

Attendance Policy

Status	Date
Revised Staff	January 2019
AGC Governors	January 2019
Revision Due	Spring 2020
Revision 16.07.14	Insertion of 'per child' under Penalty Notices section.
Revision 27.06.16	Registers close 9:10am and 1:15pm
Revision 19.01.17	Parents required to meet with the Head/Deputy in order to make a request.
Revision 10.05.17	Reasons for absences from third parties i.e. friends will not be accepted.
Revision 23.11.17	More detail added to bullet point 'c' within 'Procedures for following up absences.

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 establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges 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.
- 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 implement a system of rewards for good attendance.
- 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.

Rights and responsibilities

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 10.00am 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 authorise;

- 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 and should keep these to a minimum;
- 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 at school.

The Children will:

- be listened to and respected;
- have individual records of attendance and punctuality;
- regularly celebrate 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..

Wellsway Multi-Academy Trust will:

- meet regularly with the Head Teacher 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 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 are requested to contact the school on the first day of absence, as early as possible and by 10.00am at the latest. The member of staff taking the register will leave a blank next to the child's name. 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 via the Document boxes.
- 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, either with the register or in the document boxes.
- c) If no message has been received by 10am then the office will immediately contact parents to seek an explanation ('first day calling'); if parents cannot be spoken to during the day then we phone the next person on a child's emergency contact details.
- 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 90%.
- e) If attendance continues to fall below 90% 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 Social Services if a child:
 - 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

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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).
- d) The school administrative staff check any N codes given to absent pupils and if necessary, enter the registration data into SIMS Attendance programme every week (if it has not been completed directly into SIMS by teachers).

Punctuality

We need to be very clear and consistent about dealing with children who are late coming to school. The following criteria are simple and apply to all children.

- a) 8.55 - 9.00 a.m. and 1.00- 1.05 p.m. is registration time.

- b) Any child who arrives after 9.00 a.m. or 1.05 p.m. is late.
- c) 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.
- d) 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 Head Teacher and Learning Mentor at the Phase 2 doorway and Teaching/Support staff at Phase 1 classroom doorways; a hall display which is updated weekly; congratulations given to the best class at the end of a term.
- 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) Attendance matters will be included in the induction training for new staff.
- e) Staff will be reminded at regular intervals about procedures for dealing with problems of attendance and punctuality.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

- Wellsway MAT’s Director of Primary 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.
- 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.

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.

Signed Teachers (on reverse)

Signed.....

AGC Governors:

Date: