



WELLESLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Issue No: 13
Date: January 2025

Approved by Governors: 30th January 2025

Attendance

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Change Record Sheet | 1 |
| Summary..... | 2 |
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Aims | 2 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | 2 |
| Governors | 2 |
| Headteacher | 2 |
| Class Teacher | 3 |
| Office Staff..... | 3 |
| Local Authority ‘Education Welfare’..... | 3 |
| Parents and Carers | 4 |
| Administration | 4 |
| Absence | 4 |
| Lateness..... | 4 |
| Illness | 4 |
| Medical or Dental Appointments | 4 |
| Holidays During Term Time | 5 |
| Other Absence..... | 5 |
| Reporting to Parents and Carers | 5 |
| Attendance Codes | 5 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation..... | 6 |
| Attendance - Cause for Concern | 6 |
| Appendix 1..... | 7 |
| Example Letters sent to parents..... | 7 |

Change Record Sheet

| Issue No | Date | Summary of Change | Amended by: |
|----------|--------------|--|---------------|
| 10 | January 2022 | Policy Reviewed | Heather Small |
| 11 | January 2023 | Policy Reviewed Covid amendments removed | Heather Small |
| 12 | January 2024 | Policy Reviewed – added details re Parenting Contracts and Penalty Notices | Heather Small |
| 13 | January 2025 | Added details of LA staged intervention approach. | Heather Small |

Attendance

Summary

This policy will be reviewed every year.

This policy has been reviewed to ensure that it meets the requirements of the equalities impact assessment.

Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. There is a strong link between attendance and achievement. At Wellesley Primary School we provide an environment in which all pupils can feel safe, supported and valued for their individuality. We strive to enable all pupils to achieve at the best of their ability. To this end we work in partnership with staff, pupils, parents, governors and other relevant agencies in order to promote the aims of the policy.

Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Local Authority and multi-agency teams.
- To monitor poor attendance of vulnerable children in accordance with Safeguarding and PREVENT duties.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual internal targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

Headteacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To make a judgement as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To inform the Local Authority if a pupil fails to attend school regularly or if a pupil has been absent for more than 5 school days or more without permission in any ten-week period.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality is an issue.

Attendance

- To inform the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity if a new pupil fails to attend on the arranged date.
- To ensure that children leaving are registered and attending their new school.
- To provide governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- To liaise with the Local Authority if there are ongoing concerns about a child's attendance.
- To coordinate with the relevant Local Authority departments regarding providing work/education for children who are absent for sustained periods of time.

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by office staff.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the SIMS Attendance Manager System.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
- To contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child.
- To notify a parent as early as possible (by 9:30am at the latest) if their child has not arrived at school and we have not been given a reason.
- To notify the Head Teacher of any unexplained absence.
- To support the Head Teacher in providing information to help make a judgement as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- When a child moves school to record the name of the new school and the date on which they start.
- To notify the Local Authority within five days that a new pupil has started.
- To notify the Local Authority if a child's name needs to be deleted from the Admission register (other than when a child has completed their final year).

Local Authority 'Education Welfare'

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.

It is essential that schools comply with these duties so that Local Authorities can follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised. (Please see DfE guidance on Children Missing Education).

Attendance

Parents and Carers

- Parents and Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child/children arrive at school on time (8:35am).
- Parents and Carers must notify the school by 8:45am if their child is going to be absent either by phone or ParentMail.

Administration

- The School uses Attendance Manager provided by SIMS to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

Absence

Lateness

- Pupils arriving after 8.45am must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8:45 am, will be considered as late.
- Pupils arriving after 9.05 am will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment.
- Action to address lateness will be taken. A letter will be sent to carers and parents of children who are late on a regular basis

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 8:45am to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. The school records the reason for the absence and keeps records for the academic year.
- Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence, ideally by 9:30am.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Head Teacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide verbal confirmation of these appointments and this will be recorded as such in SIMS.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Attendance

Holidays During Term Time

Holidays during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances:-

Exceptional Circumstances are defined as:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Exceptional significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis.
- It may be appropriate to make allowances for parents who work for the emergency services and are only granted leave at certain times.

The Head Teacher will consider every above request individually but the following **will not meet the criteria:**

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.
- Parents only being able to take holidays from work at a given time.

Other Absence

Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or not authorise the absence.

Reporting to Parents and Carers

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

Attendance Codes

The following codes will be used to indicate the reason for absence :

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|---|---|---|
| L | - | Late (between 8:45 and 9.05 or after 9.05 if authorised) |
| U | - | Late (after 9.05 – unauthorised absence) |
| M | - | Medical – hospital admission, dental, optician, hospital, doctors. |
| C | - | Other authorised absence – general illness, bereavement, family reasons |
| I | - | Illness |
| H | - | Authorised holiday absence |
| G | - | Unauthorised holiday |
| O | - | Unauthorised |

Attendance

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Attendance data will be collected six times a year to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of un-authorised; and all children with attendance below 90%.
- The attendance of vulnerable groups will also be specifically collected and analysed.
- The Head Teacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governors.
- The Governors will set an internal annual target of attendance and unauthorised absence and review this annually at its first meeting.

Attendance - Cause for Concern

Parents /carers of children who have more than 4 broken weeks each long term will be sent a standard letter informing them of the amount of time their child has been absent from school and the impact this may have had on their education (see Appendix 1).

Parents/Carers of children who have less than 90% attendance over a long term will be sent a standard letter informing them of the amount of time their child has been absent from school and the impact this may have had on their education (see Appendix 1).

Parents/carers of children who have had more than 5 broken weeks for two or more long terms each year or whose attendance drops below 90% each year without good reason will be asked to attend an attendance meeting with the Head Teacher. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss support strategies which can be implemented to improve the attendance of the individual pupil.

If following the meeting, attendance does not improve the school will follow the LA's Staged Intervention Approach to address the issues

https://www.wellesleyschool.co.uk/Key_Information/South_Gloucestershire_Staged_Intervention_Approach_V3.pdf

A request for the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice may be requested if a child has more than ten unauthorised sessions of absence in any ten week rolling cycle.

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Example Letters sent to parents

Dear XXX

We recently carried out our termly attendance audit and we notice from our records that XXX had X 'broken weeks' (weeks with 1 or more absence) out of the XXX weeks last term. Our figures show that their overall attendance is XX%.

Research shows that above all else, broken weeks have the largest impact on children's attainment as they often miss a key lesson during the week. These absences may quite easily be the result of illness and authorised absences which will not be repeated next term.

However, the school will be monitoring all children whose attendance either falls below 90% or who have 4 or more broken weeks in a long term.

Or

We recently carried out our termly attendance audit and we notice from our records that XXX had an attendance figure of XX%. This means that XX missed XX days of school.

These absences may quite easily be the result of illness and authorised absences which will not be repeated next term.

However, the school will be monitoring all children whose attendance either falls below 90% or who have 4 or more broken weeks in a long term.

The intention of this letter is not to alarm you; it is likely that the absences have entirely genuine explanations. However, every child's education is important to us and as such we take a very robust line on monitoring any area which could potentially jeopardise the progress that they deserve to make.

Please feel free to contact the school should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Heather Small

Headteacher

