



Aspris Children's Service

Local Procedure 61 Attendance



**Aspris Ridgeway
School**



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1 Aims

Aspris Ridgeway School (ARS) believes that regular attendance at school is vital to pupils achieving their full potential academically, socially and personally.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence (attendance of less than 85% of timetabled sessions).
- Ensuring every learner has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

We understand that pupils may have had a disrupted education experience prior to joining ARS and that they may require a phased transition into school to be successful. While we appreciate that some autistic pupils experience anxiety that may affect their school attendance our aim, in partnership with parents, is that all pupils will attend school on a full-time, regular basis to take full advantage of the opportunities that are open to them.

2 Local Responsibilities

Attendance is the responsibility of **all** members of the Aspris Ridgeway School community. However, we have allocated specific roles and responsibilities to individuals to ensure that we are meeting statutory requirements.

The Regional Director (as Chair of Governors) is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance across the school's Local Procedures and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school against Aspris and national average
- Making sure colleagues receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher / nominated attendance champion (NAC) to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this local procedure at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

The Nominated Attendance Champion (NAC)

The school/college must have a dedicated leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance. Specifically, they are responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Having a strong grasp of attendance data
- Leading attendance across the school and not focusing on attendance in isolation of other areas such as, anti-bullying culture and curriculum
- Challenging parents/carers misconceptions about what good attendance is and ensuring they understand the links between attendance and future academic achievement
- Communicating expectations to pupils and the positive links between attendance and future plans
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school colleagues and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher.
- Working with Local Authority officers to improve persistent absence
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and improve attendance issues
- Creating reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The Nominated Attendance Champion responsible for attendance is Penny King and can be contacted via pennyking@aspriscs.co.uk

SENDCo is responsible for:

- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Support the NAC to work with education welfare officers and any other external partners to tackle attendance issues;

- Support the NAC to deliver targeted interventions where a need has been identified;
- Provide additional support for attendance in line with the school's policy on this;
- Carry out home visits where appropriate.

Tutors will:

- Record pupil attendance on the electronic recording system on a daily basis, using the correct DfE codes and adding notes, where necessary.
- Liaise with parents / carers regarding attendance. If unable to liaise with parents/carers on the same day of an absence, tutors will request administrative staff to follow up with parents/carers.
- Inform administrative staff, the NAC and, if required, a Designated Safeguarding Lead of any pupil absence without a known reason.

Administrative staff (Reception) will:

- answer and record attendance-related phone calls from parents/carers;
- check registers twice daily (9:15 and 13:55), notifying tutors of missed registers;
- liaise with parents /carers and tutors regarding absence and lateness if requested by the tutor;
- record attendance data provided by alternative providers;
- report concerns about attendance to the Nominated Attendance Champion (NAC) and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- ensure that any safeguarding concerns are reported using the school's agreed safeguarding systems and protocols.
- Supply a pupil absence request form when requested.

Parents and carers will:

- ensure that their child is in school each day, except for when a statutory reason applies;
- notify the school of their child's absence as soon as possible by phone or email [01793 557190](tel:01793557190) RidgewaySchool@AsprisCS.co.uk ;
- Provide the school/college with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child;
- ensure that leave of absence is only requested in exceptional circumstances and, where possible, advance notice is given;
- book any non-emergency medical and dental appointments outside of the school day, where possible;
- engage with any support offered to address any barriers to their child's attendance.

Pupils will:

- attend school punctually every day;
- attend all lessons;
- engage with any support offered by the school to help them overcome any barriers to attendance.

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3 Recording Attendance

3.1 Attendance register

Using Aspris MIS, Engage, we will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

Attendance records are treated as a safeguarding record and are used to monitor patterns, levels and reasons for absence to support early identification of concerns and appropriate intervention. Attendance records must support safeguarding oversight, including the early identification of patterns of absence that may indicate risk to a child/young person.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45 on each school day. Tutors will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day ("Check In") and again after lunch ("Check Up"). The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45 and will be kept open until 9:15. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:25 and will be kept open until 13:55.

It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity off school grounds
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

3.2 DfE Attendance Codes

N.B. Archived Codes:

H – Family holiday (authorised absence) removed.

J – Interview attendance removed, replaced by J1.

Y – General 'unable to attend' code replaced with specific Y subcodes.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Ongoing punctuality issues will be addressed case-by-case to establish the cause of the lateness and to identify any support that can be put in place to re-establish punctuality.

When the reason for a child's/young person's absence is unknown, the **N** code should be used and a note added. Within 5 days, the reason for absence must be established and the correct code recorded / note updated.

Where children/young people are educated off school or college grounds under the supervision of an appropriately qualified educator (e.g Forest School, art classes or alternative provision), attendance must be recorded using the **B** code..

The B code must not be used where education is provided through:

- Home visits by pastoral or family liaison colleagues
- Completion of school/college work at home

Where a child/young person is attending an approved sporting activity off school or college grounds, attendance must be recorded using **P** code.

Where a child/young person is attending an educational visit or school trip, attendance must be recorded using **V** code.

The school should record a pupil with an interim reduced timetable using **C2**.

3.3 DfE Explanatory Notes

The notes box on Aspris MIS, Engage must be completed for the following mandatory codes:

- B- Attending any other approved educational activity
- K- Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Y7- Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
- I – Stricter reporting protocols for illness-related absences. This should be in chronological order to identify any patterns.
- C- The school must provide clear reasons and rationale for granting leave of absence

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Aspris MIS, Engage, will ensure that any amendment to the attendance register includes:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

Staff must complete all these entries when amending the attendance register.

See “Working together to improve school attendance” for the DfE attendance codes, also shown in section 9.

3.4 Registration for pupils using regulated and unregulated Alternative Provision (AP)

Schools should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies the school of any absence by the child/young person. The school must record the child/young person's absence using the relevant absence code.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

3.5 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff 01793 557190 or emailing RidgewaySchool@AsprisCS.co.uk.

The administrative staff will notify the tutor so that they can update Aspris MIS, Engage.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where absence due to illness is prolonged, frequent or repeated, or where there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or the impact on the pupil's education or wellbeing, the Headteacher may request medical evidence. Any request for evidence will be proportionate, not routine and made sensitively, taking account of the pupil's individual circumstances.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence can be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

A lack of medical evidence alone will not be used to retrospectively record unauthorised absence where there are no safeguarding or attendance concerns.

Unexplained or ongoing absence may constitute a safeguarding concern and must be followed up in line with the school/college's Local Procedure and safeguarding policies.

3.6 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will normally be recorded as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carers notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 4 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

If you would like to request a leave of absence, please contact RidgewaySchool@AsprisCS.co.uk and request an absence request form. Once completed, please email to the Headteacher for approval.

3.7 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the **tutor** will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. (In the tutor is unable to make this call, they will request an administrative colleague does)
- If the tutor cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, they must inform the DSL because the school may have to contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the **school** will:

- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

3.8 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly progress update reports.

4 Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances that are unusual, not typical, out of the ordinary, unavoidable or unexpected.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via Aspris Ridgeway School reception. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong.
- Traveller children/young people travelling for occupational purposes, including Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people), circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only where the family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school/college, but it is not known whether the child/young person is attending educational provision
- Study leave
- Flexi-schooling requests

4.2 Holidays taken in term time

The DfE statutory guidance no longer allows for holidays to be granted within term time and the DfE have archived the 'H' code.

Where parents continue to take their pupil out of school/college, this will be coded as 'G' – Holiday not granted by the school.

4.3 Penalty Notices

The DfE statutory guidance Part 176 refers to penalty notices for parents/carers taking pupils out of education during term time for a holiday, 'with the exception of independent schools'; therefore, Aspris schools and colleges are not required to issue penalty notices. Where a Local Authority requests that an Aspris school or college should issue a penalty notice, this will need to be raised with the Regional Director for guidance.

5 Strategies for promoting attendance

We value the attendance of all our pupils at Aspris Ridgeway School and we recognise the impact that excellent attendance can have on pupil's progress – academically, socially and emotionally.

Missing occasional days from school may seem unimportant at the time; however, this can have a significant impact on your child in the long term:

% of attendance in a school year	Number of days absent	Weeks missed
98%	4	Less than 1 week
95%	9.5	Nearly 2 weeks
90%	19	Nearly 4 weeks
85%	28.5	Nearly 6 weeks

A pupil with 85% attendance is missing nearly half a term of learning time each school year.

Regular absences can result in poorer outcomes over time. Research shows that pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school (which is between half and one day per week on average) stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more good GCSEs, compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days. We aim to work in collaboration with parents/carers to promote, support and celebrate high levels of attendance at school.

While we understand that absence may be unavoidable, we also want to celebrate those pupils that achieve 100% attendance. At the end of every term, those pupils that have been at school for 100% of the term will receive a certificate to recognise this achievement.

5.1 Emotionally based school/college avoidance

The DfE guidance applies to any pupil displaying social, emotional, and mental health issues that are affecting their attendance and where reasonable adjustments need to be considered.

Aspris Ridgeway School will put reasonable adjustments and support plans in place to work in partnership with parent/carers when their child/young person has difficulties with school attendance. There should be a clear and shared focus on supporting the pupil's wellbeing while aiming to improve attendance over time.

We will facilitate relevant pastoral support and take a supportive, graduated approach to re-engagement. Expectations around attendance should be informed by the pupil's individual circumstances and reviewed regularly.

If the pastoral support colleagues have identified that anxiety about attending is being driven by another medical need, then the school will work with the other relevant health professionals and parents/carers to review that support and consider putting in place or updating an individual Healthcare plan.

Staff will ensure that mental health absences are recorded as 'authorised', and there is no need to routinely ask for medical evidence; however, we will seek advice in the case of long term or repeated absences.

In exceptional circumstances and where it is in the pupil's best interests, part-time timetables may be used and should seek to maximise face-to-face school time as much as possible. Where a pupil is well enough to complete remote education, we will provide this to help pupils stay on track with the education they would normally receive.

5.2 Temporary part-time timetables (including emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA))

School leaders and the Nominated Attendance Champion will document and regularly review any temporary part-time timetables, this will be in liaison with external agencies such as CAMHS and social workers, so that together we can identify the length of time/approach needed. LA oversight is required for any prolonged part-time attendance arrangements. Please refer to the Aspris temporary part-time timetable plan (ACS Form 61) for guidance when issuing any alterations to a pupil timetable.

DfE guidance is clear that temporary part-time timetables are not to be used as a way to manage behaviour, or as an alternative to exclusions. There must be a clear rationale behind the reason for a pupil being placed on a temporary part-time timetable.

Temporary part time timetables must be agreed with the parent/carer with whom the child/young person normally lives and recorded using the relevant template. Such arrangements must be exceptional, time limited and implemented in the best interests of the pupil.

Temporary part-time timetables must not be open-ended and should support a planned return to a full-time programme. We will ensure that the anticipated return to full time attendance is made explicit to both the pupil and their parents/carers. We will plan in regular review points of the arrangements with parents/carers.

Staff should record a pupil with a temporary part-time timetable using the relevant DfE code (C2).

The Headteacher and Nominated Attendance Champion will retain clear recorded evidence outlining:

- when the temporary part time timetable was implemented
- how the school is supporting a return to full time attendance
- the rationale and review considerations informing decision making

6 Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

Attendance data is regularly (weekly) reviewed and analysed by the Nominated Attendance Champion, in collaboration with the DSL, SENDCo and Therapy Team.

6.2 Analysing attendance

The NAC and wider inclusion team will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Supporting pupils with persistent or severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. The school will use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence. Where there are cases of persistent absence, parents/carers will be contacted and means of support will be discussed. Strategies to support pupils and/or parents/carers with attendance to school will be individualised to need.

Strategies may include (but are not limited to):

- A phone call to parents/carers
- Regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Attendance report
- Attendance rewards
- A review of transport arrangements
- Review and support with morning routines
- A timetable review
- Identifying motivators for attendance
- Referrals to external agencies, such as CAMHS, Local Authority, MASH, charities

7 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Senior Leadership. At every review, the policy will be approved by the regional director.

8 Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Positive Behaviour Support local procedure

9 Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Code	Definition	Scenario	Special circumstances
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration	
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration	
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed.	
Attending a place other than the school			
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority.	School/colleges should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies them of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the PUPIL's absence using the relevant absence code.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school/college, for an educational visit or trip arranged by the school and supervised by a school colleague	If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the absence using the relevant absence code.
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school	If school/college have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body.
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement	
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience	Attending transition days at other schools; courses at college;

			unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.
Absent - leave of absence			
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school	
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment	
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment	
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination	
X	Non compulsory school age child/young persons not required to attend school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age (either below or above compulsory school age) who is not required to attend school/college.	If a non-compulsory school age pupil is only timetabled to attend for four days a week as part of their programme, the fifth day should be marked with code X.
C2	Leave of absence for a pupil subject to a temporary part-time timetable, implemented in exceptional circumstances and supported by documented evidence.	Pupil is not in school due to having a temporary part-time timetable	Includes transition arrangements for children/young people joining a school/college.
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances	Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered	
Absent - other authorised reasons			
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent/carer(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode.	
R	Religious observance	Pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to.	
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health).	
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made.	
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause			
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make home-to-school travel arrangements to enable attendance at school.	
Y1	Transport normally provided not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available.	
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency	
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because part of the school/college premises is unavoidably out of use. The school/college considers the child/young persons is one	

		who cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains in use.	
Y4	Whole school or college unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly	Includes emergency whole-school closures, such as severe weather. Remote education may be provided during closure where appropriate; however, children/young people are not recorded as present when the school/college is closed.
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention	
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil is well enough to attend but there are government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.	
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes, and where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. This must be something that affects the child/young person, not the parent.	-Bail conditions -Court appearance
Absent - unauthorised absence			
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school.	

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N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes	Must be updated within 5 school days.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence	
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session.	
Administrative codes			
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Allows school to set up register in advance of child/young persons joining the school. Child/young person	
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays	Use for half terms, bank holidays and inset days, school used as a polling station. Use for half days where this is timetabled across the academic year.

Contents Checklist (Local Schools/ Colleges may add additional items – this is a core list)			
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Local Procedure Review History:

Date Reviewed	Reviewer	Summary of revisions