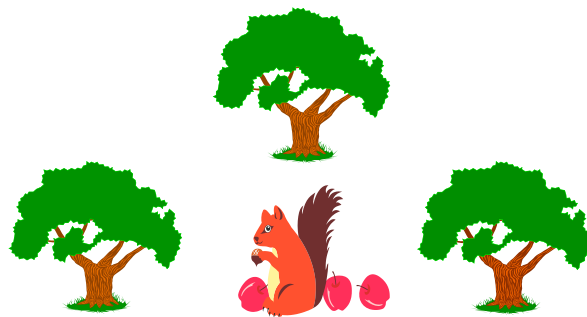


Attendance Policy

2025



**Ainslie Wood
Primary School**

Statement of Intent

At Ainslie Wood Primary School, we are committed to creating a nurturing, inclusive, and inspiring environment where every child feels known, valued, and supported. We believe deeply that regular school attendance plays a key role in helping children flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.

We work closely with families, recognising that attending school consistently is a shared responsibility between home and school. Our aim is to partner with you so that every child can attend regularly, stay connected, and feel confident in their learning.

We aspire for all pupils to achieve at least 95% attendance, with the ideal of 100%, because every day of learning matters. When challenges arise, our approach is compassionate, solution-focused, and collaborative. We will always offer help—and will also ensure families are fully aware of the legal expectations and the steps that may follow ongoing absence.

This policy is informed by:

- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, May 2022; updated May 2024)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)*
- Waltham Forest Local Authority guidance

Legal Framework

Parents and carers have a legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Local authorities may take legal action if this duty is not fulfilled.

Our role is to identify concerns early and work alongside families so that legal intervention is only ever a last resort.

Shared Expectations

Our Commitment to You

As a school, we will:

- Provide a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment, where every pupil is respected and supported.
- Record attendance accurately and follow up promptly on absences so we can ensure children's wellbeing.
- Work in genuine partnership with families, offering early help, guidance, and signposting to relevant services, including Early Help and SEND support.
- Celebrate and reward good and improving attendance, recognising meaningful progress as well as high percentage figures.
- Support teachers and support staff to play an active role in noticing patterns, engaging families, and helping improve attendance—reflecting our whole-school approach.

Parents and Carers

We ask that parents and carers:

- Support their child to attend school every day, on time, and ready to learn.
- Notify the school of any absence before 9:00am on the first day. (Unreported absences may lead to safeguarding actions being taken.)
- Avoid term-time holidays and all unnecessary absences.
- Work collaboratively with us if attendance becomes a concern—your insight and partnership are vital.

Pupils

We encourage pupils to:

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Take an active, positive approach to their learning.

Procedures

Lateness

We know mornings can be challenging at times, and we aim to support families to overcome difficulties early.

- Registration begins at 8:50am (EYFS/KS1) and 8:55am (KS2).
- Afternoon registration is at 1:00pm (EYFS/KS1) and 1:15pm (KS2)
- Registers close after 30 minutes; arrivals after this time will be recorded as unauthorised (U code) unless a valid reason is shared. Evidence of illness (e.g., a prescription) helps us make an informed decision.

Monitoring lateness each half term:

- **5 late marks** → gentle reminder letter
- **8 late marks** → meeting with Attendance Lead
- **12+ late marks** → possible referral to Local Authority and potential PCN

Late Collection

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day. If a child is not collected within 10 minutes, this will be recorded as a late collection and our Late Collection Procedure will apply.

For details of how late collections are managed, including any charges, please refer to our Late Collection Policy.

Absence

We appreciate open communication so we can support you effectively.

- **First Day Contact:** Please inform the school before 9:00am. If we haven't heard from you, we will make contact by 10:00am due to safeguarding requirements.
- **Ongoing absence:** We may call, write, or offer a home visit so we can understand the situation and agree on support.
- **Ten days of unexplained absence:** We must refer to the Behaviour and Children Missing Education Service (BACME).
- **Twenty days of absence:** A child may be considered Missing in Education; this may involve Children's Social Care and could put a school place at risk.

Frequent or Persistent Absence

Our approach is always supportive and relational.

- Attendance below **95%** triggers monitoring and early support.
- Attendance below **90%** is considered *persistently absent* by the DfE.
 - Parents and carers will be invited to meet with the Attendance Lead, and an action plan will be created to reduce barriers.
 - If concerns continue, a meeting with the Headteacher will be offered.
 - If attendance does not improve despite collaborative support, a referral may be made to BACME, which can lead to legal steps.

Holidays During Term Time

- Term-time holidays cannot be authorised.
- Unauthorised term-time holidays may result in a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) issued by Waltham Forest Council.
- Where issued, PCNs will be issued per child, per parent.

Supportive Approach

We believe most attendance difficulties can be improved through early, respectful, and open communication.

We will:

- Always offer meetings with the Attendance Lead or Headteacher.
- Provide flexible meeting times and, where helpful, home visits to reduce barriers.
- Signpost and facilitate workshops on routines, resilience, sleep, SEND support, or parenting—according to family need.
- Refer to Early Help where suitable, so families receive meaningful and timely support before legal escalation.

Celebrating Good Attendance and Positive Improvement

We celebrate both high attendance and significant progress, acknowledging different starting points.

- Weekly class attendance awards
- Termly badges
- Recognition for improved attendance and punctuality
- Access to special activities or events

Continuity of Learning and Pupil Wellbeing

When pupils experience longer term absences:

- Where appropriate, teachers provide home learning options to support continuity.
- On return, staff use “return-to-learn” plans to help pupils settle quickly back into routines and learning.
- Pastoral and wellbeing support is provided for pupils who may struggle emotionally after absence.
- Learning gaps caused by prolonged absence are addressed through:
 - personal learning plans
 - intervention plans
 - SEND or pastoral support, where appropriate
- We monitor progress data to identify whether absence has impacted achievement, ensuring a timely response.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in consultation with staff, governors, families, and pupils, ensuring it remains responsive, relational, and aligned with statutory guidance and school priorities.