



# **Arbour Vale School Specialist Sports College**

## **Attendance Policy**

**November 2017**

**Rationale:**

The attendance policy at Arbour Vale is a statement of good practice, which conveys the positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers.

As a school we strive to support pupils and families to encourage and promote excellent attendance. We aim to provide the best education which supports each pupils needs underpinned by regular attendance. We have a duty to ensure the welfare of pupils which requires the school to monitor attendance and to undertake the legal requirement to register pupils twice daily.

Our attendance target for Arbour Vale is to achieve a whole school attendance rate of 90% or over and we work with Slough Borough Council to ensure these targets are met.

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary phases.

**Expectations:**

Pupils are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (Where the school approves pupil absence. The school has received notification of the absence from the parent and the reason is deemed appropriate and valid )
- Unauthorised (Where the school does not approve the pupils absence as the reason given is not deemed appropriate given the circumstances). If no reason is provided the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

At Arbour Vale we work with parents and pupils to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence
- Ensure every pupil's educational entitlement is met
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Support parents to ensure their children of compulsory age, who are registered at the school, attend regularly

Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible however we understand that at times this is unavoidable.

Where there is prolonged illness it is important to keep the school informed by contacting the school office administrator.

**Absentee Procedures:**

When a child is absent parents must notify the school on the first day of absence stating the reason why and when they expect their child to return to school. This may be by letter, telephone or email to the office administrator. If no explanation is given for the child's absence, the school will attempt to make contact with the parent by telephone or text on the first day of the child's absence to discuss the reason why the child is not attending. This contact from school may be from:

- Office Administrator
- The child's class teacher
- A Senior Member of Staff
- By letter if no contact is available by phone
- In person in the form of a home visit
- Text message

All known absence must be recorded on the comments box on the electronic register in [SIMS.Net](#).

If there is an unknown reason for a pupils absence the class teacher must mark the register with an 'N', so that the office administrator can conduct First Day Response

i.e. make a call home for all pupils who are absent without a reason being provided by the parent.

The reason why a child is absent is marked on the electronic register. A copy of all absence notes and emails are filed in the pupils blue folders.

### **Good Attendance:**

Pupils who attend school every day throughout the school year are awarded with a special certificate at the end of the term. Special awards for 100% attendance across the whole year are given in July.

In addition, the school will reward pupils with “improving attendance”, “good attendance” (meets Arbour Vales target %) and “100% attendance” awards

If parents are concerned about their child’s attendance they are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher or Senior Staff member at the school. You can also speak with your child and your social worker.

### **Completion of registers:**

An electronic system of registration has been adopted using [SIMS.Net](#). Registers are completed twice daily – at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. The importance of accurately marking the register is viewed as an integral part of the school day and staff are highly aware that registers:

- Are a legal document that may be required in a court of law
- Provide a daily record of attendance of all pupils
- Contribute to pupil’s annual review and end of year reports, including records of achievement.

### **Leave of Absence:**

If a situation arises which requires a child to be removed from school during term time the parent must complete a Leave of Absence Form at least one month in advance requesting the time off and fully explaining the circumstances with planned dates of travel.

Holidays during term time should not be taken and the absence will not be authorised.

Leave of Absence requests for **exceptional circumstances** will be considered by the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will notify you of the decision in writing within 10 days of receiving the request. The Headteacher will decide if the circumstances are exceptional.

If permission is not granted by the Headteacher the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

A child can lose their school place if they are absent from school without the Headteachers permission for 20 consecutive school days.

### **Penalty Notice’s**

Slough Borough Council issues Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences of 5 or more days (10 sessions). Penalty Notice’s are issued on a per parent, per child basis. The cost of each penalty notice is £120 and payment must be made within 28 days. Parents can pay the lower amount of £60 if payment is made within 21 days.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may lead to the Local Authority prosecuting the parent under The Education Act 1996 s 444.

Leave of absence forms are sent home on request.

### **Lateness:**

The morning registration session opens at 8:50am and all pupils are expected to be in school for this time. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when pupils are late, usually due to delays with transport or personal medical issues.

Registers close at 09.00am. Any pupils arriving after the registers have closed will receive a late mark or unauthorised absent mark for that morning's session. Pupils who arrive after registration is closed enter the school by the main entrance and inform the receptionist of their late arrival in order for the register to be completed correctly. If accompanied by a parent or escort the reason for the child's lateness is given. For those pupils who are consistently late further action may be considered. The transport section of the LA may need to be involved

### **Medical Needs:**

Due to the medical diagnosis and treatment of some of the pupils who attend Arbour Vale, their attendance may be sporadic with long periods of absence. Some may only attend for a proportion of the week; others are supported at home part time. Following a serious illness a phased return is often agreed. The agreement is made between the Head Teacher, parents, School Doctor / Nurse, social worker and the SEND team. For this purpose it is important that parents keep the school informed throughout any period of absence.

### **Continual Absence:**

When a pupil is continually absent the school will:

- Contact the family by phone and arrange a visit to discuss the situation – either at school or at home
- Refer to the Attendance Officer
- Refer to the Local Authority's Attendance Service (this could result in enforcement action being taken)
- Refer to the child's Social Worker

If a child has been absent for 10 consecutive days and the school has been unable to make contact with the parent, the child's details will be referred to the Local Authority's Attendance Service as a missing child.

If a child is absent for 20 consecutive school days they could lose their school place.

Please note that The Department for Education deems a child a persistent absentee if they have a 90% or below attendance rate

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy is reviewed regularly and the processes for reducing absence reviewed at least termly