

West Melton Primary School



Attendance Policy

Date approved by Governing Body: April 2018

Review Date: April 2019

Z Norris

Statement of Intent

- West Melton Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of progress and achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the learning opportunities presented to them.
- One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good and better, punctual attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- The Governors Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents and carers, have a duty to promote full attendance at West Melton Primary School.
- Full attendance is essential to the all round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963

This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2016) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time.. Poor attendance undermines their education and can put pupils at risk of educational under-achievement and encourage anti-social behaviour.

Absence Procedures

- Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence and **each day** there after.
- Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the **school office** where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- A **phone call** will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- Parents should keep school up to date with contact details.

The Role of the School Staff

School Leadership has overall responsibility for attendance.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher notifies school attendance officers of children whose attendance is causing concern.

The Attendance officer and Learning Mentor will ensure that:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence.
- Where there has been no communication, we will contact Early Help/ Education Welfare Service.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes).
- Parents are informed termly of a child's attendance figure.

Appropriate strategies are put into place to support pupils and families whose attendance is causing concern .

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines: **"Absence"** as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

An **"authorised absence"** as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

An **"unauthorised absence"** as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

“Persistent absenteeism” as:

- Missing **10 percent** or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

Children Missing Education

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Local Authority. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

Registration

Class teachers will accurately register pupils, twice a day. This will occur before the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Late attendance. For pupils who arrive after the register at **8.45am** has been taken but before the register has been closed, the register should be marked L. Where the pupil arrives after the register has closed, the absence will be marked as U. In this case it becomes unauthorised. This mark may be adjusted where an authorised reason is provided and accepted by the school.

Where a child is not present for registration, the parent/carer should inform the school why the child is not attending. It is the parent’s responsibility to contact the school. Please note where no contact is made the absence will automatically be marked as unauthorised, O code must be used.

The school should contact parent/carer on the first day of a pupil’s absence. Where the absence continues and there is no contact the school will phone/text, within 3 days, to the parent/carer requesting an immediate response. After 10 unauthorised sessions Early Help should be consulted. (Should the school have any concerns with regard to the child’s safety, then Social Services or the Police may be informed at any stage of the absence).

Authorising Absence for Exceptional Circumstances

Only the School Leadership can authorise absence for approved reasons. The absence must be unavoidable. School Leadership is not obliged to accept a parent’s explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified. Where there is continued sickness, schools can request medical evidence (not necessarily a Medical Certificate, e.g. Appointment Card/Prescription) before authorising further absence and schools can make a referral to the School Nurse.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent and school.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will **not** be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates

- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Holidays
- Headlice/haircuts.

Holidays in Term Time

No holidays in term time will be authorised.

However, in line with the guidance on The Education Regulations 2006, up to 10 days holiday leave may be agreed in exceptional circumstances such as:

For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupils' education.

When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

In such exceptional circumstances, parents need to make an application in writing to the Headteacher at least 6 weeks before the start date of the proposed holiday. Family holidays will in all cases be routinely refused.

A Penalty Notice will be issued in advance to each parent for each child for holiday absence in term time that has not been authorised by the school.

Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any [unauthorised absence](#)
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

Religious Observances

The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.

Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

Monitoring Attendance

The school has a 'five-step' approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all of these steps or even to carry them out in the order listed. Responsible staff will use discretion and discuss each case carefully.

1. Where there has been no contact from parents, first day calling for all pupils with a record of the reason logged.
2. Discussion with Headteacher, Learning Mentor, Attendance officer and possibly Early Help to identify pupils with attendance below 90%, monitoring trends in pupil attendance and lateness. Letters expressing concern to parents are in place.
3. Invitation to meet with school staff. Possible referral to Early Help.
4. Invitation to School and WPT attendance panels.
5. Initiate an Early Help Assessment.

Reasons for absence are recorded and retained by the school. When a referral to the Education Welfare Service is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings will be attached.

Attendance information will be provided for teachers.

- 95 - 100% attendance - **class teacher** to monitor and report any concerning patterns to Attendance Officer/learning mentor
- 90 - 95% attendance – **class teacher** to monitor and report those whose attendance is declining to Attendance Officer/ Learning Mentor
- Below 90% - monitored by Attendance Officer/Learning Mentor on a weekly basis and the five step process initiated.
- Action will be taken by the Attendance Officer and possible Early Help for those children whose attendance is consistently below 90%.

Attendance Awards

We promote excellent attendance as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding / improving attendance.

- All pupils achieve a dojo/proud point for each day they attend school on time. These can be spent in the rewards shop.
- Attendance figures are shared in assemblies for best class of the week who will receive 'golden time' as a reward.
- Certificates and trophies are awarded for 100% attendance and >98% attendance at the end of each term.
- Excellent attendance is celebrated on the school website, class dojo and at the annual Presentation Evenings.
- Recognition is made of improving attendance for individual / groups of students.
- Excellent/improving attendance is shared with parents/carers.
- Attendance figures are recorded on the monitoring reports sent to parents/carers and excellence / improvement is praised by class teachers.
- Y6 children with 2 of more consecutive years of 100% attendance will be rewarded at the annual WPT awards event.

Attendance Actions, Roles & Responsibilities

Time Scale	Attendance profile	Actions to be taken	Who by/who with
Daily	Any absence	Weekly 'absence awareness' form to be completed. Any known reasons passed on. (appendix 1) Staff to check for regular absence on form , highlight any for 3 days or more passing this to Learning mentor and office staff. Log any reoccurring concerns on to cpoms	Support staff/teachers
Day 1	Absence without reason	Weekly 'absence awareness' form to be completed. Any known reasons passed on. (appendix 1) First-day-of-absence contact	Support staff & teachers. School Administrative Officer/Attendance Officer C Marshall
Day 3	No response or concern about explanations	Phonecall & Letter from school to parent/carers	Learning Mentor, R Pilley Attendance Officer, C Marshall
Day 6 or further 3 days	No response or concern about explanations	Parents/carers to be invited to school meeting. Formal action plan to support attendance to be agreed, individual attendance targets to be included. Date set for further meeting to review plan.	Learning Mentor, R Pilley Attendance Officer, C Marshall HT
Half termly	Attendance monitoring	Attendance monitoring- trackers to be completed/updated and shared with teaching staff. SLT Certificates & reward for 100% attendance. Attendance meeeting letters to be issued.	Learning Mentor, R Pilley Attendance Officer, C Marshall
Approx. 6 Weeks (NB sooner if child completely absent)	Further unauthorised absence Attendance below 90%	Meeting to review plan and agree a request for support from Early Help Services or referral to the AO* consideration of a Penalty Notice to be issued (if 85% or below)	Learning Mentor, R Pilley Attendance Officer, C Marshall Governor HT WPT Leader
Legal Action	Further unauthorised absence	Early Help services to consider initiating legal action or school staff to refer to the AO for school- initiated prosecution (if attendance below 85%, referral has not been made to Early Help Services or to the AO for a Penalty Notice).	Early Help services Attendance Offive LA

Day	Absent Pupils	Any reasons	Contacted Home by ..
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

Half Termly Class Attendance Tracker.

Tracker Date: _____ Class: _____

Level of Attendance	96% or above. Good attendance – rewards needed
Pupils	
Level of Attendance	Below 96% Monitoring attendance
Pupils	
Level of attendance	Below 93% At risk of PA – raise awareness with parents
Pupils	
Level of attendance	Below 90% Persistant absense attendance meeting & EH referral
Pupils	
Level of attendance	Below 85% significantly low. Attendance panel meeting. EH assessment.
Pupils	

ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART

Below 96% - Wave 1

Letter 1 - initial concern
3 week monitor, 6 week review - follow up letter or text to celebrate improvement

Below 93% - Wave 2

Letter 2 - meeting with HT/LM/AO
Action plan put in place to improve attendance
Possible referral to Early Help
Review 6 weeks

Below 90% - Wave 3

Letter 3 - meeting with WPT/HT/LM and Chair of Govs (WPT headed paper)
Action Plan written/Referral to Early Help
6 weeks to improve
PA leaflet

Below 85% - Wave 4

Letter 4 - Enforcement
Possible prosecution

LETTER 1

Date 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you about **(name's)** current level of attendance which is **0.00%**.

Here at West Melton Primary School we are aiming for all students to achieve a minimum of 95% attendance, which is the national average. I am sure that you will agree that **(name's)** current level of attendance is not satisfactory for **(him/her)** to be able to fulfil **(his/her)** her true potential.

Should you feel that there are any issues regarding your child's attendance that we are not fully aware of, please contact me on 01709 760538.

We are going to closely monitor **(name's)** attendance and would appreciate your efforts in supporting us. If **(his/her)** attendance does not improve we will contact you again to arrange an appointment in school.

I wish to advise you that if **(name's)** attendance does not improve I may request the Local Authority to consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. From 1st September 2013 Fixed Penalty Notices are £60.00 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120.00 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

Yours sincerely

Z Norris

Mrs Z Norris
Head Teacher

LETTER 2

Date 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

As you know the attendance team has continued to monitor (name's) attendance over that last few weeks. Unfortunately the situation has not improved significantly. (Name's) current attendance from the beginning of the academic year is still only (percentage attendance) %.

We would like to invite you to the school to discuss how we can work together and improve (name's) attendance in school. An appointment has been made for you to attend school to see myself on (date/time).

If you are unable to attend this appointment please contact us on 01709 760538 to rearrange. In the event that we do not hear from you and (name's) attendance does not improve we will inform the Wickersley Partnership Trust and further action will be taken.

I wish to advise you that if (name's) attendance does not improve I may request the Local Authority to consider issuing a Fixed penalty Notice. From 1st September 2013 Fixed Penalty notices are £60.00 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120.00 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

I hope we will be able to improve the situation quickly.

Yours sincerely

Z Norris

Head Teacher

LETTER 3

Date 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

As you are aware, *(name's)* attendance at West Melton Primary has been a cause for concern for several *(weeks/months)*. Unfortunately there has been little improvement in the situation and as a result we now ask that you attend an Attendance Panel meeting here in school to discuss ways in which we can improve your child's attendance. A representative from the Wickersley Partnership Trust will be present at the Panel along with the Chair of Governors, an Assistant head teacher, the Learning Mentor and the Attendance officer. This meeting will be held on *(date/time)*.

Should you fail to attend this meeting we will discuss the situation with your child in your absence and the Learning Mentor may contact you to discuss the situation with you.

Should you feel that there are any exceptional reasons for *(name's)* absence that the school may not be aware of please contact myself or the school office on 01709760538.

I wish to advise you that if *(name's)* attendance does not improve I may request the Local Authority to consider issuing a Fixed penalty Notice. From 1st September 2013 Fixed Penalty notices are £60.00 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120.00 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

Yours sincerely

Z Norris

Head Teacher

Date

Dear Parent/Carer of xxxxxxxx

Thank you, once again, for attending the Wickersley Partnership Trust 'Attendance Panel' meeting in school on Date.

As you discussed with the 'Trust Attendance Panel', you agreed the following actions that must now take place if your child is to reach their revised attendance target.

Actions include:

You will recall that you are invited to a six-week review which has been organised for Date – further details will follow closer to the day. I really do hope that you will be to attend this review meeting and continue to work together, with the school, to improve your child (ren's) attendance.

School attendance is SO important and as you are aware it is every parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

Yours Sincerely

Mr. A. Jessop
Academy Executive Improvement Partner
Wickersley Partnership Trust

E-mail: ajessop@wickersleypt.org

Date

Dear Parent/Carer of xxxxxxxx

As you are aware, a group consisting of senior representatives of the Trust, School and the Local Governing Board held a Wickersley Partnership Trust 'Attendance Panel' meeting in school on Date.

Unfortunately, as you were unable to attend the 'Trust Attendance Panel', the group discussed the poor attendance of your child (ren) in your absence and agreed the following actions that must now take place if your child is to reach their revised attendance target.

Actions include:

You are invited to a six-week review which has been organised for Date – further details will follow closer to the day. I really do hope that you will be to attend this review meeting and work together with the school to improve your child (ren's) attendance.

School attendance is SO important and as you are aware it is every parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

Yours Sincerely

Mr. A. Jessop
Academy Executive Improvement Partner
Wickersley Partnership Trust

E-mail: ajessop@wickersleypt.org

LETTER 4

Date 2018

Dear (Parent/carer name)

As you are aware, (name's) attendance at West Melton Primary has been a cause for concern for several months and despite previous communications there has been no significant improvement in the situation.

I wish to advise you that due to no satisfactory improvement in (name's) attendance, despite offers of support, I will now request the Local Authority to consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. From 1st September 2013 Fixed Penalty notices are £60.00 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120.00 per parent per child if paid within 28 days.

Yours sincerely

Z Norris

Head Teacher

Referral for consideration at LA FPN Panel

FPN 1

Confirmation of pupil absence in regard to the issue of a Penalty Notice relating to unauthorised absence from school

School:

Pupil Details:

Name:

Year

D.O.B

Address:

M / F

Parent/Carer details: (this must include the full name and date of birth of the Parent(s)/Carer(s):

1)Name:

D.O.B

Address:

Tel.No:

2) Name:

D.O.B

Address:

Tel. No:

Dates of Absence:

I confirm that the pupil named above had unauthorised absences during the period

Monday the

to Friday the

(13 week period from date of letter 1 onwards)

And that these absences have been recorded by the school as unauthorised (O and/or G).

Declaration:

I confirm that the details contained on this form are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed:

Head Teacher

Date

Name:

Please return the completed form and associated documents to:-

ewsenforcement@rotherham.gov.uk or alternatively by first class post to
Education Welfare Service, 1st Floor, Wing B, Riverside House, Main Street,
Rotherham, S60 1AE. **N.B Please do not use the blue bag post.** See reverse for documents checklist.

Please ensure that the following documents are attached:

1. An attendance certificate with the unauthorised absence code (O and /or G)
2. An attendance certificate showing the percentage attendance for the previous academic year
3. The school's 3 letters to parent(s) outlining their concerns around attendance and inviting them into school for arranged meetings
4. The minutes/report from the attendance panel meeting held in school
5. The school's letter to the parent(s) to say they are referring the matter to the Local Authority with the intention of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice

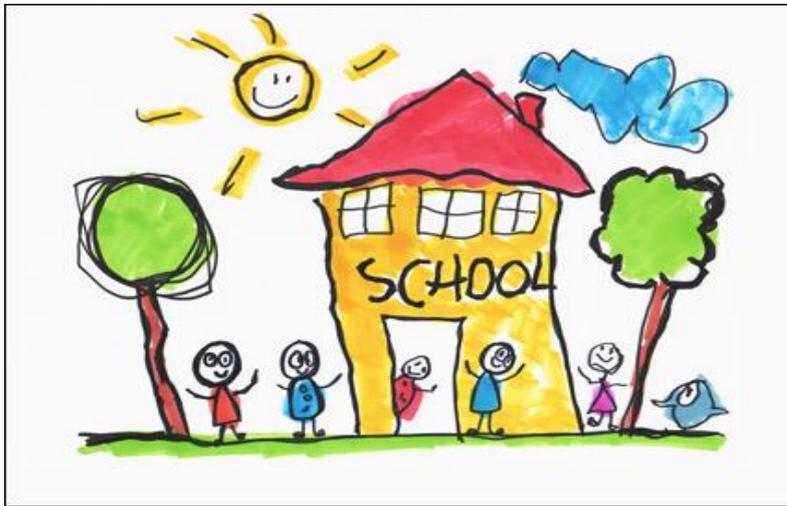
If all of the above are not included the Local Authority will not be able to process the application.

The Education Welfare Service must receive the referral within 1 week of the school's letter to the parent(s) to say they are referring the matter to the Local Authority with the intention of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE USE ONLY

DATE RECEIVED:

WEST MELTON PRIMARY



Attendance Matters

Dear Parent

I have to inform you that your son/daughter **Name of Pupil** has been identified as a Persistent Absentee (PA) student.

The Government have issued criteria to schools to identify PA students - these are students who have 10% or more absence from school.

Currently **Name of Child** has an attendance of%.

Schools and Local Authorities have been asked to take action to try to reduce the number of PA students. We would like to invite you to help us resolve this matter to prevent further actions from the Local Authority.

The law says that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. The Government are asking the Local Authority to take speedy action through the Courts where there is evidence of persistent absence.

In school we will be looking at ways to improve your son's/daughter's attendance. Can we reiterate that you contact us before 9.00am if your child is going to be absent from school and always keep us up to date so that our records can be noted correctly. Please get in touch with us if there is anything we can help you with or you require additional support.

The Local Authority will also offer support in the first instance. We are both asking for your co-operation to resolve this matter to prevent any further action which will inevitably cause distress.

Please ensure that **Name of Pupil** attends school regularly.

