



Attendance Policy

Rationale

At Wootton Bassett Infants we believe that excellent education is vital to the lives of all children and to our society as a whole. Whilst it is known that the life chances of children may not be equal from the outset of their lives for various reasons, education can help redress this imbalance and help to ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential.

Regular attendance is an essential foundation of raising pupil attainment. Absence from school can seriously disrupt pupil's continuity of learning. Not only do they miss out on taught lessons, but many children find it difficult to catch up when they return to school.

Aims

We aim to promote excellent attendance and punctuality in the early stages of our children's education in readiness for their ongoing learning journey.

To ensure everyone within the school community understands the procedures for attendance.

In understanding these procedures to recognise the need to challenge, when required, to address any issues of non-attendance.

To fulfil statutory duties in relation to school attendance and encourage, recognise and reward good attendance.

To make use of school resources and/or external agencies to help manage any issues surrounding non-attendance. Such support could be from SENCO, ELSA, CAMHS, Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Officer etc.

For the attendance of every child to be between 95 - 100%.

To ensure any phased transitions are well managed with the aim for full time education to be provided at the earliest time. Where this is not possible, for the school to work with external agencies to ensure the child is being supported in the most effective way.

Attendance: The Legal Framework

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure their children are educated. For most parents/carers this means registering their child at a school and ensuring regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted.

By law schools are required:

- To take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.
- To report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for ten consecutive school days or more without known reason.

By law the attendance register must show every session, whether a pupil is present, absent, attending approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for the absence. All other absences are unauthorised.

The local authority discharges its statutory duty to ensure regular school attendance through Education Welfare Officers within the Education Welfare Service. In doing so it enables schools and parents to meet their respective responsibilities.

Partnership working: roles and responsibilities

The headteacher has the role of improving and maintaining good attendance.

The classteacher has the role of ensuring accurate registration and in completing the register to pass on any concerns of non-attendance or lateness to the headteacher or member of the safeguarding team is appropriate.

The admin staff are responsible for maintaining all first day contact procedures.

The parents role is to ensure their child arrives to school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn. To work in partnership with the school and take an active interest in their child's education. To work in partnership with the school and other agencies to resolve problems relating to non-attendance.

The children have a responsibility to make sure they follow school procedures when answering the register, both in the morning and afternoon.

Procedures to monitor and manage attendance

Within School:

Within school, registers are taken twice a day by the class teacher or designated adult in his/her absence (such as a supply teacher). The school registers are taken at 9am and 1pm.

In the morning registers are taken up to the office no later than 9.20am. From this time registers are considered closed. If a child arrives after registration (9.05am) but before 9.20am the child is required to come to school via the school office and are marked as late while the register remains open.

In some cases, due to the nature of a child's needs the school may make an agreement with parents about arriving slightly later or leaving slightly earlier to avoid a period of noise and heavy traffic. Where there is an agreement in place, this is documented and signed by both school and parent and is reviewed regularly.

There is a use of consistent codes within the register which all staff are made aware of and are kept within the register.

There is an agreed and consistent approach to non-attendance and lateness which is managed in the following way:

- The classteacher is responsible for ensuring consistency between classes when marking the register and monitors children who are arriving to school consistently late without justifiable cause or without an agreement in place.
- The admin officer is also responsible for monitoring lateness. Doing so through the use of a signing in policy for all children arriving after registration, with doors locked at 9.05am.
- This information is fed to a member of the safeguarding team or senior leadership team who will review information every six weeks. Contact with parents is always sought as the first response with a conversation face to face, telephone conversation or letter used as the first response. This contact is recorded and monitored for impact.
- Where absence is causing a concern there are similar protocols in place. Classteacher and admin staff monitor attendance which is fed to a member of the safeguarding team or senior leadership team every term. Where a child's attendance decreases the following systems are used:
 - The school aim for attendance of 95%.

- When this drops to 90% and without a reason, contact is made with the parents. This could be in the form of a meeting, telephone conversation or letter. The impact of this is monitored.
- Where attendance decreases to 85% and there has been no response from any correspondence a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer for involvement.

Home-school:

- Contact from the parent is expected on the first day of absence and everyday thereafter, where appropriate. This contact is usually made to the admin officer who will record the reason why.
- This contact is specified in the home/school agreement parents sign on arriving at school.
- Medical and dental appointment are encouraged to be taken out of school but parents are asked to inform the school of dates in advance where this has not been possible.
- Parents are discouraged from requesting leave of absence for holidays during term time unless circumstances are exceptional. These would need to be discussed with the Headteacher.

Strategies for improving and maintaining good attendance.

Attendance is always encouraged and monitored throughout the school.

Where a child requires individual support, a personalised approach to learning is offered. This could be through phased transition, adapting pick up and drop off times, arranging meet and greets alongside a range of in class support.

An audit of attendance is made each term by the headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead

Monitoring and Evaluations

This policy is reviewed annually.¹⁹

An attendance report is provided to Governors at every meeting.