



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School

Attendance Policy

Vision: To be a community of courageous life-long learners, who are rooted in God, live out our Christian values and enjoy life in all its fullness. (Col 2:1-7)

Mission: Growing together, rooted in God and inspiring one another through our values and our broad enriched curriculum.

Strapline: Growing together, rooted in God, having fullness of life (Col 2:1-7)

Date of Policy: October 2025

Date of Policy review: September 2026

Head Teacher: Mrs H France

Date: 6th October 2025

Chair of Governors: Mr T Sowerby

Date: 6th October 2025

Our attendance policy directly supports behaviour and attitudes. Clear routines, early intervention, inclusive support and strong safeguarding ensure pupils are in school regularly, ready to learn and positively engaged. Attendance is treated as a behaviour for learning and a key indicator of wellbeing.

1. SCHOOL AIMS

Aston Rowant CofE Primary School is committed to ensuring all children access their full educational entitlement in an environment rooted in Christian love, welcome, and support.

We aim to:

- nurture every child academically, spiritually and emotionally;
- promote excellent attendance as a foundation for safeguarding, wellbeing and success;
- ensure all pupils feel valued, safe and included;
- work collaboratively with families and external agencies to remove attendance barriers.

We see attendance as a reflection of how included, supported and safe pupils feel.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for pupils' achievement, wellbeing and sense of belonging. Poor attendance is both a safeguarding concern and a barrier to progress. Regular attendance is essential to ensure continuity of learning, strong progress and positive attitudes to school. Poor attendance can have a cumulative impact on pupils' academic outcomes, confidence and wellbeing. The school therefore prioritises attendance as a key factor in securing good learning behaviours and successful next steps for all pupils.

We work towards a whole-school culture where:

- pupils want to attend because they feel safe, supported and engaged;
- parents understand the importance of regular attendance;
- barriers to attendance are identified early and removed;
- attendance concerns trigger pastoral and safeguarding responses.

Under the new Ofsted framework, inspectors will evaluate attendance alongside behaviour and safeguarding as interconnected elements of school culture.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Our policy complies with:

- Education Act 1996;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006;
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (DfE 2024) ;
- Ofsted Schools Inspection Framework 2025.

4. ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

We expect all pupils to attend school every day, unless illness or unavoidable circumstances prevent this. Attendance targets are set annually (2025–26 target: **97%**). Monitoring systems include:

- Compass attendance records;
- weekly and termly reporting;
- persistent absentee (PA) tracking;
- senior leader oversight.

5. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Registration

- Morning registration: 8:45–9:00am (register closes 9:15am)
- Afternoon registration: 1:00–1:10pm

Late arrivals:

- Before register closes: coded 'L' (late)
- After register closes: coded 'U' (unauthorised) unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Reporting Absence

Parents must:

- report absence by 9am on the first day;
- confirm the reason in writing within two weeks.

The school will:

- contact parents where no reason is given;
- escalate to emergency contacts if parents are unreachable.

These procedures ensure attendance monitoring contributes to safeguarding.

6. FIRST DAY / SECOND DAY / CONTINUING ABSENCE

- Day 1: office contacts parents if no message received.
- Day 2: standard follow-up email requesting immediate contact.
- Ongoing absence: daily parent updates expected unless a confirmed return date is given.

Ten-Day Unexplained Absence

After 10 consecutive days without explanation, the school **must refer** the case to Oxfordshire County Council Attendance & Engagement Team.

7. FREQUENT ABSENCE & EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Ofsted's 2025 framework expects schools to understand the reasons behind absence, not just attendance percentages.

Therefore, we:

- monitor emerging patterns weekly;
- identify individual, group or cohort trends;
- communicate early with parents;
- work with the Attendance & Engagement Officer;
- create parenting contracts where needed;
- escalate to Early Help or multi-agency partners for persistent patterns.

The school seeks to resolve attendance concerns through early intervention and partnership with families wherever possible. Statutory measures are only considered when support has not led to improvement and attendance remains a significant concern.

This aligns with DfE expectations for holistic, whole-family support.

8. PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil is a Persistent Absentee if attendance falls below 90%.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may be linked to additional needs, anxiety, medical issues or family circumstances. Where this is the case, attendance support is personalised, and expectations are balanced with appropriate adjustments and targeted support, while maintaining a clear focus on the importance of regular attendance.

For all PA pupils:

- case study opened by Headteacher;
- parents notified immediately;
- personalised action plan created;
- pastoral/mentoring support offered;
- referrals to external agencies as appropriate;
- data and intervention impact monitored by SLT.

9. VULNERABLE PUPILS & REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Some pupils face additional barriers to attendance, including those with:

- SEND;
- medical needs;
- EHCPs;
- social workers;
- emotional-based school avoidance (EBSA);
- safeguarding vulnerabilities.

In line with DfE and Ofsted expectations, we will:

- identify barriers promptly;
- provide tailored reasonable adjustments;
- work with families and professionals to support reintegration;
- ensure attendance is addressed within safeguarding or Early Help plans.

10. SAFEGUARDING & ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a core safeguarding responsibility. The school recognises that absence from school may be a safeguarding indicator, and unexplained or prolonged absence is followed up promptly to ensure pupils are safe and supported.

The school will:

- cross-reference attendance patterns with safeguarding indicators;
- log concerns on MyConcern where absence may signal risk;
- escalate unexplained or concerning absences to DSL/Deputy DSL;
- ensure staff recognise absence as a potential sign of harm.

11. WELCOME BACK PROCEDURE

Upon returning, pupils will be supported to:

- catch up on learning;
- reintegrate socially;
- feel valued, missed and welcomed.

12. HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Term-time holidays will not be authorised except in *very exceptional circumstances*. Requests must be made in writing 14 days in advance.

13. PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

The school promotes good attendance through positive reinforcement, celebration and clear communication with pupils and families, helping to establish attendance as a shared value across the school community.

Class teachers play a key role in promoting good attendance by building positive relationships with pupils and families, monitoring attendance patterns, and sharing concerns promptly with school leaders. Teachers support pupils returning from absence to re-engage with learning and work closely with the school office and senior leaders where attendance concerns arise.

We promote good attendance by:

- celebrating excellent attendance;
- communicating expectations clearly;
- reinforcing the message that attendance is everyone's responsibility.

14. MONITORING & LEADERSHIP OVERSIGHT

Senior Leadership Team will:

- review attendance data weekly;
- analyse cohort, group and individual patterns;
- evaluate the impact of interventions;
- report to governors termly.

Governors must:

- scrutinise attendance trends;
- ask challenging questions of leaders;
- ensure statutory duties are met;
- understand attendance as part of safeguarding.

APPENDICES

THE LAW

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

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

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and [b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 details when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

REGISTER AND ADMISSION ROLL KEEPING

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

CATEGORISATION OF ABSENCE

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories: 1 Unauthorised Absence;

- 2 Authorised Absence;
- 3 Approved Educational Activity.

1. Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without a valid reason. Some examples of an absence that would typically be classed as 'unauthorised' include but are not limited to:

- Holidays or family days out during term time unless pre-arranged and agreed by the Headteacher as very 'exceptional circumstances'
- Absence due to tiredness or feeling a little 'under the weather'
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

2. Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996. Some examples of an absence that would typically be classed as 'authorised' include but are not limited to:

- Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours
- Sickness supported by medical evidence
- Recognised examinations (i.e. a music exam that cannot be rescheduled)

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits;
- Sporting activities;
- Link courses or approved education off site;
- Most types of dual registration.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.