



Woodlands Community Primary School Attendance Policy

Statutory	Yes
Staff member	
Governor	
Committee	Full
Full Governing Body	Yes
Last amendment date	
Renewal date	

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The headteacher

The head is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance officer [Family Liaison at Woodlands]

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the head when to request fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Teachers are also responsible for initial contact if they see a dip in attendance or emerging pattern.

3.5 School office staff

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. SIMS

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the beginning of the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50 and will be kept open until 9am.

4.2 Unplanned absence

- Parent/Carer to phone/e-mail the school office on the first day of a child's absence with the reason for absence (before 9.15am).
- Every subsequent day of absence, the Parent/Carer is expected to phone/e-mail with reason for absence (before 9.15am).
- Any supporting evidence for a medical absence is requested (medical card, prescription, appointment letter, etc.)
- Parent/Carer to provide a medical note when an illness is reported directly 1 - 2 days before or after a holiday period. If a medical note is not provided, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Unauthorised absences will be reported in the end of year reports and they will be cumulative year on year.
- Any unexplained absences will require a meeting with the Family Liaison.
- If an absence is taken in term time for non-medical reasons or non-exceptional reasons, the school may refer to county to issue a fixed penalty notice.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carers notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Please contact the school office to let them know that your child/ren has an appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent/carers must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Family Liaison to resolve the problem. Please approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child, we expect to attend school, does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by the School Attendance Officer and other senior leaders if appropriate.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to adults with Parental Responsibility

We report attendance and punctuality at the end of each academic term.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.3 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The promotion of excellent attendance and improving attendance contributes to the success of each and every pupil.

The following measures are in place to achieve this:

- Celebration at class and Whole school level in school gatherings
- Parents are informed of our high attendance expectations in all induction meetings.
- All staff recognise their role in promoting good attendance and punctuality as part of a collective responsibility and work hard to maintain its profile within school.
- Expectations and procedures concerning attendance are included in the staff handbook and prospectus.
- Concise information sent to parents at the beginning of each academic year reminding them about the school's expectations regarding regular and punctual attendance.
- This is reinforced when the school reports individual attendance twice a year in reports.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. She liaises with the Head teacher to monitor any concerns.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above three days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the statutory school attendance team.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Regular meetings are held with the Head to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents.

The schools work closely with the Early Help team from the Local Authority to support improved punctuality and attendance. These agencies will work directly with families and advise the schools.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour regulation policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day