carers will be invited to discuss the removal of their child from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list. The Local Authority would then be informed that the child had left the nursery.

Although attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted for emergency situations and medical appointments.

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Section 4. Attendance Targets

We strive to achieve **96%** attendance across all of classes at Airy Hill. If your child's level of absence concerns us or falls below **90%**, you will be contacted by the school to look at what can be done to improve attendance.

Our annual school attendance figures have been:

2017/2018: 93%

2018/2019: 94%

2019/2020: 91%

2020/2021: