

**Anson Primary School**



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

**2023**

(to be reviewed 2026)

Headteacher: Mr Simon Pile

[www.anson.brent.sch.uk](http://www.anson.brent.sch.uk)

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to achieve their potential. The attendance of all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure regular attendance is maintained. We expect all children to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage good attendance and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

**Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.

**Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or the reason given is not acceptable for the school.

Please be aware that informing the school that your child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, may not be authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a cough or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences may mean that we ask you to provide medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

### **Attendance during a pandemic**

When schools are open in England children should be in attendance at all times unless there are specific medical reasons for children to be absent. These may include pre-existing conditions set out by the Department of Education or specific medical advice from a General Practitioner which results in the shielding of certain groups.

Such absences can be authorised during these periods.

For all children, attendance at school does not change unless either the pupil or family has symptoms associated with the pandemic, or the school is forced to close a classroom due to an confirmed case of any virus or issue on the school site.

All absence from school will be followed up immediately with telephone conversations and any cases of absence that are unauthorised may follow the existing rules outside of a pandemic.

Families who choose to travel during a pandemic do so knowing that there is a risk of self isolation on their return and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. All holidays must factor in that children should be ready to return to school during term time.

### **Attendance Summary**

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

100 - 96%+	Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
94-95%	Average – Well done, strive to build on this.
86-93%	Poor – Absence may affect your child's attainment and progress at school. A referral may be made to Brent Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Please work with the school urgently to improve the situation.
Below 85%	Unacceptable – Absence can cause serious concern. A referral will be made to Brent Education Welfare Officer (EWO). We will work with you and the EWO to improve your child's attendance.

## AIMS OF THE POLICY

To promote regular attendance and so offer all pupils equal access to learning.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.
- To ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days.
- To meet the Government attendance targets set for the school.
- This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

## SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- To inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school, initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To report to the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) and support their work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the Government on attendance three times a year.
- To encourage and reward excellent attendance and punctuality
- To provide attendance information to parents three times a year.

## PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To ensure their child attends school every day unless there is a very good reason why they cannot attend.
- To have children in school ready for teaching by the start of the day at 9.00 a.m.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.
- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's '**Leave Of Absence Form**' , giving the reason for the request and provide evidence if applicable.
- To work with the school and EWO to improve punctuality and attendance if this is an issue.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
- If parents are worried about their child's attendance at school they should first:

talk to their child; it may be something simple that they need your help in resolving.

talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

reach out to the person in charge with of attendance (**Deputy Headteacher**)

## THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

The school Attendance Officer (Deputy Headteacher) will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss weekly with the Head Teacher. Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

### **Stage 1:**

Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with parents.

### **Stage 2:**

If the concerns persist the school will write to the parents/carers.

### **Stage 3:**

If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer, school representative and the EWO.

### **Stage 4:**

If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service. This will be monitored by the school and the EWO.

The EWO will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Should poor attendance and/or punctuality persist the Local Authority can take legal action.

## ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME

Anson Primary School, Brent Local Authority and the Government believe that absence during term time should be avoided as it can have a damaging effect on pupils' education and overall achievement. However, it is recognised that there may be exceptional reasons that may justify authorisation of the absence by the Headteacher.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

*Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*

*Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.*

As of 1st September 2013, the rate per parent per child will be £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Therefore it will be £120.00 for one child and £240.00 for two children if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid

each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. These may be obtained from the school office (or printed from this policy).

Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. For example, the death of a close relative. Please note that taking term time leave for weddings is not considered an exceptional circumstance. Parents will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

There are approximately 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are over 13 weeks of school holidays, please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

## **LATENESS**

Children must be in class by 9.00 a.m. each day. The school gates open at 8.45am. The school gates will be shut promptly at 9am. Children who arrive after that time must come into the building via the main office, where they will be entered into the late book.

Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken. The registers will close at 9.10. Pupils arriving after 9.30 will be recorded as "O". This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.

Lateness will be monitored and the E.W.O. (Education Welfare Officer) will follow this up.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late disrupt not only their own learning but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents of pupils who are repeatedly late will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to meet with the Headteacher or Deputy and discuss the problem.

## **SICKNESS**

Please notify the school on each day of the absence.

We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

## **PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our school by

- Awarding certificates and prizes for any class with 100% for the previous week.
- By awarding a certificate to the class with the highest attendance if there isn't one with 100% attendance.
- By awarding individual prizes to individual children who have 100% for each half term.
- By working with individual pupils and their families to set targets and increase punctuality and attendance.

### **Children Missing School**

Anson School will monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular. Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance stipulates that all schools must inform the local authority Education Welfare Officer of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has, for a continuous period missed school.

### **THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

The Education Welfare Officer strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Section 444 of the Education Act states that "if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence."

Brent Council, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

### **GOVERNORS**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance at Anson schools. Our attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

## Leave of Absence Request Form

When requesting leave please make an appointment to see the Head/Deputy and have this completed form with you. Please do not make any travel arrangements before you have spoken to us.

### **Term Time Holidays and Penalty Notices**

*Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school for long periods of time. Family holidays or trips abroad must be taken in the school holidays. The Headteacher can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, parents should submit a "Leave of Absence Request" form in advance and only make bookings if leave is granted. Whether to grant leave is at the discretion of the Headteacher. There is no right for a parent to appeal a decision.*

Please be aware that if you take your child out of school and the leave is not authorised, we are required to make a referral to Brent Education Welfare Service explaining the absence. This may result in you receiving a Formal Warning or an Education Penalty Notices, which are issued to both parents for each child taken out of school. Fines are £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the fine may result in parents being prosecuted in court for their child's unauthorised absence.

Child's name: ..... Class: .....

### **Reason for absence**

.....  
 .....

.....**From:** ..... **To:** ..... **Total number of school days:** .....

Name of parent: .....

Tel/Mobile: .....

email: .....

\*I have read the school's attendance and punctuality policy.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

### **Permission has/has not been granted for Leave of Absence**

From: ..... To: ..... Total number of authorised/unauthorised .....

School year: ..... Attendance rate: ..... Previous leave taken ..... (days)

### **Additional comments**

.....  
 .....

Signature (Headteacher): ..... Date: .....

Anson Primary School must report all unauthorised term time absences to Brent. This may result in a fixed penalty notice or formal warning. We do not make the decision over the final outcome.

\*Policy on the school website