

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Updated: February 2018
Review Date: February 2021

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

2. Principles

The Attendance Policy is founded on the following key principles:

- ✓ good attendance will be promoted and absence reduced, including persistent absence
- ✓ every child will have access to a full-time education to which they are entitled
- ✓ any patterns of absence will be acted upon early in collaboration with pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Service
- ✓ parents will be held accountable in performing their legal duty of ensuring that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly
- ✓ children will be punctual to lessons

3. Parents' Responsibilities

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
- Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the school as soon as possible, preferably on the first morning of absence. This may be done by phone, by letter or in person. A letter confirming reason for absence should be sent in to school when the child returns.
- Parents may not authorise their child's absence - only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. (Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised.)
- Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (8.50am Juniors, 8.55am infants). If a child arrives after 9.00am his/her parent should report directly to the school office and they will be marked as 'late'.
- Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time. If this is absolutely unavoidable they should apply in writing on a Leave of Absence request form available from school at least four weeks in advance of the period for which leave is to be requested.
 - At this time parents should advise of any extenuating circumstances they feel apply to their application. Leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances (the only exception that the LA recognise is Service Leave), however the following criteria are all at the Headteacher's/COG's discretion:

- Services leave
 - Family Respite
 - Family crisis (Looked after Child, Adoption, Bereavement, Severe medical needs)
 - Return to homeland (long distance visit to family members) - 20 days maximum
 - Religious Events
 - Examinations or approved sporting activity
 - Family events (close family) at the discretion of the local authority or Headteacher
 - Urgent medical appointments (routine appointments should be made outside of school hours)
- Following application for Leave of Absence, parents will be advised in writing whether leave has been authorised or not and whether the Local Authority will be notified and a Fixed Penalty Notice applied.

Fixed Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate for absences of more than 9.5 sessions (4.5 school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive.

Please refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Code of Conduct for Educational Fixed Penalty Notices for further details.

4. School Responsibilities

- The school will record and monitor attendance, either manual or electronically, in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- Registers will be called twice daily (8.50am Juniors, 8.55am infants) and at (12.50pm Y3/4, 1.20pm Y5/6 and 1.15pm Infants). Registers will close at 9.00am and 1.00pm Y3/4, 1.30pm Y5/6 and 1.20pm Infants. Any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as 'late' for that session. Thirty minutes after the close of registration a late mark becomes an unauthorised absence.
- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook and CWAC policy. The Headteacher/attendance officer will inspect registers each week in order to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage.
- Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality a note should be handed to the headteacher/attendance officer. The class teacher may also wish to speak to the Headteacher.
- Should a child be absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. Should no explanation be received from the child's parent the class

teacher will endeavour to make contact with the parent. Should this prove impossible the class teacher will refer the matter to the Headteacher.

- All absence notes from parents should be dated and initialled by the class teacher and stored neatly in the register. Only notes concerning absences about which there are concerns/queries should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher/ attendance officer (who may then choose to speak to the parents concerned).
- The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the Local Authority and its representatives. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the EWO.
- The school will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
 - The Headteacher and class teachers will communicate regularly with parents on attendance matters
 - Appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to individual children
 - Clear attendance information will be entered in the school brochure

5. This attendance policy will be reviewed 3 yearly.

This policy/document was reviewed by:

Signed **Date**

Position

Signed **Date**

Position

The next revision date is: