Federation Attendance Policy

Aylestone School federated with Broadlands Primary and Withington Primary

Approved by:	Federation Governors	**Date:** June 2024
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Philosophy

At The Aylestone Federation we promote a culture in which children enjoy coming to school. We are committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embrace 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 potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We consistently aim for maximum 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. We aim to provide sensitive and appropriate guidance to parents and carers concerning pupil attendance, taking into account guidance from the Department for Education, which states:

- schools should systematically analyse attendance data to identify patterns;
- schools should benchmark attendance against appropriate comparators;
- schools should use data to target improvement work;
- governing bodies should repeatedly evaluate the effectiveness of attendance processes and improvement efforts.

School attendance is subject to statutory laws and regulations.

• The school should monitor its attendance figures and set targets accordingly.
• The school should review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

We have high expectations for attendance. Every child should attend every day that they are required to attend. **A school year consists of 190 school days split into am and pm sessions**. We are committed to providing an education of the highest standard for all pupils and recognise this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will pupils be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment and good progress depend on good attendance. We recognise that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. We will work with pupils, parents and carers to understand and remove barriers to attendance, making reasonable adjustments and providing additional support where appropriate.

Statutory duty of parents
The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Statutory duty of schools
Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

The Government expects that:

- Schools will promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence. Any attendance below 95% is a cause for concern within the Federation and will be reviewed so that support can be offered where needed. A pupil is classified as persistently

absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions and severely absent when they miss 50% or more.

- Schools will ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence, by working in partnership with parents.
- Parents and carers will perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly in accordance with the school's home/school agreement.
- All pupils will be punctual to school and for their lessons. From September 2026 the **school day begins at 8:30am**. This is the time at which all students should have arrived in their form room and be ready to learn. Lateness to school will be dealt with by way of a 15 minute breaktime detention.

THE SCHOOL DAY Aylestone		**THE SCHOOL DAY Withington**	**THE SCHOOL DAY Broadlands**
Morning Welcome	08:30—08:35	Gates open 08:35-08:45	Gates open 08:30-08:35
Tutor Time	08:35—09:00	Register 08:45-09:00	Register 08:35-08:45
Period 1	09:00—09:55	Morning Session 1 09:00-10:30	Morning Session 1 08:45-10:10
Period 2	09:55 —10:50	Break 10:30-10:45	Break 10:10-10:30
Break	10:50 —11:10	Morning Session 2 10:45-12 noon	Morning Session 2 10:30-12 noon
Period 3	11:10 —12:05	Lunch 12 noon – 13:00	Lunch 12 noon -12:45
Period 4	12:05 —13:00	Afternoon session 13:00 – 15:15	Afternoon session 12:45-15:00
Lunch	13:00 —13:40		
Tutor Time— DEAR	13:40—14:05		
Period 5	14:05—15:00		
After school Clubs	15:00—16:00		

Purpose of this document

Pupils, parents and carers, teaching staff, support staff and school governors have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this and the policies that underpin it.

The policy has been drawn up based on current Government and Herefordshire Council guidance and statutory regulations, including **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**. The school will ensure that all members of the school community have access to this policy.

Responsibilities

Federation's responsibilities

We have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

The Head teacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. Each school will have a Senior Attendance Champion who is a senior leader and has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

The school will:

- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued;
- pursue explanations for each absence from school;
- recognise that repeated and/or prolonged absence, and unexplained absence, may be a safeguarding concern and ensure that concerns are shared promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy;
- work with all members of the school community, the school's learning mentor, the School Attendance Advisor and the Herefordshire Council in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy;
- encourage parents and carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance; and
- send information regularly to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.

It is a legal requirement that the Federation will:-

a) Be open to all pupils for 380 sessions each school year.

b) Maintain electronic admission and attendance registers in accordance with the relevant regulations (we will also maintain a separate PA **(Persistent Absence <90%)** register and monitor PA as a discrete category of absenteeism).

c) Accurately record and monitor all absenteeism and lateness.

d) Clearly distinguish between absence which is authorised and absence which is unauthorised according to criteria laid down by the DfE.

e) Provide attendance information through the School Census and other statutory data collections and report regularly to governors on levels and patterns of attendance and absence.

f) Set priorities for reducing absence and regularly evaluate the impact of attendance improvement work.

The Federation will also take into account relevant guidance issued by the DfE and good practice identified by the Herefordshire Council and will:

a) Ensure that clear attendance information is regularly communicated to parents through parents' evenings, reports or through other media. Parents should be specifically reminded of their legal responsibilities for ensuring their student's regular and punctual attendance.

b) Collect and make effective use of attendance data to monitor progress/trends and set targets for improvement – for individuals, classes, year groups and the whole school.

c) Provide clear guidance to staff on the practice of registration.

d) Identify clear absence procedures and follow up unexplained absence promptly on the first day, using more than one contact route and making further enquiries where necessary.

e) Recognise the crucial importance of early intervention and provide appropriate strategies.

f) Monitor post-registration truancy through the taking of class registers and spot checks and ensure that the parents of any post-registration truants are promptly informed and where necessary actively involved.

g) Discuss attendance issues as part of the KS2-3 transition process.

h) Identify a range of both proactive and reactive strategies to promote attendance and address absenteeism, especially persistent and severe absence (including Family Help or other multi-agency support where appropriate).

i) Provide a clear and unambiguous hierarchy of sanctions.

j) Use attendance rewards which recognise strong and improved attendance without disadvantaging pupils whose absence is related to disability, medical needs or other circumstances beyond their control. Attendance competitions form an integral part of the Federation's Reward Policy.

k) Set up effective networks for liaising with other involved agencies and services, such as the Herefordshire Council's Education Legal Officer, the Independent School Attendance Advisor, Social Care, Police, Health, etc.

l) Establish procedures for reintegrating long-term absentees and pupils who may, in very exceptional circumstances and where it is in their best interests, have been on a temporary part-time timetable.

m) Identify an interesting, flexible and accessible curriculum which encourages regular attendance.

n) Work with families and children where attendance is a concern to improve individual attendance and overall outcomes for the child. Ensure that reasonable steps are taken by the Federation before a referral is made to the Herefordshire Council and keep a record of these.

o) Not authorise leave in term time, unless in exceptional circumstances; and will stress to parents the importance of continuity of learning, particularly in relation to family leave during term time.

p) Involve and identify a lead governor for attendance.

q) Identify a lead person with overall responsibility for attendance at each of the federated schools.

Parents' and carers' responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

The school expects that parents and carers will ensure that:

- their children attend school regularly and punctually;
- they support their children's attendance by avoiding term time leave;
- they contact school on every day of absence to provide an explanation;
- their children arrive at school on time in correct uniform and with the right equipment for the day and are collected on time;
- they work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school immediately if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives; and
- keep the school updated with any changes to contact details.

Aylestone Attendance Team Contact Details			
Senior Attendance Champion (strategic development)	Mr N Moores	nmoores@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk	01432 357371
Attendance Officer (day to day contact ref absence)	Mrs M Carter	attendance@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk	01432 357371
Pastoral support (for more detailed support)	Mr K Panniers (Yr 7) Miss B John (Yr 8) Mrs L Perez (Yr 9) Mrs L Priday (Yr 10) Miss L Smith (Yr 11)	kpanniers@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk bjohn@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk lperez@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk lpriday@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk lsmith@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk	01432 357371

Broadlands Attendance Team Contact Details			
Senior Attendance Champion	Mrs C Willis	cwillis@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk	01432 266772
School Admin (day to day contact ref absence)	Ms R Healey	broadlandsadmin@broadlands.hereford.sch.uk	01432 266772
Pastoral support (for more detailed support)	Mrs F Madeley	fmadeley@broadlands.hereford.sch.uk	01432 266772

Withington Attendance Team Contact Details			
Senior Attendance Champion	Mrs C Willis	cwillis@aylestone.hereford.sch.uk	01432 850289
School Admin (day to day contact ref absence)	Ms C Smith	admin@withington.hereford.sch.uk	01432 850289
Pastoral support (for more detailed support)	Mrs S Houchen	shouchen@withington.hereford.sch.uk	01432 850289

Pupils' responsibilities
All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly they should speak to their class teacher or tutor.
Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. Pupils also have a responsibility for reporting to the school office if they arrive late.

Governors' responsibilities
The Governing Body will oversee, support and challenge the leadership team in ensuring excellent attendance with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils at the school.
The Governing Body will regularly review attendance and absence data, including patterns for groups of pupils who may face additional barriers to attendance. These may include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils with physical or mental health needs, pupils with a social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after children, young carers and pupils eligible for pupil premium. Governors will ensure that the Federation's attendance arrangements are effective, regularly reviewed and adequately resourced.

Recording attendance

Registration
School starts at 8.30am each day. The register is taken during form/morning registration which is 8.35am – 9.00am for Aylestone, 08.45am – 09.00am for Withington and 08.35am -08.45am for Broadlands. Registers remain open until 9am. Any child arriving after 8.55am but before 9.25am will be recorded as **late (L)**. Any child arriving after the register has closed without a satisfactory explanation will be recorded as **late after registration closes (U)**; meaning an unauthorised absence is recorded for the session. Afternoon registration is taken at 1.40 pm at Aylestone, 1.00pm at Withington and 12.45pm at Broadlands.

Absence from school
If a pupil is unfit for school, parents or carers are asked to contact the school on each day of absence by 8.45am using the school's absence telephone number or via the e-mail addresses in the table above dependent upon which school your child attends.

If a pupil is absent at morning registration and the school has not received an explanation by the close of registration, the office staff will be informed and will contact the parents or carers promptly to establish the reason for the absence. If contact cannot be made, the school will use the additional emergency contacts supplied by the family and make further enquiries proportionate to the pupil's vulnerability and the circumstances. This may include contacting other professionals involved with the family and, where appropriate, carrying out a home visit. Where there is an immediate concern for a child's safety, the school will contact children's social care and/or the police.

In cases where the absence at registration is due to an early morning medical appointment, the absence will be recorded as authorised as long as prior notification has been received.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- ascertain the reason;
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- identify whether the absence is approved or not; the school will decide whether an absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised not the parent; and
- identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

We recognise the clear links between attendance, progress and safeguarding children. Pupils' attendance rates will be monitored on a weekly basis. Repeated, prolonged or unexplained absence may be a vital warning sign of neglect, mental health difficulties, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation including county lines, substance misuse, the risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation or forced marriage. Staff will maintain professional curiosity and share concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy in accordance with the Federation's safeguarding procedures.
If there is a problem with a pupil's attendance, the parents or carers will be informed in writing of the school's concerns and will be encouraged to keep absences to a minimum. The attendance of these pupils will be monitored by the school and if no improvement is noted The Federation will contact parents and carers to work together to remedy the problem.

At registration each morning and afternoon, any child who is not present will be recorded using the appropriate attendance or absence code. Where the reason for absence has not yet been established, code N will be used temporarily. The correct code will be entered as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session; if the reason has not been established by then, code O will be used. This is an unauthorised absence code. Where an entry is amended or corrected, the original entry and the amendment or correction will remain distinguishable. **The decision about whether an absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the school.** A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised.

Illness

Pupils should only be absent from school when too ill to attend. Pupils can attend with minor illnesses. Where there is a long-term or frequently recurring medical condition, parents and carers may be asked to grant permission for the school to consult the medical practitioner concerned so that appropriate support and reasonable adjustments can be considered. The school will not routinely request medical evidence and will not operate a blanket requirement for it. Medical evidence may be requested in a minority of cases where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness or where it is needed to understand and support a pupil's prolonged or repeated absence. The school will not be rigid about the form of evidence requested; evidence may include prescriptions, appointment cards or other appropriate information. The school may record an absence as unauthorised if it is not satisfied that the pupil was unable to attend because of illness but will advise parents of its intention.

Medical Appointments

Parents are expected to make medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments are unavoidable in school time the child is expected to only be absent for the

duration of the appointment, coming to school before the appointment and returning once the appointment has taken place. Parents must provide appointment cards or other evidence of the appointment.

Term time Leave
Headteachers cannot authorise term time leave unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any application for leave should be made in writing six weeks in advance wherever possible. The Head teacher will consider each application individually and must be satisfied that there are truly exceptional circumstances based on the particular facts and circumstances of the case. The Federation will not operate a blanket policy which automatically grants leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head teacher's discretion. If the Head teacher does not authorise the absence and parents or carers still choose to take the leave this will then be deemed unauthorised absence. As a result a referral may be submitted to Herefordshire Council, who may issue a Penalty Notice.

Unauthorised absence
If no explanation is received for absences, or the School is not satisfied that the explanation for absence is reasonable they will be recorded as unauthorised absences. The School will make efforts to work with pupils and their families where unauthorised absences occur to try to overcome attendance and punctuality issues. This support may be through, letters, telephone calls, meetings, home visits and referrals to other support services; including the School Attendance Advisor.

Where unauthorised absences persist the school may issue a Notice to Improve and the matter may be referred to Herefordshire Council for consideration of legal action. Details of this can be found on the Herefordshire Council website.

Penalty notices
Penalty notices or other legal proceedings, such as court hearings, can only be instigated by Herefordshire Council. They are seen as a last resort after all avenues of support have been exhausted and can be used where the pupil's frequent or prolonged absence has not been authorised by the school.
A penalty notice is a fine imposed on the parents or carers.

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Meeting the threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will be issued automatically. The individual circumstances, support provided and the most appropriate course of action will be considered.

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions such as an Education Supervision Order.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave the school and no information has been received by the school regarding their new placement and parents/carers are unable to be contacted, the school has a duty of care regarding safeguarding and must contact Herefordshire Council. The school will make reasonable enquiries jointly with the local authority to establish the pupil's whereabouts and will not remove the pupil from the admission register unless the legal grounds for deletion have been met. The child may be considered to be a Child Missing Education. Herefordshire Council has a legal duty to investigate, which may include liaising with children's social care, the Police and other agencies to try to track and locate the child. The school will notify the local authority of additions to and deletions from the admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with statutory requirements. By giving the school details of the child's new school and location, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. A part-time timetable will only be used in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests and for the shortest time necessary. It will not be used to manage behaviour. Any arrangement will be agreed with the parent or carer, have a clear purpose, review dates and a planned date for return to full-time education. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved where there are safeguarding concerns and the local authority will be informed where required. The pupil will remain on roll and the Federation will record attendance and absence using the correct statutory codes.

Remote education

Remote education will not normally be used as a substitute for attendance at school. Where it is considered for a pupil who is absent, it will only be used as a last resort, for a limited period and as part of a plan to support the pupil's reintegration into school. It will not reduce the Federation's expectations for attendance or its duty to address the causes of absence.