**Abbey Primary Shaftesbury**

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Abbey Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational potential a high level of school attendance is essential. **We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children.** Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets. It will be based on National and Dorset Guidance

**Promoting educational attendance in Dorset 2024-25**

**and**

**Working together to improve school attendance – August 2024**

**Promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

**Registers**

Registers are completed for morning and afternoon sessions.

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 12.45pm for KS1, 1pm for KS2.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.

**School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

**First Day Absence**

Parents expected to contact the school

The school office will make telephone or text contact.

The Head teacher will be made aware of any absences of children of concern.

Notes are included in the register for any absences and teachers follow up absences by discussions with children about why they were away from school.

**Third Day of Absence**

Ifa child is still away then the Head teacher will make contact with the parents.

**Continuing Absence**

If there is continuing absence then further advice will be sought from the school attendance team

**Ten Day’s Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children’s Services School Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

**Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

**Frequent Absence**

Within the school it is the responsibility of the Teaching Staff to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

**Persistent Absence [PA]**

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the Head teacher. A letter or email is sent each term to any parents where attendance is below 90% with no valid reason. If this is persistent then the parents are invited into school to discuss the attendance. If all else fails then they will be referred to the Attendance team and invited to attend an Attendance panel. The school will consider issuing a penalty notice.

The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil’s attendance.

**Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should 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 the other pupils.

Genuine absences mean that children take work with them or agree work to be done while they are away. It is noted in children’s work books if they have missed a particular section of work and homework given where possible.

**Leave of absence in term time**

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil’s potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

Dorset’s Penalty Notice Protocol is set out in the document **Promoting educational attendance in Dorset 2024-25 and at**

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/school-attendance>

**Attendance Awards**

 The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

100% attendance certificates are given at the end of the school year in the annual awards ceremony.

**Categorisation of Absence**

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories**.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. **Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

1. **Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

1. **Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

* Work experience placements
* Field trips and educational visits
* Sporting activities
* Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

Further guidance is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>