



WestWood Primary School



ATTENDANCE Policy

Introduction

Westwood Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its children and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – children, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

School's roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at Westwood Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our children are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes (appendix 1)

The register will be taken promptly at **8:45 am** and **1.00 pm** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

The registers will close at **9.05 am** and **1.10 pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent**. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted as **present**.

Absence

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- where leave has been granted by the school 4 weeks in advance
- where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend
- where the child has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand)
- where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents belong;
- in other **exceptional circumstances** (eg a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.

Collection and analysis of data

The Headteacher will endeavour to ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate and analysed. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection. This will be reported to governors.

Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Day to Day Arrangements

Please see Appendix 2

First-day calling

Parents will be contacted via text or telephoned on the first day a child is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern of absence with or without explanation or if attendance is below 90%, the Attendance Managers will advise the headteacher. Parents will be invited to discuss the reasons for the absences and plans will be put in place to resolve any difficulties

Penalty Notices and Referrals to the Education Attendance Service

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of a specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Attendance Service Officer who can issue a Penalty Notice.

If an absence is unauthorised and is for 10 sessions (5 school days) or more in the preceding 12 school weeks, schools are **required** to pass this information onto the Education Attendance Service Officer who will send out a letter direct acknowledging receipt of this.

Your child will need to have 100% attendance for 30 sessions (15 school days) from the date this letter is received to stop any further action being taken.

Penalty Notices are intended to be early deterrents to patterns of unauthorised absence.

Lateness and punctuality

Children, who arrive late for school (after 8.45am, 1.00pm), but before the registers close (9.05am, 1.10pm), will be marked as late. Children arriving after the close of registers will be marked as absent for the whole of the morning or afternoon session.

For health and safety reasons it is important that records of attendance are accurate. Children arriving late must report to the school office and the adult bringing them to school must sign the late arrivals book. For the same reason, parents/carers of children leaving the premises early must sign the book giving reason.

Absence in term time

Firstly, we ask that all families carefully consider the timing of any absences, particularly avoiding the first half term in a school year and special events/assessment times.

Westwood Primary does not support absences during term time other than in most **exceptional circumstances**.

If **the only time** an absence can be taken, is in term time and there are exceptional circumstances, then families need to make an application on the school's absence request form **4 weeks in advance to the Headteacher** - Forms are available from the school office. If absences are requested without 4 weeks prior notice these will automatically be unauthorised.

Once an absence request has been made the school office will process your request and the Headteacher may contact the family to discuss the application. Once a decision has been made an acknowledgement slip will be returned to you, advising if the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

Term-time Holidays

Term time-holidays are not supported by the school other than in most exceptional circumstances

Absence Due to Illness

Please telephone the school office on the first day of absence to report your child's absence/illness and on each subsequent day as required.

Absence Due to Medical Appointments

We encourage all medical appointments to be made outside school hours, but understand that this is not always possible. When appointments are made in school time, please can you provide the school office with copies of appointment cards/letters prior to your appointments.

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Westwood Primary School.

Westwood Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- notify the school on the first day of absence in person or by phone

Governors' responsibilities

The Active Learning Trust working in partnership with Westwood Primary School shall Make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Conclusion

Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring that children obtain the best possible outcomes in all aspects of school life. Good attendance supports children's emotional and social health and development.

Good attendance is the best way to safeguard children, it builds confidence and gives children a sense of belonging which ultimately teaches them to contribute to and be responsible for the well-being of others.

Reviewing the policy

The school will review this policy each year in line with the agreed cycle of review.

Policy developed: 2013

Appendix 1

REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 2

Day to Day Arrangements

1. An Attendance leaflet has been produced for parents and is distributed at the start of each academic year and to the parents of all new children starting school. In addition, parents are signposted to the full policy available on the school website.
2. Parents are requested to inform school providing a reason, by 10am on the first day of absence. This information is recorded in the Absence Sheets in Class Registers.
3. The office staff undertakes First-day calling when children are absent from school without explanation. Information from First Day Calling is recorded in the Absence Sheets.
4. When it is not possible to contact parents, the office staff may use emergency contacts to try to make contact with parents.
5. If no contact is made, the office staff informs the headteacher and a letter is sent to parents. (No Reason for Absence Letter)
6. If no contact has been established after 1 week, we follow procedures as outlined in Safeguarding Policy,
7. Children who arrive late for school after the close of the registers are recorded in the Arriving Late/Leaving Early Book. Parents are required to give a reason.
8. Children who leave school early are recorded in the Arriving Late/Leaving School Early Book and parents are required to provide a reason.
9. The attendance managers monitor children arriving late or leaving early and informs the Headteacher when lateness or leaving early becomes persistent. The Headteacher will instruct the attendance managers to send a punctuality letter to parents.
10. When parents telephone school in order to inform of absence, the information is recorded in the Absence Sheets and Absence Book in office.
11. Letters received from parents providing reason for absence are filed in the Absence section of class registers. The information is also recorded in the Absence Sheets.
12. When no reason has been given for absence the office staff will send a letter to parents asking for a reason to be given. (No Reason for Absence Letter)
13. Children's attendance is monitored on a day to day basis by the office staff and attendance managers and concerns are raised with the headteacher.
14. Decisions regarding authorising absence rest with the headteacher.
15. The attendance managers track attendance every week and produces reports for the attention of the Headteacher. Attendance below 90% will be drawn to the attention of the Headteacher.
16. If attendance does not improve within a month or dips below 80%, the Headteacher will instruct the attendance managers to send letters to parents inviting them to come and discuss attendance issues and may refer the child to the Education Attendance Service Officer.
17. At the end of each term the attendance managers send details of each child's attendance (Registration Certificate) to parents
18. All attendance information is stored in a file centrally in the office and is maintained by the attendance managers.