



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Rationale

The school ethos aims to assist all pupils to reach their learning potential and we believe that children are more likely to maximise their achievement and attainment if they attend regularly. We recognise that by working together parents and school can improve a pupil's life chances by ensuring their frequent and punctual attendance. Good attendance is important because statistics show a direct link between higher achievement and good attendance. Children who attend school regularly find routines and school work easier to cope with.

Aims

Improving attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school. Pupils and parents must know of the high priority given by the school to good attendance. Both must also know that pupils will be missed when absent and follow-up action will be taken.

Those with a responsibility towards improving attendance are the pupil, their parents and everyone working in school.

To support good attendance school will:

Monitor attendance daily

The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance with both the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.

School opens at 8.55am and all external doors are locked at 9.00am for the safety of all children. Registers will be called twice daily at the start of the morning and afternoon session and will be kept open for a maximum of 30 minutes (in accordance with DFE guidelines). Registers are taken and recorded on the school Information Management System (SIMS). In the event of the platform being unavailable staff will take a paper register and update the system once it is back on-line. In the event of any staff absence due to illness or training, office staff will update the MIS following completion of a paper register by supply staff.

Any children arriving after 9.00am will enter via the main entrance, sign in on the electronic system and will be marked as late. Parents will need to record the reason for the child being late on the electronic system and staff will record any reason a child gives if they are unaccompanied. These notes will be automatically added to SIMS.

Attendance information entered into SIMS will be cross-referenced with e-mails and absence messages left on the answerphone.

The office staff will contact parents after the close of registers for those children where we have no information recorded. As a first response this will be a text message with sufficient time given to reply. If there is no response this will be followed up with a telephone call. If there is no further response after an acceptable wait time the school attendance officer will be alerted and dispatched to the family home.

Monitor attendance weekly

Should any member of staff have particular concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality this will be raised by them with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will discuss absences during regular meetings with the School Business Manager and Attendance Officer. Attendance of all children falling below 90% (persistent absence) is discussed within the meeting, as if any unauthorised absence or unauthorised holiday absence (holiday not approved by the Headteacher). The Attendance Officer will contact the parents directly to discuss pupil absence, (this may take the form of a telephone call or a home visit) reasons for absence and how the school can support families to improve attendance. The discussions are recorded on the school's secure online monitoring system (CPOMS).

Should attendance not improve, due to repeated unauthorised absence, the school will contact the parents in writing asking them to attend a meeting in school to complete a Parenting Contract. An opportunity will be given to receive a support conversation with the schools Director of Pastoral care so that all avenues can be explored in ensuring your child attends school. Should the parent decline a Parenting Contract, this may be used as evidence during any future prosecution.

If school or the Attendance Officer are still concerned about an absence, despite a Parent Contract being in place, school may ask for a doctor's note to confirm a child's illness, before authorising an absence.

In the event of a prolonged absence, resulting in a child's attendance falling below 90%, the Headteacher may request that attendance is legally monitored by the local authority Attendance Officer.

Requesting absence during term-time

Absence during term-time has the potential to interrupt continuity of teaching and learning, as well as disrupt the educational progress of individual children. Waverley Primary School aims to minimise the amount of time lost to term time absence through a policy which actively discourages parents from arranging periods of absence during term time unless in ***exceptional circumstances***.

The policy is intended to be a clear statement regarding the issue of term time absence, and to ensure the amount of teaching and learning time lost to absence such as term time holidays, is as a result, minimised. The Headteacher will be consistent in making robust and informed decisions with regard to the authorising/non-authorising of leave of absence to ensure that parents develop a consistent understanding of the response which they might expect.

The Headteacher will decide what might constitute ***"exceptional circumstances"***.

Such circumstances might include the following:

- A parent/grandparent or other close relative is seriously/terminally ill;

- There has recently been a death or significant other trauma in the family and it is felt that an immediate period of absence might help the child concerned better deal with the situation.

Legislation and requests for term time absence

Please note that holidays taken during term time, without the prior permission from school or not in exceptional circumstances, could result in legal sanctions for irregular attendance being taken. School **will** request the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (a £60 fine payable within 21 days or £120 within 28 days) to **each** parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school.

To support good attendance school expects parents to:

Remember that parents have a legal, as well as a moral obligation to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular full-time basis.

Ensure that your child arrives on time each day. We do understand that there will occasionally be circumstances beyond your control where your child is late. If this is the case, we would much rather you brought your child to school late, than not at all.

The school monitors regular late arrivals as this can be unsettling for your child entering the class after the lesson has started and extremely disruptive for the rest of the children in the class. If your child is repeatedly late for school a letter will be sent reminding you of your commitments to the school.

Ensure that your child has everything they need ready for the school day the night before e.g. reading book, PE kit.

If your child is unwell, please contact school to let us know the reason for the absence. You can contact us by telephone on **0191 2674549** after 8.15am please leave a message on our answerphone at any time. School should be kept informed on a daily basis if the absence is more than one day.

If you cannot get a medical appointment outside the school hours please let the office know, in advance that your child has an appointment so that we can have them ready for you. We also ask that you bring in a copy of the appointment card/letter for us to copy for our records. Please try to ensure that your child returns to school after the appointment in order to finish the school day.

The school seeks to improve general class attendance and to improve the attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and ways of helping combat poor attendance in the form of an information sheet.
- b) Present 100% attendance certificates to pupils, when possible.
- c) Other incentives used at the schools discretion.

- d) Persistent offenders must be followed up or reported to the Headteacher to co-ordinate the school response with the School Business Manager (SBM) and Attendance Officer (AO).

To support this, the school has daily and weekly systems:

Daily Admin Attendance Routines

- List the pupils who are late
- Check pupils are in school against on-line registers
- Text parents when the pupil is not in school
- Ring parents when pupil is not in school
- Contact Attendance Officer (AO) when contact cannot be made with parents
- After having received phone call/ made contact with parents, mark missing pupils on-line with appropriate reason e.g. ill or medical appointment
- Print attendance information when requested by Head Teacher / AO.

Weekly Attendance Officer Attendance Routines

- Deal with any concerns reported by teaching, classroom or adult staff
- Check attendance of all pupils where attendance is less than 96% - check reasons for absence and discuss any under 90% with Local Authority Area Attendance Officer (LAAAO)
- Check attendance of all pupils where more than 3 sessions have been entered as late – check reasons for lateness and work alongside parents/child to improve attendance
- Where attendance /lateness does not improve after contact, arrange in-school meeting to establish a Parenting Contract
- Monitor impact of Parenting Contract and thank parents for their collaboration where improvements achieved or move to legal proceedings where child's education continues to be detrimentally affected by attendance / lateness
- Take appropriate actions after unauthorised holidays taken including, if necessary asking LAAAO to arrange possible legal action
- Refer to Director of Pastoral (DoP) where parents need any type of parental support.
- Hold 1 to 1 meeting with children to discuss any issues affecting their attendance working in partnership with parents
- Work within the Outer West partnership of Schools to maintain transition interaction and liaison to benefit all pupils in a family

Improving Punctuality

Repeated absence at the beginning of a school session can amount to failure to attend regularly for the purpose of 1993 Education Act. The school seeks to improve general punctuality and to improve attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and offer ways of helping combat lateness.
- b) Parents of persistent offenders must be contacted, and reported to the AO, if no improvement.

- c) Praise and acknowledge latecomers who improve.
- d) Ensure that staff set a good example by arriving punctually for lessons.
- e) All children and parents must understand that lateness is actively discouraged, although sensitivity may be appropriate in some cases.
- f) Schools may use other incentives to improve levels of punctuality.
- g) The DoP will be used to support pupils and families with any of the above issues.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of all these issues through the traffic light system, will be the responsibility of the Headteacher, Office Staff, the class teachers, the AO and the DoP who will all work together to resolve these issues with the family.

The Traffic Light System used in school is:

Green light	96%+ attendance	= good attendance
Amber light	91-95% attendance	= monitor internally
Red light	90% and below attendance	= poor attendance, refer to local authority

Prevent Agenda (radicalisation and extremism)

School will make reference to the Prevent Agenda should there be any concerns about the validity of reasons given for extended periods of absence or children missing in education.

Reviewed: February 2022

Next review due: September 2025