

Whipton Barton Federation



Attendance Policy

Policy Status:	Active
Policy Ratified on:	
Ratified by:	
Signature:	
Review Due on:	

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age (the start of the term following their fifth birthday) who are on the school's admission roll.

We believe that:

Every child has the right to a quality education, which seeks to maximise their abilities and their potential.

A welcoming, organised learning environment, that supports and celebrates it's learners is a key factor in ensuring children enjoy school and attend regularly.

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. The school's ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

As a school we:

Do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and addressed speedily. We are committed to working in partnership with our parents who have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive each day in good time.

Give priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We have an established communications system which is utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

Will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve attendance issues as quickly as possible. See the procedures we use for achieving this at the end of this document.

We aim to maximise the attendance and punctuality of all children through:

- Providing a rich and stimulating curriculum that will ensure that all children feel inspired and motivated to attend school every day.
- Providing a safe and nurturing environment with staff who have positive relationships with children (in conjunction with our Behaviour and Positive Relationship Policy)
- Monitoring, communicating and supporting families for whom a child's attendance is a cause for concern.
- Analysing attendance data to inform future policy and practice.
- Working closely and making full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.
- Ensuring a consistent approach across the Federation.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Parents and Carers

- Will recognise the importance of a good standard of attendance and their role in achieving this.
- Will not arrange medical appointments during school time wherever possible.
- Will inform the school on the first day of non-attendance.
- Will inform the staff if there is an issue that may lead to an absence.

- Will complete an absence request form for planned absences
- Will provide medical evidence when requested to do so by the school.

Governors

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

Executive Headteacher

- Will have an overview of attendance across the Federation.
- Will ensure Heads of School put in place strategies to improve attendance of persistent absentees and those who are frequently late for school.

Deputy Heads

- Will recognise and celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Will ensure that records are kept of children arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis and contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence.
- Will ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- Will make a judgement about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Will monitor individual pupils, groups and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- Will monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
- Will write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- Will arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Will work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- Will liaise with the Education Welfare Officer to improve the attendance of persistent absentees.
- Will provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.

Class Teachers

- Will provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- Will inform the Deputy Head where there are any concerns about a child's attendance.
- Will organise work to be sent home to children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness where appropriate.

Education Welfare Officer

- Will support the Federation response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.
- Will enforce the law regarding school attendance where absence rates are high.

Absence Requests in Special Circumstances

Parents/carers should consider very carefully any requests for leave of absence for their child/children during term time and if an absence request is to be made an S2 Absence Request form (available from the school offices and Federation website) must be completed. The school will then decide whether or not to approve an absence during term time. However, authorisation will only be granted:

- In exceptional circumstances
- At the discretion of the Head of School
- If the child/children's attendance is above 95%

The Law and requests for term time absence

As of September 2013, an amendment to the *Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006* came in to force and greater clarity was introduced to the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforced the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in 'exceptional circumstances'.

A family holiday is not considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore may not be authorised by the school.

If you would like to request 'leave' to be considered for authorisation due to exceptional circumstances, please request, complete and return an S2 form to the school.

Should you choose to take your child out of school without the authorisation of the school, then a referral to the Education Welfare Officer may be made which could lead to a legal meeting, a penalty notice or a court appearance.

Guidance for Parents and Carers

Key times

School	Register opens (all children to be in school)	Register closes	Lunch	End of day
Infant	9:00am	9:10am	12:15pm – 1:15pm	Nursery 3.00pm Reception 3:10pm KS1 3:15pm
Junior	8:50am	9:00am	12:15pm – 1:15pm	3:20pm

- A child is late if they arrive after the register opens and marked as an unauthorised absence if they arrive after the register has closed.
- If your child arrives after the register has been completed, they must report to the office to ensure that all staff are aware that they are on site and to give them opportunity to order their lunch.
- If a child is absent, you should phone the school by 9.00am on the first day of absence on 01392 467556 (Infant), 01392 466072 (Junior). If your child's absence continues, it is your responsibility to keep the school informed at least every 48 hours.
- Due to local and national guidance, where school does not receive notification from parents of absence within 48 hours, other family contacts will be called. If this does not secure understanding of a child's wellbeing, either a school visit will be made and/or police will be contacted.
- If a pattern of continued absence due to illness starts to emerge, then the school may request medical evidence e.g. appointment card or surgery call log.

Concern Level	<u>Punctuality</u>	<u>Absence</u>	<u>Unauthorised Absence</u>	<u>Illness</u>
1	<p>5 late marks in 20 weeks We hope that by bringing this to your attention, punctuality will be improved. Please be reminded that the register opens at 8:50 in the Junior School and 9:00 in the Infant School and children are marked late after 5 minutes. <i>Please be aware that attendance beyond 10 minutes late is marked as Unauthorised Absence.</i></p>	<p>Attendance falls below 96% Your child's attendance is falling below the national average and the expected standard. There may be a valid reason for this and we wish to work together where support may be needed. Our family Support Worker can assist where minor issues are causing this to be a problem. Please try and ensure that all medical appointments are booked out of school hours where possible. <i>Please be reminded that all absence must be reported to the office or it may be marked as Unauthorised Absence.</i></p>	<p>4 Unauthorised sessions (2 days) within a 6 month period As a result of unauthorised absence or excessive lack of punctuality, your child has now accrued 4 unauthorised sessions. <i>Please be aware these are taken seriously and, as stated below, can escalate to a legal meeting resulting in fines and/or court appearance.</i></p>	<p>5 separate occasions of illness in 10 weeks; 5 full days of illness in 10 weeks; a single, full weeks absence We are concerned at the level of absence due to illness for your child. From this point forwards, <u>all absence as a result of illness or medical appointments will require medical evidence.</u> This can take the form of an appointment card, prescription, Dr call log (to be requested from the receptionist) demonstrating the seeking of advice. <i>Please be aware that any absences for which evidence is not provided will be marked as Unauthorised Absence.</i></p>
2	<p>10 late marks in 20 weeks Punctuality has become a significant issue. Please improve this immediately or there will be need to refer the issue to the Education Welfare Officer.</p>	<p>Attendance falls below 93% As your child's attendance has now fallen below 93% we are required to inform the Education Welfare Officer. <u>Please contact the office to discuss this with a member of SLT to see if there are strategies we can develop to prevent this.</u></p>	<p>8 Unauthorised sessions (4 days) within a 6 month period Further sessions of unauthorised absence mean that you are now at severe risk of Education Welfare Officer intervention. From this point forwards, <u>all absence as a result of illness or medical appointments will require medical evidence.</u> (See the advice in the Illness column for valid evidence).</p>	
3	<p>20 late marks Due to persistent lateness, this matter has now been referred to the Education Welfare Officer</p>	<p>Attendance falls below 90% Attendance is well below the expected standard and is now at the Persistent Absentee rate. From this point forwards, <u>all absence as a result of illness or medical appointments will require medical evidence.</u> (See the advice in the Illness column for valid evidence). It is probable that the Education Welfare Officer will contact you. <i>N.B. As only a few absences can have a big impact on attendance percentages in the first term, while medical advice is required, attendance will be monitored closely for improvement rather than involving the EWO except where there is a history of poor attendance.</i></p>	<p>10 Unauthorised sessions (5 days) within a 6 month period You have now met the threshold for Education Welfare Officer involvement. Details of your child's attendance will be passed directly to them for their consideration.</p>	<p>Non provision of medical evidence upon request These incidents are recorded as Unauthorised Absence</p>