



Ash Manor School

Attendance Policy

Governors' Committee Responsible:	Experience
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	L Needham, Deputy Headteacher
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1. Policy Statement

In order to ensure that our students meet their full potential and become equipped for adult life, students and their families must commit to them attending school each day and to arriving on time for school and lessons. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and levels of attainment.

We expect that all students will:

- arrive to school on time for the first bell which rings each day at 8.35am;
- attend school every day;
- arrive to school appropriately prepared for the day ahead.

We expect that all parents will:

- encourage regular and punctual attendance;
- ensure that they contact the school when their child/children is unable to attend;
- notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details;
- communicate with the school any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- ensure that any absences from school are explained by way of a telephone call or by completing the online absence form (<https://www.ashmanorschool.com/report-your-child-absent.html>) by 9.00am on each day of absence. If the duration of absence is known this can be stated. If it is not, contact must be made on all subsequent days of absence.
- understand that ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is their legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

We expect that all staff will:

- record students' attendance as required;
- notify the Attendance Officer/HOH of any attendance concerns;

2. Encouraging Excellent Attendance

Ash Manor School actively encourages excellent levels of attendance in the following ways:

- providing a safe, secure and engaging learning environment based on positive behaviour principles;
- celebrating and rewarding excellent attendance levels;
 - celebrated in end of half term and end of term assemblies;
 - weekly 'jump the queue' cards for the canteen for the tutor group with the highest attendance from the previous week;
- responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about school or other students' behaviour in school;
- effectively communicating with parents and students about attendance;
- recognising significant improvement in attendance;
- ensuring students and parents understand the link between regular attendance and levels of attainment through assemblies and communication home.

3. Lateness and Punctuality

Lessons start at 8.40am promptly. Students who arrive late to school miss valuable learning time. Students arriving after 8.40am must enter school via Main Reception and then make their way to Student Reception to sign in. Students arriving without a valid reason (such as a medical appointment) will be set a lates detention with a member of the House Team at break time the same day.

Persistent lateness is often an indicator of a lack of preparedness for learning and as such we address it quickly and effectively using our behaviour sanctions.

Morning registers close at 9:30am. If students arrive after this time without a valid reason, the AM registration mark will coded as an unauthorised absence.

4. Absence due to illness/appointments

- Students may have dental or medical appointments in school time. However, parents should try to make routine appointments during the school holidays or after school hours.
- If a student needs to leave the premises during school time, parents must have contacted to the school to inform them of this. Students must sign out at Student Reception before leaving and sign in on their return.

These are important procedures in helping to ensure the safety and welfare of all our students.

Where there is an excessive amount of absence due to sickness the school may request that medical evidence be provided and, if this is not provided, such absence will not be authorised and the school is likely to refer the matter to the Inclusion Service to investigate further.

5. Responding to Non-Attendance

- If a student does not attend school and a reason has not been provided, steps will be taken to find out why the student is absent;
- the Attendance Officer will endeavour to contact the parent each day by sending out using our text system;
- if there is no response the Attendance Officer will continue to try to contact the parent;
- the school will always endeavour to work with parents to ensure excellent attendance. However failure to comply with the expectations set by Surrey Inclusion Service may result in further actions.
- the attendance officer will regularly track student attendance and meet with pastoral staff to discuss appropriate ways to support individuals to have excellent attendance.

Where agreed, the school can provide a range of support strategies to support students to attend school.

- Sort and settle – morning check-ins before school starts, setting the student up for the day;
- Regular communication with home
- A chosen calm space at break and lunch times;
- Scheduled regular check ins with a chosen member of staff;
- Support to get in to lessons – walking with the student to lessons, settling the student in to lessons;
- Nurture group for year 7 students;
- ELSA;
- Counselling;
- Mentoring – school staff, SSLT or ambassadors, outside agency eg Matrix;
- Target setting with achievable goals;
- Some lessons to be completed in the Bridge for all or part of the day or for part of a lesson (time bonded);
- Positive reinforcement such as praise postcards for increased attendance;
- Increasing timetable – time bound to two weeks maximum, needs Headteacher approval.

An appropriate length of time will be agreed for any of the above strategies to best support the student accessing 320 minutes of quality learning each day.

6. Leaves of Absence

- Parents play a crucial role in ensuring their child regularly attends school;
- We expect parents to encourage excellent levels of attendance. To enable this:
 - school term dates are published in advance on our website;
 - leaves of absence during term time will not be authorised. Should you take your child out of school during term time the Inclusion Service may be informed and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Please be aware that The Education Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless the reason is considered to be of exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

In accordance with the above Regulations, requests for leave of absence are treated sympathetically, but only in exceptional circumstances can they be approved. Government Regulations state that parents who take their child out of school during term time, without the authority of the Headteacher, will each be liable to receive a penalty notice. Penalty Notices will be issued by the Local Authority and in Surrey it has been agreed that Penalty Notices will only be issued where 5 days unauthorised 'leave of absence' is taken. These absences do not have to be consecutive, but could be accumulated over a 3-month period.

7. Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances:

1. Pupils identified by Police and Inclusion Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more). **Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.**

In such cases the Headteacher/Governing Body have to judge whether there are exceptional circumstances and may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices when the absence is not authorised. Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance. This will be considered when a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 6 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the Attendance Officer in school by telephone or email (attendance@ashmanorschool.com).

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice. (Alternative education provision will be made available from the sixth day of any exclusion.)

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice

The amount payable for a Penalty Notice issued in any of the above circumstances is £60 if paid within **21** days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after **21** days but within **28** days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued.

Please be aware that ***each*** parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for ***each*** child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents and one child, each parent will receive one Penalty Notice. If there are two parents, and two children incur unauthorised absences, each parent will receive two Penalty Notices, which in this case would amount to £120 each, if paid within 21 days.

Advice and support is available from an Inclusion Officer by contacting your local Education Office as follows:

South West - Tel: 01483 517179

Support is also available from your child's form tutor or their Head of House.

Our Attendance Officer is also available to provide advice and support. You can contact them by calling the school and selecting that option from the menu or by emailing attendance@ashmanorschool.com.