

Policy	Attendance Policy
Ratification date	13th September 2017
Next review date	September 2019
Signatories	 Head Teacher  Chair of Governors

Attendance Policy

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities; and
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted upon promptly.

Department for Education policy states that the school expects attendance at school to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

It is parent's responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day ;
- arrive at school promptly at 8.40am (KS2) and 8.45am(KS1); and
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day;

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities as **regular attendance is a legal requirement;**
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school. ;
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day;
- Notify the school by 9.30am of the pupil's absence 01480 466919. This needs to be done daily (unless the child is in hospital or has a long term illness related absence for a period of time-in this instance the parents do not need to ring daily);
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child;
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details as soon as possible; and
- Take family holidays in the school holiday period.

Examples

Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genuine illness of the pupil • hospital/ dental/ doctors appointment for the pupil; • major religious observances; • visits to prospective new schools; and • external exams or educational assessments. • Seeing a parent who is on leave from the Armed Forces • Travelling children on the road with their parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park; • a birthday treat; • oversleeping due to a late night; • looking after other children / other family member; • appointments for other family members; and • family holiday when it is cheaper. • Visiting relatives or relatives visiting.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere;
- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns;
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance, punctuality and monitor individual children's attendance;
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Contact parents when pupil absence is impacting on achievement;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from an appropriate health professional or other relevant body may be requested;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition. Each term we will celebrate attendance as a whole school. Children who have achieved 100% attendance for the current term will receive a certificate presented in assembly. 100% attendance for the academic year will be celebrated at the final assembly.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order;
- Will notify the Local education Authority (LA) after 15 days sickness;
- Will notify EWO after 10 days unexplained absence;
- To have a named member of the Senior Leadership team responsible for attendance (headteacher); and
- Update the governing body termly on the overall attendance figures.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the main playground is supervised from 8.30am.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil;
- Registration takes place at 8.55am (KS2) and 9.00am (KS1) and pupils who arrive after 9.00am will be recorded as late to school;
- Registers close at 9.00am and after this lateness is recorded as an **unauthorised** absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority;
- When children arrive after 8.40 (KS2) or 8.45am (KS1) they will need to be signed in at the main school office by a parent or adult with the reason for lateness given;
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm for KS1 and KS2; and
- Pupil's attendance is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

If a child is regularly late

1. The headteacher will write to parents to inform them of the number of days the child has been late and to reinforce the school policy and expectations;
2. If lateness persists the Headteacher will invite parents to a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child to school on time;
3. The headteacher may withdraw the privilege of the late mark for children who arrive persistently late after 9.00am. An unauthorised late would be recorded; and
4. When a child accumulates 18 unauthorised lates in a six week period the Headteacher will refer the family to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer). They will take the late issue as a case and will investigate why a child/ren has been late on the dates given. This investigation could result in parents receiving a warning notice. Alternatively a fixed penalty fine could be issued per child to each adult who has parental responsibility.

Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school;
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time;
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return;
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site; and

- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupil as a missing person.*

Failure to ensure regular school attendance & Penalty Notices

Penalty Notice Briefing Note for unauthorised term time leave / holiday – update

The Penalty Notice code of conduct has been amended to take into account the Supreme Court Judgement (**Isle of Wight v John Platt**) which clarified the meaning of “regular” school attendance as outlined in Section 444 Education Act 1996. **The school expects attendance at school to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.**

Penalty Notices will be issued for **single event absences** of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable.

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government’s amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and individual circumstances.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified.

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to prosecution for failure to ensure regular school attendance in any given period of unauthorised school attendance as below:

A. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE: The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice in relation to a child whose attendance at school is less than 90% over a given period. To allow time and opportunity for early intervention work with the family, attendance will be monitored by school and Local Authority before enforcement actions are considered.

B. UNAUTHORISED TERM TIME LEAVE(includes Holiday): Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more over a 4 week period, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances rule), may receive a Penalty Notice. Therefore Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

To attend school “regularly” means “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school”.

If a child`s attendance falls below 95%

1. The Headteacher will write to the parents to inform them that their child`s attendance has fallen below 95%. Parents will be reminded of their legal duty and of the school`s policy and expectations;
2. If attendance does not improve the Headteacher will invite parents to a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child to school every day;
3. If persistent absence from school continues, the Headteacher has the right to unauthorise any absence without the support of medical advice; and
4. The Headteacher will refer the family to the EWO when a child continues to be absent (unauthorised) for;
 - 9 full days over a 6 week period
 - 18 sessions over a 6 week period
 - 10% unauthorised absence in an academic year
 - 10 consecutive days with no reason for absence

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Wheatfields Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next;
- The address of the new school; and
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local Education Welfare Team.

Appendix One

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** allowed Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a **family holiday** during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers were also able to grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Appendix Two

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

WARNING: If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice* per parent, per child, or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>School aged pupils in maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and you may receive a £60* fine per parent for each child.</p>	<p>The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However, before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides.</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.</p> <p>In the case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school,</p>

<p>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genuine illness • Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (try to make these after school if at all possible) • Days of religious observance • Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces • External examinations • When traveller children go on the road with their parents 	<p>Other examples of absence from school that will not be authorised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any type of shopping • Looking after siblings or unwell parents • Minding the house • Birthdays • Resting after a late night • Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
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Please contact your child's head teacher if you wish to discuss the issue.

The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.

We hope that when you have read this leaflet, you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.

*Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days

Appendix Three



Absence Request Form

Student Details

Name _____ DOB _____ Class _____

Address _____

Contact number _____

Sibling details of Compulsory School Age

Name _____ DOB _____ School _____

Name _____ DOB _____ School _____

I request permission for my child to be absent from school

First day of Absence _____ Date of Return _____ Total School Days _____

Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Headteacher **WILL NOT** be able to consider your request without your supporting documents. **Please read carefully the Letter Exceptional Circumstances Information for parents, which is attached to this form for your convenience.**

Declaration

I have read the letter Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents and understand that **I/we may receive a penalty notice** if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. ***Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.***

Signed _____ Date _____
(Parent/Carer)

For School Use only

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows

Number of Authorised Sessions _____	Number of Unauthorised Sessions _____	Number of unauthorised sessions to date _____
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Signed _____
Date _____