



Attendance Policy

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. Windale Primary School will consistently work towards a 100% attendance for all children and this policy details how we aim to achieve that.

Section 1. Policy Aims, Objectives and Purpose

Aims

- To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance.
- To ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves and each other and strive to attain them.

Objectives

- To achieve at least 96%+ attendance rate.
- To promote partnership between the parents/ carers and the school, working for the benefit of the child's learning.
- To regularly update stakeholders with information regarding absences.
- To involve other agencies when all possible school based supportive measures have been put in place.

Purpose

The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for all stakeholders:

- Pupils
- Parents/ Carers
- Staff
- Governors/IEB members

Section 2. Policy Expectations

Expectations of pupils:

- That they will work with their families to attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 96-100%.
- That they will work with their families to arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.

Expectations of parents/ carers:

- That they will ensure their child(ren) attend(s) school, aiming for a 96-100% attendance rate.
- That they will contact the school as soon as it is reasonably practical (on the same day) if their child is not able to attend school, with a verbal explanation of why the child is/was absent
- To ensure that their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day.



- To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To refrain from taking their child out of school for holidays or occasional days, unless it is under exceptional circumstances and it has been previously arranged in communication with the Headteacher. Families may be required to attend a meeting with the Headteacher or Attendance Lead.

Expectations of school:

- To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence/absence.
- To make early contact with parents/carers when a child fails to attend.
- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required.
- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance.
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted and celebrated.

Section 3. School Procedures with Regards to Attendance

Registration

- Registration periods are 8.45 – 9.00am and either 1.00 – 1.05pm. Registers will be completed during these periods.
- If no information, regarding the absence of a child, has been received by the time the register closes, the First Day Response Worker (FDRW) will telephone the parent/carer to check the reason for absence. This process will be repeated on the next day, if the child is still absent.
- If there is still no reason given for the absence, or letter of explanation on the child's return, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- If there are particular concerns about a child or family then school staff will visit the house.

Lateness

The morning registration period is 8.45 – 9.00am and the registers will remain open till 9.20 am. If a child arrives after the register has closed at 9.20 am the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless there is an acceptable explanation. Where the absence at registration is due to an early morning medical appointment, then the appropriate absence code will be entered. Parents/ carers are encouraged to make medical/ dental appointments outside school hours whenever possible.

Persistent lateness

If the lateness is persistent and parents/ carers fail to work with school to address the issues, the matter can be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence



The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Headteacher, following statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance.

Authorised absence

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parents that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence. **If a child has a parent contract due to poor attendance, then a doctor's letter will be needed for any sickness absence lasting longer than two days.**
- If the child has a medical appointment that cannot be made outside of school hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Evidence of appointments is always required.
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures, then this will be an authorised absence.

An absence may not be authorised, ***even if the parents give a reason***, if the absences are persistent or the reason is inappropriate. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Unauthorised absence

Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence.
- Absence for a shopping trip or looking after a younger child at home.
- A trip or holiday.
- Any absence that is not considered by the Headteacher to be as a result of extenuating circumstances.

Holiday Absence

The Headteacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Requests for leave will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Parent/ carers should seek permission from the Headteacher prior to any such absence and they may be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher.

If a holiday request is refused by the school, but the child is still taken on holiday, the matter can be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service.

Section 4. Response to Non Attendance:



- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by parents.
- Where there has been no response, staff may attend the home address of the child. Where there continues to be no response to the school intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the school will follow the missing children procedures. See link below:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf
- If a child's attendance slips below 90% or the child is repeatedly late, the school will initially write to parents/carers expressing concerns and a parent attendance contract will be put in place. If the child's attendance does not improve then the school will follow County guidance and fine the parents/carers.

Legal Proceedings

The Education Act 1996, Section 444 and the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23, gives powers to the Local Authority to initiate a range of legal procedures if parents/carers fail to ensure an appropriate education for their child. These procedures include a Penalty Notice Warning, an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Order or prosecution which could result in a parent/carer being fined, being required to undertake unpaid work in the community and in extreme cases a term of imprisonment.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice which will result in a fine or could lead to further legal action through the courts.

Section 5. Incentive Schemes for 96% and Above Attendance:

Windale Primary School will select and employ a range of strategies to promote and reward good attendance. These could include:

- Termly certificate for individuals with attendance of 96% or above.
- Termly rewards, ranging from certificates to raffles, for children with attendance of 96% and above.
- Weekly class initiatives such as Awesome Attendance.
- A certificate for improved attendance will be given as appropriate.
- Parents will receive reports on their child's level of attendance at Parent consultations twice a year and in their end of year report.

Section 6. Monitoring and Evaluating Effectiveness

- Attendance data will be checked termly (six times) by the school Attendance Team to identify any issues.
- The school will work using national benchmarking, in our monitoring and evaluation of the attendance and registration procedures in the school.



SUMMARY

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- a 96% + attendance rate
- a positive partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
- clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by all stakeholders

Windale Primary School will review the Policy every three years unless circumstances require an earlier review e.g new legislation.

Policy written by: Katie Geran-Haq

Policy written: April 2019

Review date: April 2022

Ratified by Governors: April 2019



Appendix A

School Absence Codes:

Symbols in Registers

Presence

/ \ Presence is recorded as an oblique stroke in the morning and an oblique stroke in the reverse direction in the afternoon

Holiday for all

L Indicates the child was late but arrived within the prescribed period
Authorised absence (zero with appropriate code within it)

C Other circumstances (bereavement, agreed special occasions, performances, other approved absences not covered by other codes)

E Excluded

H Family holiday (for which leave has been granted in advance)

I Attending interview eg with prospective employer or with another educational establishment

M Medical and dental appointments, confirmed illness

N No reason yet provided

R Day of religious observance for the religious body to which the parents belong

S Approved study leave (maximum of 10 school days in any one year)

T Traveller child travelling

V Approved educational activity

B Pupil receiving education off site

P Approved sporting activity (participation in/attendance at)

W Approved work experience



X Only staff should attend

V Educational visit or trip (UK or overseas)

Y Enforced closure

O Main mark for unauthorised absence

∅ Late (after registration closes). Should be accompanied by explanatory note to avoid confusion where it might appear that an absence was merely being changed to present because of a mistake