



**Attachment Aware
Schools Award**



Attachment Aware Schools: Managing appointments for children and young people during the school day

**Issues arising from appointments
during the school day**

Advice to designated teachers

Children and young people sometimes have worries about leaving or returning to their class when they have an appointment or personal meeting during the school day. These concerns include anxiety about the reaction from a member of staff or from their peers if they have to ask to leave the classroom or to miss a lesson. They may also worry about the negative attention that may be attracted by being fetched by a member of staff who is known to work with those who have additional needs or who are looked after.

These worries may cause children and young people to find it difficult to settle into learning in the time around these appointments and they may become preoccupied with the 'story' they will need to tell peers when it is time to leave the lesson. This may affect not only their sense of belonging in school and with their peers but also the benefit they derive from the therapy or other input.

Students can also miss valuable lessons through visits arranged during school hours by the local authority

What can you do to help?

Try to encourage carers and parents to remember not to book appointments during school hours unless absolutely necessary. For every 5% of school absence, a student falls two grades behind at GCSE*.

If you are aware that a child or young person does need to leave class for an appointment, ensure that their teachers are sensitive to the fact that they may feel embarrassed about having to ask to leave.

Can they give the teacher a prearranged signal or ask the young person to run an errand so as not to draw attention to the fact that they are leaving a lesson.

Alternatively, arrange that students who need to leave during a lesson are provided parallel curriculum learning in a safe space so that they do not need to manage the pressures of leaving the lesson. Ensure that all teachers and members of staff are thoughtful in their approach to this issue.

Maintain positive communication with parents and carers so that they are aware of the importance of arranging appointments either at the end of the school day, so that children and young people don't have to leave a lesson.

When they return from the appointment, offer some thinking time and an appropriate space where they can self-regulate before returning to lessons.

If you have any questions about these issues, please feel free to contact the following members of staff from AfC Virtual School.

Headteacher: Suzanne Parrot

AfC Virtual School contact: 020 8831 6037

Richmond: paul.chapman2@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Kingston: clare.farley@achievingforchildren.org.uk

RBWM: christina.buckley@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Post 16 students: michael.guard@achievingforchildren.org.uk

*from Sebba et al (2015). The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data

www.education.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Linking-Care-and-Educational-Data-Overview-Report-Nov-2015.pdf