



WINWICK CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for Attendance & Punctuality

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| Date Written: | September 2016 |
| Amendments & Date of Approval: | September 2017 |
| Signed: Chair of Governing Body | <i>Jackie Neal</i> |
| Signed: Executive Headteacher | <i>Sue Dymond</i> |
| To be reviewed by: | September 2018 |

As a school community, we feel that ensuring excellent attendance and punctuality is important if our children are to benefit from all the opportunities school has to offer; there is a clear link between attendance, punctuality and achievement. As a Christian school, we feel it is important to work together to build a strong home-school partnership, being mutually supportive, to ensure that our children's attendance and punctuality maintains at a high level. Excellent attendance is important if children are to be encouraged to be valuable members of society.

Aims

- To have a manageable whole school approach to attendance procedures.
- To promote excellent attendance and punctuality in order to ensure continuity of education and maximise children's academic potential.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance; to work with and support parents if difficulties arise.
- To work alongside other agencies, including Educational Welfare, if difficulties arise so that effective action can be put into place to support our children and families.
- To ensure children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality by rewarding children who achieve it.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality effectively so difficulties are quickly highlighted and resolved.
- To make everyone aware of the detrimental effect of absences and lateness on the education of our children.

Inclusion

- We are committed to providing an inclusive school where all children have the opportunity to maximise their potential.
- Staff should respond appropriately to children's diverse needs and be aware of the needs of children with differing: genders, special educational needs, disabilities and cultural ethnic and social backgrounds.
- Staff are aware of the need to overcome potential barriers to learning and the importance of attendance and punctuality as an aspect of this.
- We are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and this is reflected in the conduct of staff and pupils and how attendance and punctuality is managed within the school.

Absence

Absence is categorised as authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised Absence:

- Genuine illness – although, if the length of illness is considered to be unreasonable this will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Medical and dental appointments (including Speech & Language) - where it is unavoidable that they take place in school time (**appointment cards should always be seen**).
- Family Bereavements - for an agreed period of time.
- Days of religious observance - **advance notice should be given in this case.**
- Temporary exclusion - as a result of a specific action by the Head Teacher.
- Permanent exclusion - while the appeal process is ongoing.
- Attendance at a Pupil Referral Unit - where attendance is dual registered.
- Exceptional circumstances, as discussed between parent and Headteacher

Unauthorised Absence:

- **Unexplained absences** - a member of the school admin team will send a text, then telephone the family in the first instance. A letter to the parents/carers is then sent if no explanation is provided.
- **Truanting** - Staying off school **for haircuts, purchase of party clothes, shoes etc**

Late Codes

- Late arrival before registers close (indicated by an L on the register).
- Late arrival after registers close (indicated by a U on the register).

Procedures for Teachers

- Registers must be taken by 8.55am and 1:10pm (infants), 1:40pm (juniors)
- The list of attendance codes (Appendix 1) must be strictly adhered to.
- **All** children should be marked either present or absent.
- Registers close at 9.20am and at 1:50pm.

Absences

- **Notes** explaining absence should be placed in the plastic pocket of the register and the absence report filled in appropriately.
- **Verbal** explanations should also be recorded on the class register and the absence report, as appropriate.

Concerns about Absence and Lateness

The designated member of staff, Attendance Officer and DSL meet regularly to monitor attendance. A printout of absences of 90% and below is scrutinised and acted upon.

Procedures for Dealing with Absence and Lateness

- On the first day of absence parents must inform the school of the reason for their child's absence. If there will not be attending school on subsequent days, parents must contact the school on each day that their child will be absent.
- This reason must be recorded in the absence book and on SIMS.
- If no message is received, a member of the admin team will telephone or use text messaging service the parents/carers of all unexplained absentees from 9:30am onwards and record explanations in the absence book and on SIMS. If no contact can be made, admin team will proceed with the First Response Procedure.
- If no response is forthcoming, this should be recorded in the absence book and on SIMS.
- The late book will be used to record the names of all children who are late. Any child who is late must report to the school office on arriving in school.
- Trends in absences are scrutinised by the Head Teacher, designated members of staff and Attendance Officer on a monthly basis.

Procedures with Registers

- All attendance information is inputted into SIMS on Friday afternoons.

Monitoring Procedures

- First day response calls are made in the first instance by the school admin team (Attendance Officer).
- Persistent lateness is monitored by the school admin team and discussed with the Headteacher and the Attendance Officer during the regular meetings.
- Weekly checks will be made to ascertain any children whose attendance is below 95%. In this case the following procedures are followed:
 1. Warning letter from school (Appendix 3).
 2. Monitor
 3. Invitation into school to discuss issues
 4. Monitor
 5. Visit to home by the Attendance Office
 6. Monitor
 7. Formal Governors' Attendance Working Party meeting in school
 8. Monitor
 9. Formal proceedings – referral to 'Children missing in education' team – Social Care.
 10. Fast-tracking can be considered at any time.

Attendance Rewards

- Every child that has 100% attendance for a whole term receives a certificate at the end of term or the beginning of the next term.
- Every child that has 100% attendance for the whole school year receives a certificate and a prize on the last day of the summer term.
- The class with the best attendance each week receives the Attendance Award, which given out in Friday morning Worship.

Absence during Term Time

- Absence during term time must be due to exceptional circumstances (holidays are not exceptional circumstances).
- The Head Teacher will consider each request and make a decision accordingly.

Liaison with Parents/Carers

Attendance and punctuality are mentioned in every half termly newsletter to parents. Posters showing the effects of attendance and lateness are on display throughout the school and are also on our school website.

Where families are having difficulty with attendance,

Role of Governors

Governors determine support and review school policies. They support the aims of this policy by making resources available wherever possible. They receive termly reports concerning attendance, which they use for monitoring purposes. Governors meet with parents/carers at Governors' Attendance Panels.

Evaluation and Review

Reviewed: September 2017 – Changes: Policy updated to include details about the SLA for attendance linked to the Local Authority.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

| Code | School Meaning | Statistical Meaning | Physical Meaning |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present | In for whole session |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present | In for whole session |
| @ | Do not use | Unauthorised Absence | Late for session |
| B | Educated off site (not Dual reg.) | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| C | Other authorised circumstances | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| D | Dual registration (attending other estab.) | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| F | Extended family holiday (agreed) | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| G | Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess) | Unauthorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| I | Illness (not med/dental appointments) | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| J | Interview | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present | Late for session |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| O | Unauthorised Abs (not covered by other code) | Unauthorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| S | Study leave | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised Absence | Late for session |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| W | Work experience | Approved Educational Activity | Out for whole session |
| X | DfES #: School closed to pupils | Attendance not required | Out for whole session |
| Y | Enforced closure | Attendance not required | Out for whole session |
| Z | Do not use | Authorised Absence | Out for whole session |
| ! | DfES X: Non-compulsory school age absence | Attendance not required | Out for whole session |
| # | School closed to pupils & staff | Attendance not required | Out for whole session |
| * | DfES Z: Pupil not on roll | Attendance not required | Out for whole session |
| - | All should attend / No mark recorded | No mark | No mark for session |

(i) Unauthorised absence.

These need to be followed up by class teacher and reported to Head if not authorised.

- Attendance Leaflet
- Attendance Letters:

Appendix 2 – Letters that may be sent by the Attendance Officer

Letter 1 – No Response

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance Letter of Concern- No Response

Name

DOB

Each day of your child's absence from school, we must receive a phone call letting us know the reason for absence. We operate a 'First Day Response' system which will send a text message or voice message to parents if we have not already received a reason by 9.30am for absence on that day.

Unfortunately on your child was absent from school and we have not received notification for their absence. Unless we receive notification, their absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where children have a number of unauthorised absences the case may be referred to the Local Authority School Attendance Service who check our school registers on a regular basis.

Please contact the school as soon as possible to notify us of your child's recent absence. If you are having difficulty getting your child into school I would welcome the opportunity to support you.

Yours Sincerely,

Letter 2 - Concern below 90%

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance Letter of Concern- Below 90%

Name.....

DOB

The Government outlines that any pupil with an attendance level of under 90% will be classed as a 'persistent absentee'. This means that any pupil whose attendance drops below 90%, their attendance will be discussed and scrutinised on a regular basis. At present 's attendance is only.....% (see attached attendance certificate). It is essential this improves as research has found poor school attendance does have a detrimental effect on a child's academic progress and I hope, with your cooperation, we will see an improvement.

Please note under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. If you are having difficulty getting your child into school I would welcome the opportunity to support you.

Yours Sincerely,

Letter 3 – Invitation to meeting

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance Letter of Concern- Invitation to Meeting

Name.....

DOB

As I am sure you are aware, regular attendance and being punctual at school is important so that young people can maximise their educational opportunities. The Government have decreed that any pupil with an attendance level of under 90% will be classed as a 'persistent absentee' and this may trigger legal involvement from the Local Authority Attendance Team.

Following my letter dated,’s attendance is still a cause for concern and is only.....%. This level of attendance is now well below average and your child will not be achieving their targets. Absence may include times when your child has been ill and may therefore have been authorised by the school. However all school absence, whatever the reason, can prevent your child from achieving their full potential.

I would therefore ask for your co-operation in ensuring a sustained improvement in your child’s overall school attendance. To discuss this further I would like to invite you to attend a meeting at the school on..... If you are unable to meet with me on this date will you please either let me so we can re-arrange. Please note if we do not meet to discuss your child’s attendance we will consider passing our concerns on to the Local Authority’s Attendance Service.

Yours Sincerely

Letter 4 – Medical Evidence

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance Letter of Concern- Medical Evidence

Name.....

DOB

Following my previous letters and the meeting arranged for,’s attendance is still a cause for concern and is only.....%. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, you are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance and punctuality of your child at school.

Due to the significant number of absences you are requested to provide medical evidence to support the reasons if you decide in future that your child is too ill to attend school. This evidence may take the form of either a letter from your GP or an appointment card, date stamped and signed by staff at your GP’s surgery as proof that your child has attended for treatment. It may also include a copy of a prescription or medication that has the child’s name and date on it. This decision has not been taken lightly and it has been made following advice given from the Local Authority Attendance Service. If your child is now absent from school and medical evidence has not been provided their absence will be classed as unauthorised; an accumulation of unauthorised attendance could lead to legal action being taken against you.

We would appreciate your support in this matter and hope’s attendance improves to help them achieve their potential. If you are having difficulty getting your child into school I would welcome the opportunity to support you.

Yours Sincerely

Letter 5 – Referral to LA Attendance Service

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance Letter of Concern- Referral to the Local Authority Attendance Service

Name.....

DOB

Following my previous letters and contacts with you’s attendance remains a cause for concern and is only.....%.

As his/her attendance has not significantly improved, I have no further option other than to refer the case to the Local Authority. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, you are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance and punctuality of your child at school. The Government have decreed that any pupil with an attendance level of under 90% will be classed as a ‘persistent absentee’.

Unfortunately your child is on track to becoming a persistent absentee and they will be falling behind in their learning.

An Attendance Officer from the Local Authority will be in contact with you and may consider a prosecution. May I take this opportunity to remind you that the outcome of their involvement will be influenced by an improvement in your child’s attendance at school. I would urge you to ensure your child attends school regularly from now on. If they are absent for any reason it is still a requirement that you must provide medical evidence to support their absence.

As always I am willing to discuss this matter with you further either in person or by phone. Thank you in anticipation for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely

Appendix – Attendance Procedures Flowchart

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES-IN LINE WITH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

