

Attendance Policy



Wayfield Primary School

THE PRIMARY
FIRST TRUST

Reviewed: September 2016

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WAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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The school recognises that good attendance means that your child gets the most out of their school life. Children with poor attendance do less well in tests, miss out on friendship groups and generally get less out of their early schooling.

It is our policy that children will not be taken out of school during term time except in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional leave will be granted in the following circumstances only:

- **To attend a funeral and/or a wedding – 1 day per academic year for each event**
- **To attend an approved examination – 1 day per academic year (evidence will be required)**
- **To attend a sporting event or to take part in a creative arts opportunity – 1 day per academic year (evidence will be required)**

Other Absences

When a child's absence falls below 97% all absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless accompanied by medical evidence. If the child is sent home by the school then this will constitute medical evidence. Wayfield Primary School will follow Medway Council's attendance Service procedures for letters and interventions to improve the attendance of persistent absentees. This may include fining parents (where attendance falls below 85%).

All unauthorised absence has to be reported to the Medway Council's Welfare Office.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrive on time. We will share attendance percentages at each parent's consultation meeting and more frequently where there are concerns. **It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent.** This is a safeguarding matter so that all parties know that your child is safe.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive between 8.40am and 8.55am, when the doors are open and Senior Leaders are on duty to greet children and take any messages. All pupils who arrive after 8:55am need to report to the school office where they will be registered, their meal requirements noted



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and the reason for lateness is recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L'). The register will close at 9.00am. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') This national code counts as an unauthorised absence.

Illness and Medical Appointments

If a child is too unwell to attend school, parents should contact the school before 9.15am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence. As part of our safeguarding procedures, the attendance officer will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

If it is not possible to make contact, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a seven day reply deadline before the absence is recorded as unauthorised. The appropriate national attendance code is entered into the register.

Parents must note that

- a) every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours
- b) an appointment card or verification by the doctor/ dentist/hospital is required
- c) if it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should attend school until the appointment and be returned to school directly after the appointment
- d) if your child is absent due to vomiting, they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last bout of sickness. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school
- e) for more than three days of absence the school requires a written explanation of why the child was absent. The school office will request this if it is not produced
- f) medical certificates are required for absences greater than five days

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason, the school has received notification from a parent or carer and the Head Teacher considers the absence to have been necessary. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Head of School. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Holidays not agreed



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Action for Low Attendance

97%+	Excellent – Well done! This will help all aspects of your child’s progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
90 - 96%	Strive to build on this. The school and parents work to continue to promote full attendance to above to 97%+
Below 90%	Unacceptable – Absence is causing serious concern. It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting the child’s learning. Meetings between home and school to share strategies for improvement will be called. If improvement is not achieved a referral is made to the Attendance Advisory Service (AAP) at Medway Council.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child’s attendance.

Children Missing Education

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Head Teacher must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from the school roll until we have been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced will not be removed from the school roll. They will be reported to the local authority. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

Proceedings for Lateness

If there are more than 2 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed over a two week period, parents will be notified by letter and asked to attend an attendance clinic to discuss the reasons for the lateness. Repeated lateness in a term after registration close will result in the school making a referral to the Attendance Advisory Service.

Local Authority Action

Where there is no improvement in a pupil’s attendance and/or there are at least 10 sessions (5 days) absence in a term the school must consider the following:

Referral to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner

This may include:

- Home visits
- Multi agency meetings
- Sign posting to supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services and Family Group Conference Service.
- Penalty Notice or progression to Prosecution

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance

Penalty Notices are issued by the Attendance Advisory Service in accordance with their Code of



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Conduct for irregular attendance.

- The Attendance Advisory Service issue a warning letter
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the monitoring period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Unauthorised holiday

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 each to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 each if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Unauthorised Holiday Absence

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Advisory Service Code of Conduct.

Rewards for Positive Attendance

The attendance of each class will be tracked and reported to Achievements Assembly each Friday. An attendance league table is displayed in the hall. The class with the best attendance each term will be taken on a trip to the local park.

All children with 97% attendance will be taken on a trip in Term 6 – for academic year 2016-17, this will be a trip to Chessington.

Signed:..... S Hamilton, Head Teacher Date:.....

Signed:..... TBA, Chair of Governors Date:.....



WAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Application for Exceptional Leave

Name of school,(Junior, Infant, both).....

Name of child/children.....

Class(es)

We/I wish to apply for my child(ren) to be absent from school:

From (first day of absence).....

To (date of return to school)

Exceptional leave will be granted in the following circumstances only:

- To attend a funeral and/or a wedding – 1 day per academic year for each event
- To attend an approved examination – 1 day per academic year (evidence will be required)

Please give details:.....

.....

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Name..... Relation to child.....

Signed.....

Schools Response

Please retain this section as proof of authorised absence

Office Use ONLY: Details of Exceptional Leave already granted this academic year:

This request is authorised.

Signed..... Designation.....

This request is **not** authorised because:

Signed..... Designation.....