

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Governing body
Last reviewed on:	October 2021
Next review due by:	October 2022

Statement of Intent

Amble First School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

‘The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’.

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies within the Disability Discrimination Act (2010)
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Key roles and responsibilities

1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Amble First School.

- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Amble First School.
- 1.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for following the attendance policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 1.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 1.7. Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
- 1.8. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.
- 1.9. Pupils are aware of, and are beginning to take responsibility for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

2. Definitions

2.1. Amble First School defines "absence" as either:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

2.2. Amble First School defines an "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school have granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.
- An absence due to exceptional circumstances for which the school has granted leave.

- Late before the register closes.

2.3.Amble First School defines an “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Truancy before or during the school day.

2.4.Amble First School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 per cent (10%) or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason.**

3. Training of staff

- 3.1. At Amble First School, we recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at risk pupils.
- 3.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 3.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

4. Pupil expectations

- 4.1. Pupils will be expected to attend school every day and are encouraged with positive reinforcement strategies (Puffin points for improvements, encouraging “Reach for the stars” class attendance, register checks, inform Senior Leadership Team of any patterns to non-attendance).

5. Absence procedures

- 5.1. Parents/carers must contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- 5.2. Alternatively, parents/carers may call into school and report to the school

office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.

5.3. A phone call/ email will be made to the parent/carer of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

5.4. Parents must report absences to school on a daily basis, unless specified dates have already been notified to the Headteacher.

5.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Headteacher.

5.6 We have a clear attendance monitoring procedure. See appendices 1 and 2.

5.7 If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the local Educational Welfare Service who may instigate legal proceedings.

5.8 If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local Educational Welfare Officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

6. Contact information

6.1. Parents/carers must provide accurate and up to date contact details.

6.2. Parents/carers are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

7. Lateness

7.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.

7.2. The school day starts at 8.55am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

7.3. Registers are marked by 9am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

7.4. The register closes at 9.10am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

7.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

8. Term time leave

8.1. At Amble First School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.

8.2. Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.

8.3. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

8.4. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

8.5. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods.
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 per cent (10%) for any reason.

8.6. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

9. Monitoring

9.1. Amble First School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

9.2. Amble First School's attendance target is 96 percent (96%).

9.3. Details of our absence levels can be found upon request from the office.

10. Religious Observances

10.1. Amble First School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.

10.2. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

11. Appointments

11.1. As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

11.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to school.

11.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a parent/carer.

11.4. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

12. Young Carers

12.1. Amble First School understands the difficulties that face young

carers.

12.2. Amble First School will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

12.3. Amble First School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

Appendix 1 – Attendance monitoring procedures.

1

- Officer manager and class teachers monitor absence on a daily basis and alert headteacher to repeated absences and trends.

2

- Contact is made with parents on the first day of any absence that has not been reported. Any unexplained absences will be recorded as unauthorised after one week. If school staff have safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be made, after risk assessment.

3

- If pupil attendance drops below 95%, internal monitoring takes place weekly. A first concern is registered informally with EWO.

4

- If pupil attendance drops below 92% - school send 1st letter home - a reminder of targets, statement of current attendance and explanation of possible consequences

5

- If no improvement within one month, second, more formal letter sent, advising that if no improvement is made, a referral will be made to EWO - and likely consequences, no further absences will be authorised.

6

- If no improvement within one month, formal referral made to EWO. However, this may happen earlier if unauthorised absences occur in addition to poor attendance.

7

- If attendance has not improved within one month, parents may be invited to a meeting with EWO and headteacher.

8

- Education welfare protocols will be followed. If no improvements - final written warning, followed by fixed penalty notice within four weeks if no improvement is made.

Appendix 2 – Attendance reporting structure

