

‘A place where everyone flourishes’

**Pupil**

**Attendance**

**Policy**

**@Willen**

**Approved: November 2017**

**To be reviewed**: **November 2019**

1. **Introduction**

This is a successful primary school and your child plays their part in making it so. We create an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to strive for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they are punctual and attend regularly every day that the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

We recognise that the vast majority of pupils attend school regularly; good attendance and punctuality is the norm. This policy is a guide to all attendance matters and sets out how we will achieve excellence in attendance working in partnership together.

1. **Why regular attendance is so important**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. For Parents/Carers/Guardians, ensuring your child’s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and will result in prosecution.

**Children with an attendance percentage of 90%**

Children who have attendance figures of 90% are missing half a day each week. This equates to 19 full days (nearly four weeks) each school year; which totals 28 weeks lost if attendance is always this poor through a child’s primary school life (Reception to Year 6). This is only 10 weeks short of a full year missed from their education before they reach secondary school.

**Children with an attendance percentage of 80%**

Children who have attendance figures of 80% are missing a full day each week. This equates to 38 full days (nearly eight weeks) each school year; which totals 56 weeks lost if attendance is always this poor through a child’s primary school life (Reception to Year 6). This is one and a half years missed from their education before they reach secondary school.

Children will be monitored closely below 90%. Persistent Absence (PA) is triggered below 85%.

1. **Absence procedures**

**If your child is absent you must:**

* Contact school by 8.50am on each day of absence (01908 690098). If you do not contact us, our Attendance Officer (Mrs Warner) will contact you.
* We follow up each unreported absence to ensure all children are safe and make parents aware that their child is not at school.

1. **Telephone numbers**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your latest contact numbers at all times.

1. **Holidays in term time**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you feel that you have ‘exceptional circumstances’ then a written submission must be made addressed to the School Attendance Officer. We have withdrawn our Holiday Request Form.

1. **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day or the start of the afternoon session they will miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information. Late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. Late arrival can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. The school is open to children from 8.40am and learning begins at 8.50am. **Doors close at 8.50am.** Following lunch, school begins at 1.15pm (1.00pm in EYFS and Year 1).

**How we manage lateness**

The school day officially starts at 8.50am and we expect your child to be inside the school building by this time. Any child arriving after 8.50am will be recorded as Late (‘L’ code used). At 9.05am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site (‘U’ code used), but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This will mean that you face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

**The school will follow Flowchart 1 in Appendix A of this policy for all matters regarding lateness of pupils.**

1. **Children in Early Years**

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

We promote and expect that all children in Early Years attend at or above our 96% target because this sets the standard for years to come.

1. **Promoting regular attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody’s responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

**To help us all to focus on this we will:**

* Give you details on attendance in the school reception area
* Report to you annually on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment and progress
* Send parents whose children’s attendance is causing concern a series of warning letters
* Celebrate good attendance.

1. **Understanding types of absence**

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 any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school with a good reason. This includes:

* Illness
* Medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time
* Emergencies or other unavoidable incidents.

This list is not exhaustive.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, and for which no ‘leave’ has been given. This type of absence can lead to the School and Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

* Parents/carers keeping children off school unreasonably
* Truancy
* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Extended visits to see family
* Medical/sickness given as a reason but not backed up by a medical stamp if requested
* Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (after 9.05am)
* Shopping
* Looking after others
* Birthdays
* Day trips and holidays in term time.

This list is not exhaustive.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never advisable to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. The school employs a Learning Mentor (MrsCole) who has a number of strategies to support children and families. The Learning Mentor can be contacted via the school office or directly by email:

School Office: 01908 690098

1. **School targets and attendance trends**

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The current target is to achieve a whole school percentage higher than 96.0%

The school uses the following scale to judge attendance:

98 – 100% Very Good

96 – 97.9% Good

95 – 95.9% Requires Improvement

90 – 94.9% Poor

89.9% or less Very Poor

1. **Those people responsible for attendance matters in school are:**

Mrs Warner (School Attendance Officer)

Mrs Claire Dale (School Business Manager & Senior Team Member)

Mrs Orr (Deputy Headteacher)

Miss Matthews (Headteacher)

If a parent/carer wishes to know the current attendance percentage of their child/ren then please contact the school office who will be able to assist.

1. **At risk of Persistent Absence (PA) (Below 90%)**

A pupil becomes ‘at risk of PA’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason** (Attendance less than 90%). Absence at this level is doing damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly.

You will be informed by letter if your child’s absence is a particular cause for concern.

**The school will follow Flowchart 2 in Appendix B for pupils whose attendance is below 90%.**

1. **Persistent Absenteeism (PA) (Below 85%)**

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we expect parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark is given priority and you will be informed of this via the school’s warning letters. The school, with the support of the Local Authority, will fine parents/carers where persistent absenteeism is not eradicated.

**The school will follow Flowchart 3 in Appendix C for pupils whose attendance is below 85%.**

1. **Fixed Penalty Notices and Court Proceedings**

This is the last resort for the school but will be applied rigorously in all cases that fall into the fixed penalty/court proceedings categories. The Local Authority Senior Education Welfare Officer will support the school with fixed penalty notices and court proceedings.

Fixed Penalty Notice: £60 in the first instance rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days.

Issued for ‘late after the register closes’ and ‘unauthorised’ absence.

Court Prosecution: up to £2500 fine and 3 months in prison.

Issued for ‘persistent absence from school’.

1. **Taking a child off the school roll**

If we are unable to establish the reason for absence or make contact with parents/carers, we will take a child off the school roll following 20 consecutive days of unauthorised absence. You will be informed in writing before the removal takes place. Any child removed from the roll in this way will be classed as a ‘missing child’. The Local Authority will be informed immediately when we suspect a child is missing.

1. **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote excellent attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure the highest levels of attendance possible.

**Appendix A - Flowchart 1 - Lateness**

**Normal attendance** = Child here before 8.50am.

No further action required.

**Child arrives after 8.50am** – Classroom doors will be closed – Entrance via school office only

* 8.50am – 9.05am ‘L’ code
* 9.05am onwards ‘U’ code.

**Five ‘L’ or ‘U’ codes identified by registration computers during one term (6-8 weeks).**

**Warning Letter 1 issued.**

* Review Period 1 begins.

**RP1**

**(Review Period 1)**

**One school term**

**One or more ‘L’ or ‘U’ codes used during RP1.**

* Warning Letter issued
* RP2 starts
* Attendance Review Panel meeting called.

**No ‘L’ or ‘U’ codes during RP1 (school term).**

* Normal attendance achieved.
* Improvement letter issued

**RP2**

**(Review Period 2)**

**One school term**

**No ‘L’ or ‘U’ codes during RP2.**

* Improvement letter issued.
* Ongoing monitoring by school.

**One or more ‘L’ codes in RP2.**

* Continue RP2 (Another school term).
* Possible sanctions for pupil if late.

**One or more ‘U’ codes used during RP2.**

* If under 10 ‘U’s since Sept continue another RP2. Warning letter issued.
* If 10 ‘U’s or more since Sept = Warning letter issued (pre-Fixed Penalty Notice) & LA Senior Education Welfare Officer contacted to support with legal intervention. RP3 starts.

**One or more ‘L’ codes during RP3.**

* Continue RP3. (Another 25 days).

**No ‘L’ or ‘U’ codes during RP3.**

* Improvement letter issued.
* Ongoing monitoring by school.

**One or more ‘U’ codes in RP3.**

* Fixed Penalty Notice letter issued as 10 ‘U’s have been exceeded.

**RP3**

**(Review Period 3)**

**One school term**

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Review Panel to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

**Please Note - You will be fined by fixed penalty notice if persistent lateness continues**

**-Term equates to 6-8 weeks**

**Appendix B - Flowchart 2 - Children at risk of becoming Persistent Absentees (below 90% attendance but higher than 85%)**

**Expected good attendance = percentage above 96%**

No further action required.

**Below 96%** = Normal attendance monitoring by school each day.

**Percentage drops to below 90%.**

* 90% Warning Letter 1 issued.
* Review Period 1 begins.

**RP1**

**(Review Period 1)**

**One school term**

**No significant improvement during RP1.**

* 90% Warning Letter 2 issued.
* Attendance Review Panel meeting is called.
* GP stamp may be required for any child sickness.
* RP2 begins (1 school term).

**Attendance during RP1 is over 96% and attendance percentage is rising.**

**\*Monitoring ongoing to maintain high attendance**

**No significant improvement during RP2.**

* Senior LA EWO consulted to evaluate case.
* Attendance Review Panel meeting is called.
* GP stamp may be required for any child sickness.
* Consultation on Fixed Penalty Notice begins.

**RP2**

**(Review Period 2)**

**25 school days**

**Attendance during RP2 is over 96% and attendance percentage is rising.**

**\*Monitoring ongoing to maintain high attendance**

**Children who have attendance figures of 90% are missing half a day each week. This equates to 19 full days (nearly four weeks) each school year; which totals 28 weeks lost if attendance is always this poor through a child’s primary school life (Reception to Year 6). This is only 10 weeks short of a full year missed from their education before they reach secondary school.**

**Appendix C - Flowchart 3 - Persistent Absence below 85%**

**Normal good attendance = percentage above 96%**

**No further action required.**

**Close ongoing monitoring to ensure increase is maintained.**

**Percentage drops/is below 90%.**

Flowchart 2 Followed (Appendix B)

**Percentage drops/is below 85%.**

* 85% Warning Letter 1 issued.
* Review Period 1 begins.

**RP1**

**(Review Period 1)**

**One school term**

**No significant improvement during RP1.**

* 85% Warning Letter 2 issued.
* Attendance Review Panel meeting called.
* GP stamp may be required for any child sickness.
* RP2 begins (one scool term).

**Attendance during RP1 is over 96% and attendance percentage is rising.**

**\*Monitoring ongoing to maintain high attendance.**

**\*Support from Learning Mentor and School Attendance Officer ongoing.**

**Attendance during RP2 is over 96% and attendance percentage is rising.**

**\*Monitoring ongoing to maintain high attendance.**

**\*Support from Learning Mentor and School Attendance Officer ongoing.**

**No significant improvement during RP2.**

* 85% Warning Letter 3b issued (pre-Fixed Penalty Notice) or letter 3c issued (Prosecution Warning).
* Local Authority Senior Attendance Officer is contacted to support with legal interventions.
* Second Attendance Review Panel meeting called.
* GP stamp may be required for child sickness.
* RP3 begins (one school term).

**RP2**

**(Review Period 2)**

**One school term**

**Attendance during RP3 is over 96% and attendance percentage is rising.**

**\*Monitoring ongoing to maintain high attendance.**

**\*Support from Learning Mentor and School Attendance Officer ongoing.**

**No significant improvement during RP3.**

* 85% Letter 4 issued.
* Fixed Penalty Notice issued or invite to Pre-Court Interview (£2500 prosecution).

**RP3**

**(Review Period 3)**

**One school term**

**Children who have attendance figures of 80% are missing a full day each week. This equates to 38 full days (nearly eight weeks) each school year; which totals 56 weeks lost if attendance is always this poor through a child’s primary school life (Reception to Year 6). This is one and a half years missed from their education before they reach secondary school.**