

# Attendance Policy

Member(s) of staff responsible	Headteacher
Governor responsible	Chair of Curriculum
Committee responsible	Full Governors
Date agreed with staff	September 2023
Date discussed with pupils	September 2023 – via teachers
Frequency of policy review	Annual
Date next review due	September 2024

#### **Document Version Control**

Issue No.	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1.1	Nov 2014	Complete update/rewrite
1.2	March 2017	Annual, communication with governors
1.3	Nov 2018	Change to the Request for Absence form Revised policy changes and approval from governors.
1.4	March 2019	Changes to include updated County Council guidance (January 2019) and school procedures.
1.5	Sept 2020	No changes
1.6	Sept 2021	Changes to the morning routine
1.7	Sept 22	Updated with new school start time
1.8	November 2022	Updated inline with the School Attendance Guidance May 2022 - Regular attendance defined - Change in Absence Request form
1.9	July 2023	<ul> <li>Updated inline with advice offered at</li> <li>Attendance meeting by the Local Authority</li> <li>Regular attendance defined</li> <li>'When should I send my child to school?' advice poster from the NHS added as an Appendix (2) (shared in the first assembly (23/24) back in September 2023</li> <li>Key legislation added</li> <li>'School Attendance: Information for Parents and Carers' – Appendix 3</li> </ul>



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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Warden Hill Primary School is committed to maximising the achievement of all our pupils and there is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement. We aim to promote regular attendance and good punctuality in order to ensure all our pupils achieve their full potential.

The school expects a pupil to attend every day that the school is open to them. This is how what we define as 'regular attendance'.

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.

For our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital that they are at school, on time, every day unless the reason for the absence if unavoidable. Attainment, as well as confidence with peers and staff all depend on good attendance.

Improving attendance is a school priority. The school has set itself a target for attendance to be above the nationally expected 95% and for the number of pupils deemed to be Persistently Absent – pupils with attendance below 85% – to be reduced.

#### LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the <u>working together to improve school</u> <u>attendance</u> from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on <u>school attendance parental responsibility measures</u>. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)</u>
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

#### 1) AIMS AND SCOPE

The aims of our attendance policy are:

• To maximise the attendance of all children



- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all.
- To monitor, communicate with and support children and families where attendance is a cause for concern.
- To work in partnership with parents to resolve any attendance issues.
- To analyse attendance data to inform future policy and practice.
- To work with the educational entitlement and Inclusion Team, Social Care and Health Care to improve attendance.

#### 2) STRATEGIES

At Warden Hill, attendance is a priority and is promoted by the following strategies:

- Good attendance is expected
- Attendance targets are set for the school year.
- Parents/Carers are informed of the school's attendance.
- Attendance data is analysed and informs future planning.
- Governors are regularly kept informed of attendance figures through the Head Teacher's Report to Governors.
- Support and intervention is provided where poor attendance continues.
- Pupils are provided with a secure, happy and stimulating environment where they are valued and welcomed so that they feel their presence in school is important.

#### 3) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Parents/Carers will:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly and on time, appropriately dressed, equipped and ready to learn.
- Let the school office know before 9.30 am *at the latest* on the first day of absence from school to explain why their child is absent and when they expect them to return to school. This can be done via telephone or on the Xpressions APP.
- Let the school know if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available support or help can be provided.
- Seek permission from school prior to any absence that is not illness.
- Understand that there is **no entitlement** for parents to take pupils on holiday during term time and that holidays in term time are not an automatic right.
- Notify the school in writing if they intend to remove their child permanently from the school for any reason.

**Note**: If a parent/carer wishes to take a child out of school for **any** reason, please fill in our '*Declaration of Absence Request Form*'. We ask that a separate form is



completed for each child you are intending to take out of school. We will then invite you in to have an open conversation about the planned absence. We value this honesty and it is crucial to avoid any pupil being put in the position of having to be deceitful about the reason for their absence when they return to school.

#### Governors will:

- Monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures at each full governor meeting.
- Set targets for attendance annually (agreed in each September Full Governor meeting)
- Report on the attendance data on the school website.

#### The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that everyone at school sees attendance as a priority.
- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and parents.
- Be available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors
- Remind parents, at least annually, of attendance procedures.
- Oversee attendance procedures with the school's attendance officer. *The school administrator will:*
- Record the names of all absent pupils by 10am daily.
- Contact the parents/carers of any child who is absent from school on the first day of absence, if a satisfactory reason has not been given. This will be initially be a message on the Xpression APP, which will then be followed by a telephone call if a reply has not been received by 10am. This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety, as well as their regular school attendance.
- Record any child who arrives after 8:50am, together with the reason for lateness.
- Record children arriving late or leaving early, with the reason, on a daily basis in the 'pupil signing out book'.
- Monitor lateness and where the register shows 4 separate late marks over a two week period, inform the school's attendance officer.
- Provide the Headteacher with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the school's policy and make fair decisions about attendance.
- Update SIMS regularly with attendance information.
- Update other data management systems with termly attendance

#### The School's Attendance Officer will in conjunction with SLT:

- Write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about a child's attendance.
- Work in partnership with the families of persistent absentees and work towards improving attendance.



- Communicate with any families whose child's attendance drops below 95% (without apparent medical reason), discussing the school's policy and ways in which the school can support the family in improving attendance.
- Work with families whose children are persistently late for school.
- Communicate concerns about attendance issues to the Headteacher.
- Produce **termly** attendance reports, including overall attendance and by class and share these at each full governor meeting (see Headteacher's report to Governors).

#### Class Teachers will:

- Emphasise the importance of attendance for successful learning through the praise and celebration of good attendance.
- Provide an accurate record of attendance by taking the class register promptly at 8:45 am and 1.15pm, marking any child as late who arrives between 8.50am and 9.15 am.
- Respond promptly to any issues raised in the weekly analysis of attendance in collaboration with the school's attendance officer and the Headteacher, if appropriate.
- Log any discussions with parents concerning attendance.
- Organise for work to be sent home for any child who is expected to be away for a prolonged period through illness.
- Report attendance (%) to parents on academic reports.
- Discuss the importance of good attendance at year group Curriculum Evenings.

As a school, we follow the Government's guidance on School Attendance as outlined by this document, which clearly states what is expected from the school, the parents the Local Authority for **all** pupils (including SEN and pupil's with a social worker) at risk of becoming persistently absent, persistently absent pupils and severely absent pupils. Please note we are a maintained school for reference when reading the table: <u>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/at</u> <u>tachment\_data/file/1073619/Summary\_table\_of\_responsibilities\_for\_school\_att</u> <u>endance.pdf</u>

#### 4) SCHOOL TIMES

We expect all children to be in their classroom by 8.45am and they are permitted to arrive from 8.35am onwards. At 8.45 the register will be taken.

Key Stage 2 children are to walk onto school site via the Key Stage 2 blue gate, walk around the building and enter the appropriate door that leads directly to their classroom. Class teachers welcome the children into their classroom and a teacher assistant will be in the classroom supervising the children as they make their way in. Key Stage 1 children walk onto school site using our entrance by the nature area and enter classrooms via outside doors.

Children who arrive after 8.50am must report to the school office so that their attendance and lateness can be recorded.



The school day finishes at 3.15pm. If any child needs to leave before the end of the day, parents/carers must contact the school office with the reason. Children must then be collected from the school office and signed out by the parent/carer.

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day at 3.15pm. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns, with parents in the first instance and then if necessary, with other agencies. If the problem persists, the school has the right to place the pupil in after school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.

#### 5) ILLNESS

Parents/Carers must contact the school on the first day of absence by 9:15 am *at the latest* to provide the reason for the absence and, where possible, on each subsequent day of absence.

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will initially contact you on the Xpression APP. This will be followed by a telephone call if a reply has not been received by 10am. This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety, as well as their regular school attendance.

Please see Appendix 2 for an updated poster from the NHS. 'Is my child too ill for school.'

#### 6) AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absence is when a pupil:

- Is absent with prior permission from the school
- Is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dentist appointment,
- Is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance.
- Has suffered a family bereavement.
- Has been excluded.

#### 7) UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Unauthorised absence is when a pupil:

- Is absent and no explanation, or an unacceptable explanation, is given.
- Is away from school on a holiday

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked accordingly when a child is on an educational /school visit, is attending an approved off site activity or is receiving special offsite tuition.



#### 8) REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME (INCLUDING HOLIDAYS)

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (England) remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. Consequently, there is now NO legal entitlement to time off during term time. The amendments make it clear that the Headteacher may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. The principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. The requirement for exceptional circumstances means that the vast majority of requests for holidays will be refused.

It is important to note that if leave is granted, the Headteacher can also determine the number of school days a child can be away.

If a request for 10 or more days is refused, but parents choose to take the leave/holiday anyway, this will constitute an unauthorised absence. This may result in *the issue of a fixed penalty notice* which is a fine that is issued to each parent, for each child that they are planning on taking out of school. If you decide to take your child/children out of school, **then an offence has been committed.** 

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 gives powers to the Local Authority (LA) to issue Penalty Notices when a parent or carer is considered capable of, but has failed to secure their child's regular school attendance and/or punctuality.

#### Exceptional circumstance may include:

- The need for a family to spend time together after a family crisis
- Holidays with parents who are service personnel and other employees who are and are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have a minimal disruption to the child's education.

Not being able to afford a family holiday during holiday time **is not** an exceptional circumstance.

If parents/carers wish to apply for permission from the Headteacher, a 'Declaration of Absence during term time' form (appendix 1) should be completed well in advance of the absence dates. The Headteacher will consider the request carefully and will look at the child's attendance data, the pupil's age and stage of education before notifying the parents whether she is able to authorise the absence or not.

*Please note* that authorisation will not be given for leave during assessment periods, or the first 4 weeks of the school year or for more than 10 days unless circumstances are truly exceptional.

#### 9) <u>APPOINTMENTS</u>

Where possible, appointments should made outside of school hours. If it is really necessary to arrange appointments during school hours, school should be notified in



advance. If pupils are leaving school during the day for an appointment, then the school office should be informed when the child leaves the premises and when they return. This must be recorded in the 'pupil signing out book'. If present during registration, then no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent during registration, then the register should be marked with an authorised absence.

#### **10)** FREQUENT ABSENCES FOR MEDICAL REASONS

When a pupil frequently misses school for medical reasons, the school will consult with the medical service. Where necessary, a referral will be made so that the school can make an evaluation of the child's educational and health needs.

#### 11) LONGER ABSENCES

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time will be positively welcomed back to school; they will be supported so that they can catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period of time, to ensure that the pupil settles smoothly back into school life.

#### 12) <u>PUPILS RECORDED WITH 10 OR MORE DAYS OF CONTINUOUS</u> <u>UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE</u>

We have a legal duty to report to the Local Authority regarding the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation or without the school's permission for 10 or more consecutive days. This will be reported to the Local Authority, using their absence reporting process.

#### 13) WHEN ATTENDANCE CAUSES CONCERN

If a pupil misses 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in their learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly.

Where attendance or lateness is a cause for concern, the following actions will be taken:

- The Headteacher and/or Assistant Head will arrange a meeting with parents/carers to discuss the reasons for the absences.
- The school will work closely with the parents/carers to try and remove any barriers to regular attendance.
- Where appropriate, a formal Attendance Improvement Meeting will be held with the parents/carers, as well as the child, in order to draw up a plan, and set agreed targets. This plan will then be reviewed to ensure targets have been met. Should the parents/carers fail to attend, the meeting will continue and a plan drawn up in their absence.



- If attendance still does not improve, a referral will be made to the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of this referral and there may be the possibility of prosecution.

For further information, please see the Declaration of Absence form and leaflet for parents on school Attendance from the Local Authority.

Attendance Target 2023 - 2024: 100%



#### <u>Appendix 1</u> <u>Declaration of Absence Form</u> Please request a copy of this document from the school office



#### DECLARATION OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Please complete this form if your child is taking any absence during term time. Holiday absences will be unauthorised and this may be acted upon should there be more than <u>10</u> sessions per term.

Child name			Class	
DATES OF ABSENCE:				
First day of absence: Last day of absence: Total nur		mber of <u>session</u> 2 sessions)	<u>s</u> missed	
REASON FOR ABSENCE () Family Holiday	olease select) Religious Examin Observance	nation	School Visit	Performing Arts
	ospital required to author	ise)	Other (please spe	ecify)
Further information:				

I understand that if the absence request is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the Headteacher may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. I understand that a penalty is issued to each parent and for each child taken out of school and that this fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay this it may result in legal action.

Parent name	Parent signature	Date
		, ,

This form will be sent home with your child in a sealed envelope within 5 days

% Attendance	Authorised	Factors affecting decision	Requirement to follow legal procedures
	Yes / No	Negative educational impact Positive educational impact Other:	Yes / No
Low attendan absences will scheduled for		nd all holiday with Mrs Andrews	-98 - 12

Headteacher signature	Date
5	





#### ATTENDANCE DESCRIPTORS AND BANDINGS

Attendance	Support/Entitlement
100% EXCELLENT	No learning missed
96% - 99% GOOD	Some learning missed due to genuine illness or acceptable circumstances.
91% - 95% SOME CONCERN	1 week and 4 days of learning are missed. You are likely to have missed > 9 maths lessons > 9 English lessons > 4 PE/Games lessons > Topic, Art, RE and other learning > 10 hours of playtime where you don't make friends and develop vital social skills and experiences.
86% - 90% CAUSE FOR CONCERN	3 weeks and 4 days of learning are missed. You are likely to have missed > 19 maths lessons > 19 English lessons > 8 PE/Games lessons > Topic, Art, RE and other learning > More than 20 hours of playtime where you don't make friends and develop vital social skills and experiences.
85% and below SERIOUS CONCERN	<ul> <li>5 weeks and three days of learning missed.</li> <li>You are likely to have missed</li> <li>&gt; 33 maths lessons</li> <li>&gt; 33 English lessons</li> <li>&gt; 11 PE/Games lessons</li> <li>&gt; Topic, Art, RE and other learning</li> <li>&gt; More than 30 hours of playtime where you don't make friends and develop vital social skills and experiences.</li> </ul>

When a session or several sessions are missed due to holidays, the learning missed is sometimes not revisited again. Stop and think what taking time out of school will cost your child. Asking for work to complete while away is also extra work for our teachers.

MEETING NOTES:



<u>Appendix 2</u> <u>'Is my child too ill for school?</u>





# Should I keep my child off school?

## Yes

	or telline
Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

Until...

# No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

 Hand, foot and mouth
 Glandular fever

 Head lice
 Tonsillitis

 Threadworms
 Slapped cheek



#### Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit https://grco.de/minfec.



#### <u>Appendix 3</u> <u>'School Attendance: Information for Parents and Carers'</u>

#### What can you do to help?

Take an interest in your child's education.

- Ask them about their day and praise and encourage their achievements at school.
- If your child is missing school or is seemingly unhappy, you should discuss your concerns with your child.
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of them missing school, but be on the alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance, such as bullying or problems with school work.

Contact the school as soon as possible when a concern is identified so that you can work with them to resolve any difficulties.

Be willing to engage with any support offered by the school or Gloucestershire County Council Support Services.

Make sure your child arrives at school on time for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

If your child is ill or absent for any other reason, contact the school on the first day of absence.

Follow the school's procedures for notifying absence, and always let the school know of any days that your child is unable to attend.

Updated November 2020

#### It all adds up!

Attending school everyday gives your child the best chance of success.	100%
Attending 4½ days a week = 4 weeks learning missed per year	90%
Attending <b>4 days</b> a week = <b>8 weeks</b> learning missed per year	80%
Attending 3½ days a week = 12 weeks learning missed per year	70%
80% attendance adds up to missing 2 f	ull years

education over their school life!

Can they afford to keep missing out?

#### Every Minute Counts!

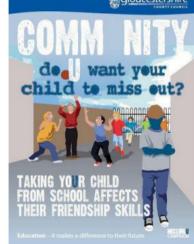
Being late for school reduces learning time.

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning missed per year.

15 minutes late every day = 9 days of learning missed per year.

Arriving late can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher, and the other children in the class.





#### Information for Parents and Carers





### Why is it important for children not to miss school?

Children only get one chance at school, and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected by not attending regularly. If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.
   Employers want to recruit people who are reliable.
   Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help your child later on in life.

### What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

Research shows children who are not regularly attending school are:

- More likely to become involved in, or be a victim of crime and anti-social behavior.
- More likely to fall behind due to the strong link between attendance and achieving good results.
- Less likely to achieve 5 good GCSEs (grades 9-5) compared with those with less than 8 days absence.
- More likely to have increased levels of anxiety due to inconsistencies and uncertainty in their routine.
- More likely to have reduced self esteem due to finding learning increasingly hard having missed out on key information.



#### What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly.

### What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

If your child fails to attend regularly - even if they miss school without you knowing - the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you.

Schools will notify you if your child's attendance level is a concern and look to work with you to put in place steps to improve it. If attendance continues to require improvement then schools will look to initiate an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM).

The AIM is the start of the legal process. It is important you engage with the process and work with the support provided to meet the agreed targets. These targets will be reviewed and progress evaluated at a review meeting. If satisfactory progress is made then targets will either be considered met or adjusted until attendance if satisfactory. If progress is not made then you may be referred to the LA for legal intervention.

You run the risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted in court. If this happens:

- Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

#### When is absence authorised?

There may be times when your child has to miss school because they are unwell. If your child becomes ill you should notify the school immediately and follow the school's absence procedures.

Children may have to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time. However, you should, whenever possible, try to make routine appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holidays or after school hours. Schools have the right to request medical evidence to validate absences for medical reasons.

If you think you might need to take your child out of school, discuss the reasons with the school as soon as possible. Absence must be requested as far in advance as possible. Absences will only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances.

Examples of absence that may be considered as exceptional circumstances include family bereavement or taking part in an agreed religious observance. The decision on whether to authorise absence is made at the headteacher's discretion.

#### For more information

For more information you can contact the Local Authority's Education Inclusion Service at:

Phone: 01452 427274

Email: Attendance@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/educationand-learning

