

Auckland College Independent School

Attendance Policy

Values:

‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school’.

School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE, Sept 2018

Auckland College expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved. At Auckland College, we are continuously working towards our goal of 97-100% attendance for all pupils.

Overall Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

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Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality

The Legal Framework:

There are legal obligations on:

- The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school

Head Teacher:

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave.

Deputy Head & Assistant Heads:

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquiries.
- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To meet with the School Administrator to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

School Administrator:

- To ensure all new pupils are added to registers on SchoolPod.
- To update register codes following the outcome of a call or message.
- To send letters to parents.
- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.

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- To monitor weekly attendance data for their year groups.
- To check with the school receptionist for messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the Assistant Heads/Deputy, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- To produce weekly/termly/yearly data for SLT to analyse.
- To record reasons for absence in the daily log.
- To contact parents/carers by letter, following 3 instances of lateness or absence.
- To maintain attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with and report to outside agencies when necessary.
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality within their year groups.
- To support Assistant Heads/Deputy with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

Staff:

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To complete the daily class attendance and punctuality chart, with the pupils.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the register system.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day at 8.30 am and 1.40 pm.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.

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- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the Assistant Heads/Deputy, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents' Evenings.

Parents:

- Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. If pupils have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know.
- Pupils should be brought back to school after appointments. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child.
- Provide a written explanation of absence, including dates of absence as soon as their child returns to school.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the

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child's life, which may impact on learning.

Morning Register

Class registers remain open until 8.40am. At that point, the teacher may submit their final register and close registration.

From 8.40am, pupils are required to sign the late book at the school reception. This is to ensure that no children are missed on the register due to arriving in school late.

Children arriving after 8.40am are recorded as 'L' (late after register closed) in the register.

The School Administrator officer then checks that the children who have arrived late have been registered. SchoolPod will automatically insert them as late and make a note of how many minutes late they were.

Afternoon Register

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch, before afternoon lessons commence.

School Attendance Letters

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality. (Copies of all standard letter formats are included at the end of this document.)

Punctuality Folder

The SA and the Assistant Heads/Deputy monitor the punctuality folder regularly. This may involve speaking to parents directly, or via a phone call. Letters regarding the school's concern over lateness may also be sent to explain how much learning pupils are missing. If it does not improve, parents are invited in to school to discuss the concerns with the Assistant Head/Deputy and plan a way forward. If lateness does not improve, further action may be taken.

IMPORTANT:

Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

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Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made. The School Administrator follows this system:

- Phone parent's contact number(s).
- Leaves a message if no response or logs that contact not made.
- Phone emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.
- SA/DHT/AHT to speak to the parents at home time, if they are at school to pick up other children.
- Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers.
- The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder.
- The SA must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the SA has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised).

Attendance Meetings

The DHT/ASHT and School Administrator monitor individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups and SEN pupils. They identify patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups. Letters are sent out to parents whose children's attendance is below 96% and parents who are concerned about their child's attendance, are invited to work in partnership with the school.

Policy written by: S Boyd

Written: March 2015

Reviewed: September 2021

To be reviewed: bi-annually or sooner