

Status	Date
Revised Staff	November 2022
AGC Governors	November 2022
Revision Due	November 2024

Mission Statement

- Wansdyke Primary School is committed to providing all its pupils with a full-time Education and we believe that regular attendance at school is the key to every child achieving his or her maximum potential.
- The school will do its best to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels secure and valued.
- The school will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.
- The school will acknowledge the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and punctuality and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- The task of raising and promoting attendance is a joint one. By co-operating and communicating we believe that parents/carers, children, schools and agencies can raise achievement by raising attendance.

Aims of the whole school policy on attendance

- To continue to improve the overall percentage of attendance of pupils at school.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community and to ensure that all leaders, staff, pupils and parents understand expectations.
- To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

A long side statutory guidance related to attendance, the following non-statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' (Sep 2022) will be used to support maintain high levels of school attendance.

Legal responsibilities for parents/carers

- Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schooling is thus not compulsory but education is.

Moral obligation for parents/carers

- Even a relatively small number of absences can make a big difference to a pupils overall attendance rate and therefore reduce academic and social progress.

	In a week means missing ...	Over a year means missing...	Over the seven years of primary school means missing...
100% attendance	No days	No weeks	No learning at all!
90% attendance	Half a day	Almost four weeks	Over four terms
80% attendance	One day	Over seven weeks	One school year and two terms
70% attendance	One and a half days	Eleven weeks	More than two years
60% attendance	Two days	Over fifteen weeks	Two years and four terms
50% attendance	Two and a half days	Almost twenty weeks	Three and a half years

Parents and carers:

- are responsible for making sure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn;
- must inform the school on the first day of absence before 9.00am of the reason for absence by phone, text, email, online or in person and this must be someone who has parental responsibility for the child; please note that we will not accept reasons for absences from third parties i.e. friends and other relatives.
- must make an agreement with the school in advance for any absence they wish to be authorised;
- must make every effort to ensure the child's full attendance, including not taking holidays in term time;
- should not expect the school to automatically agree to requests for absence
- expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's progress and level of attendance;
- expect the school to support and encourage them in continually seeking ways to improve attendance

The Children will:

- be listened to and respected;
- have individual records of attendance and punctuality;
- be regularly educated about attendance as part of assemblies

The School will:

- ensure accurate and daily registers are maintained on pupils in the school;
- authorise absences, where appropriate for 'exceptional circumstances';
- ensure parents are fully informed of their responsibilities;
- publish expected school times and holidays (including INSET days);
- keep parents informed of attendance levels at parents' evenings and through social media, attendance letters and website;
- ensure the school is a welcoming place where children want to learn;
- reintegrate positively any pupils that have been absent for a significant period of time;
- monitor data to identify patterns of attendance and resource accordingly;
- discuss individual pupil attendance with class teachers, especially for those children for whom attendance is a concern.

Futura Learning Partnership will:

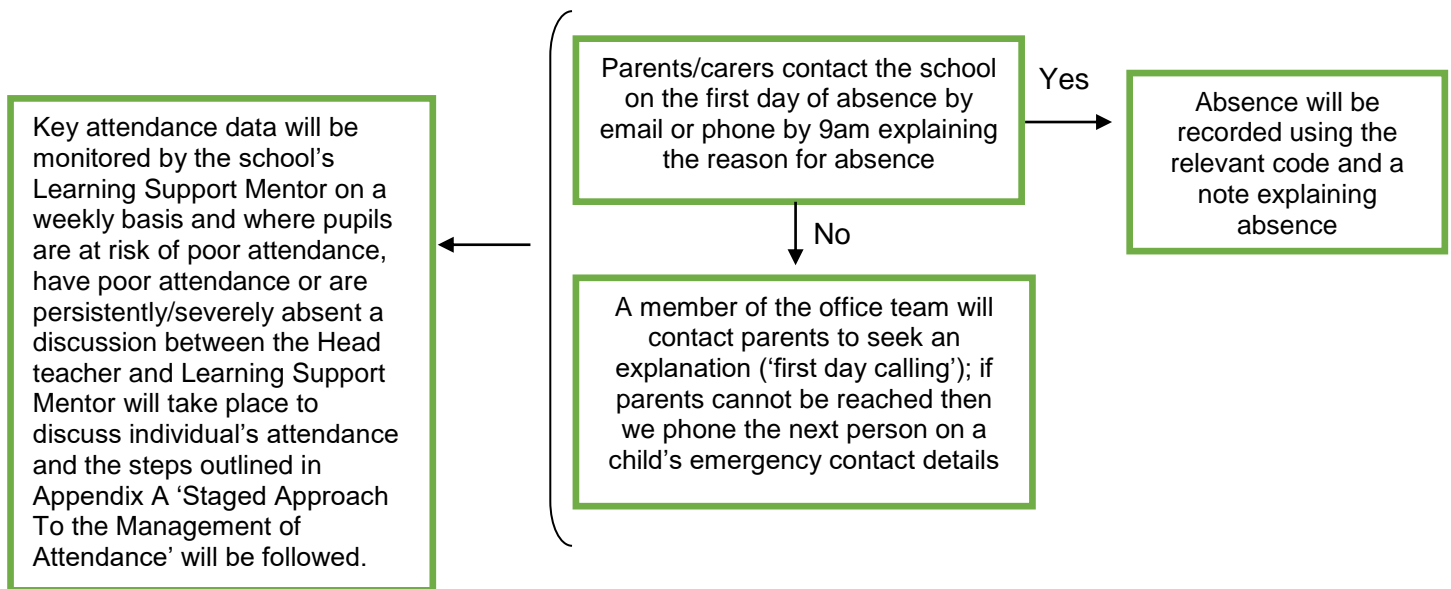
- meet regularly with the Head Teacher and Learning Mentor to monitor levels of attendance and discuss individual pupils;
- assist the schools in setting attendance targets;
- support the school and Bristol City Council in taking appropriate legal action against parents who do not complete their statutory obligations;

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

- As a school it is our responsibility to determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. A letter or telephone call from parents/carers does not in itself authorise an absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation will do this. Parents do not have the right to take a child out of school during term time to share a family holiday.
- Absences will be authorised for days of religious observance such as Eid or Diwali providing that a request form has been completed and sent to the Office in good time.
- All holidays taken during term time are 'unauthorised'.
- Permission must be sought by completing an absence request form, in advance, before booking any time out of school for a child. These may be authorised or not by the Head Teacher/School Learning Mentor, depending on the circumstances.
- Each request will be considered individually, taking into account the circumstances, such as: the child's current level of attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling; the frequency of requests; the nature of the request. Requests will only be authorised for 'Exceptional Circumstances'. This means that it is **highly unlikely** that the following will be judged as 'exceptional' and therefore authorised:
 - Attendance at family weddings abroad that take place within a family holiday
 - Spending time with relatives that haven't been seen for a long time
 - Spending time with relatives from overseas who were not aware of our term times
 - Holidays that have been won as prizes or given as presents

Procedures for following up absences

- a) Parents/carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence either by phone 0117 903 0218 or email office@wansdykeschool.org.uk to explain absence, as early as possible and by 9.00am at the latest. The member of staff taking the register will select the code 'N'. The Office then enter the correct code next to the child's name on the School Information Management System each day. If letters or notes are sent in with children, these are passed to the Office
- b) If an absence is reported verbally to the teacher, either by the child's parent or another adult, this is recorded on paper and passed on to the office or emailed
- c) If no message has been received by 9am then the office will contact parents to seek an explanation ('first day calling') by 10am; if parents cannot be reached then we phone the next person on a child's emergency contact details and a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting that the school are informed of the reason for absence.
- d) If problems with attendance are noted through the School Learning Mentor's termly monitoring system, a model letter will be sent, together with a copy of the child's registration form, highlighting that attendance is under 95%.
- e) If attendance continues to be of concern then the School Learning Mentor will attempt to make an appointment with the parent to try to resolve the problem.
- f) If a child has a regular pattern of absence then the School Learning Mentor will consider a referral to Bristol's Education Welfare Service and/or First Response if a child:
 - has an overall attendance figure of below 90%
 - has less than 80% attendance over a short term period and for which the school has been unable to establish an acceptable reason.
 - has more than ten consecutive days of unexplained absence. (CP / LAC pupils who have 5 consecutive days of unexplained absence).
 - has a pattern of regular unpunctuality



Penalty Notices

- A Penalty notice may be issued if a child has 4 days (8 sessions) unauthorised within the same term or 10 week period. The penalty is fixed i.e. the same amount for 4 days as it is for 10. This means that a fine could be issued for a child having a 1 day unauthorised absence each week for 4 weeks
- Penalty notices can be issued for term time holidays i.e. a holiday of 4 days or more during term time which has been unauthorised. The same would apply for 'long weekends' which amount to 4 days within a term or 10 week period.
- Penalty notices can be issued for persistent lateness
- The penalty notice will be for **each** parent to pay £60 **per child** within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

Procedures

Registers

- Registration is a legal process which takes place in every class twice a day from:
8.55 - 9.00 a.m.
1.00 - 1.05 p.m.
- Each class will take the register by calling out children's names. The teacher, learning support assistant or student may do this, but it is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure that the register is completed correctly, including daily and weekly totals.
- All registers must be completed (and if these are paper based then sent to the office by 9.10 a.m. and 1.15 p.m. and these will be stored centrally outside the school office (or completed directly online into the SIMS system).
- The school administrative staff check any N codes (reason not yet provided) given to absent pupils and if necessary, enter the correct code on our management information system, once a reason is confirmed.

Children missing from education

There are many reasons why we may make a referral to the Children Missing Education Service (CMES) including the following circumstances:

- Unexplained absences of ten consecutive days
- Continued unauthorised absence
- Patterns of irregular attendance
- Prior to removing a child from the school roll if the destination school is not known or there are other safeguarding concerns
- The school has been unable to contact parents

- The school is concerned that absence may be condoned by parents/carers
- School refusal
- The school is concerned that a pupil's absences may be due to emotional or medical difficulties
- Illegal child employment

This is not an exhaustive list.

Persistent and severe absence

- Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), this is known as persistent absence. The school along with wider support services will work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, the schools will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.
- The term severely absent is where children who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of agencies and will likely be formalised in conjunction with the local authority. Children who are severely absent will be of the highest priority for support and this may include very specific support with attendance or whole family plan.
- If all avenues of support have been facilitated by all partners involved, and the appropriate educational support or placements have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. School staff will be particularly conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, follow appropriate action in line with the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Punctuality

We are very clear and consistent about dealing with children who are late coming to school. The following criteria are simple and apply to all children. 8.55 - 9.00 am and 1.00- 1.05 p.m. is registration time.

- a) Any child who arrives after 9.00 a.m. or 1.05 p.m. is late.
- b) If the child arrives between 9.00 a.m. and 9.10 or 1.05 and 1.15 p.m. then they are registered as late before the registers close with an L.
- c) If a child arrives after 9.10 or 1.15 for the relevant session, then they are entered into the register as having an unauthorised absence (U code)

Promoting and celebrating good attendance

- a) Good attendance and punctuality will be promoted and positively acknowledged through: the presence of the Senior Leadership Team and Learning Mentor at the school entrance and Teaching/Support staff at Phase 1 classroom doorways;
- b) Poor attendees will always be welcomed back into class in a positive manner.
- c) Children will be constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- d) Children with high attendance will be recognised in the end of term celebration assemblies.
- e) Weekly attendance will be shared as a whole school community in weekly celebration assemblies.
- f) An attendance summary will be included in the induction training for new staff.
- g) Staff will be reminded at regular intervals about procedures for dealing with problems of attendance and punctuality.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

- Futura Learning Partnership's Executive Lead for School Improvement will meet with the Head Teacher at least twice a year in order to monitor attendance and punctuality.
- Regular and structured meetings will be held between the Head teacher and School Learning Mentor in order to identify and support any child whose attendance or punctuality is a source of concern. This may include a further referral to other agencies, such as Social Services where attendance is considered to be part of a larger family problem.
- The School Learning Mentor will be responsible for the monitoring of attendance and punctuality each term and will liaise weekly with the head teacher to share data headlines and form next steps.
- Termly reports will be made by the Head Teacher to the Academy Governance Committee on both positive and negative issues to do with attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Data

- Attendance data is used to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most. Data will be used on a weekly and termly basis to monitor and explore patterns of both persistent and severe absence and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible.
- At Parent's Evening and at the end of the school year, parents/carers will receive an attendance report which uses a traffic light system to summarise their child's attendance

The School Roll

A pupil will remain on the school roll unless one of the criteria below applies:

- The pupil moves from one mainstream school to another and is enrolled at that new school.
- A permanent exclusion which has been upheld.
- Where a parent makes a formal request to the LA to 'Educate Otherwise' their child at home.
- Following a period of 20 School days – where 10 days from school has been granted as leave of absence and the child then fails to return within a further 10 days which is not due to sickness or another unavoidable reason.
- Where a child has been certified by a medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school.
- Where the LA names another school in an Educational and Health Care Plan.

Appendix A

Effective school attendance improvement and management

PREVENTION of poor attendance through good whole school attendance management;

- **All pupils-** Developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance (including leadership, ethos and systems and processes)
- **Pupils at risk of poor attendance-** Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern

EARLY INTERVENTION to reduce absence before it becomes habitual;

- **Pupils with poor attendance-** Intervening as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing disengagement with school

TARGETED reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils

- **Persistently and severely absent pupils-** Put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils

Staged Approach To the Management of Attendance

Whole school attendance is monitored at a minimum of every half term but more frequently as appropriate to the needs of the school.

	Trigger	Outcome
1	Attendance falls below 95% and the child's attendance is of concern.	<p>Letter of concern 1 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing concern about attendance Informing the parents of current attendance Enclosing a registration certificate Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence' Welcoming the parents to arrange contact the school if they wish to discuss attendance further. <p>Attendance is monitored for a fixed period</p>
2	Parents have received a Stage 2 letter and attendance remains of concern.	<p>Letter of concern 2 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance Informing the parents of current attendance Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the definition of 'persistent absence' • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing attendance, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, and setting an internal school attendance target. • Notifying parents that should they chose not to attend, the meeting may take place without them and a target set.
3	Parents have failed an internal school attendance target and attendance is below the level of Persistent Absence (90%) and still a concern	<p>Letter of concern 3 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance Informing the parents of attendance during the target period. Enclosing a registration certificate • Notifying parents that the school intends to discuss their child's attendance with a caseworker at the weekly attendance officer drop in, and may make a formal referral following this. At this stage, a Penalty Notice may be issued.
	During a monitoring period, attendance improves.	<p>A Letter of Praise will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period. Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor attendance to ensure sustained improvement.