



Willow Fields Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

2017-2018

## **Aims**

The staff and Governors of Willow Fields Community Primary School are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and pupils in order to build a well-respected school that serves the whole community. We want to work in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that all children attend regularly and access high quality teaching every day.

There is a proven link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage every parent to ensure their child achieves maximum attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Attendance will be discussed with governors at their half-termly meetings.

## **Expectations**

Our expectations are that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Arrive at school on time.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the school day.

We also expect that all parents will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time and is prepared for the school day.
- Contact the school before 8:50am on each day of the child's absence to explain why their child is unable to attend school.
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may prevent their child attending school.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Inform the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and attitude to learning for their child.
- Whenever possible, try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of the school day (as when arranged within the school day - proof of appointment will be required).

The school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Ensure sympathetic responses to any pupil's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.

- Contact a parent before 9:20am when a child is absent with no explanation.
- Follow up unexplained absences.
- May seek verification from health professionals in cases of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions.
- Refer any persistent absences with Education Welfare or Early Help to support the family and to monitor attendance and punctuality.

### **Punctuality/Lateness**

- Punctuality is vital and a late arrival causes disruption to teaching and learning for all pupils and staff. It is therefore very important that pupils arrive on time.
- Registration takes place at **08:50am** and pupils who arrive after that time will be recorded as late to school.
- Register closes at **09:00am** and after this lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Persistent lateness and non-attendance by a pupil will be referred to the Education Welfare service to be further investigated and monitored.

### **Failure to ensure regular attendance at school**

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% or if there are regular, unexplained absences a referral will be made to Education Welfare Service team. The role of Education Welfare is to work with parents and children to overcome difficulties that may prevent a child's regular and punctual attendance at school. Continued irregular or unjustified poor patterns of attendance may result in parental prosecution or fixed penalty being applied.

The named attendance officer in school is Miss Jane Hill. The role of our Attendance officer in school is to:

- Identify any children not attending school or who are late.
- The Headteacher will then be informed and the absence recorded on CPOMs to be monitored.
- Parents will receive a text or phone call asking them to explain the absence or provide evidence if it is medical.
- Late arrivals will be monitored.
- Complete regular checks to identify any children whose attendance falls below 90%.
- A letter will then be sent to the parents to request an attendance meeting with the attendance officer and the headteacher (this includes children who are often late)
- If attendance does not improve, a referral to Education Welfare will be made and they will contact / visit the parents at home.
- Attendance is monitored to check for improvement.
- If there is no improvement, then further visits will be made.

- Make every effort to ensure that up to date contact details are on file for the children.

$\frac{1}{2}$  termly parents and carers are sent letters to rate their child's attendance using a Red, Amber, Green system (RAG)

Green - 100% -95%

Amber - 95-90%

Red 90% and below

If a child were to stay on amber for a period of time, the attendance would be monitored and parents requested to attend a meeting with the headteacher and attendance officer to discuss the issues and plan how we could help in order to improve attendance and to prevent it from falling lower.

### **Leave of absence**

Withdrawal of a pupil during term time disrupts a child's learning and may cause them to fall behind their peers. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school during term time. Within the context of the law, only a Headteacher can authorise absence, not parents or carers. For this reason:

- From September 2017, family holidays/leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances e.g. if a family have a member who serves in the armed forces.
- For all leave of absence, a form (available from the school office) must be completed and returned to the Governing body before the termly Governors' meetings.
- Should parents remove children during term time, school work will be provided to complete during the holiday as it is not an efficient use of a teacher's time to expect them to plan work for children who are not attending school.
- In line with DfE guidance, the Headteacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice and fine to parents who take holidays during KS2 SATs week or take holidays without notification.
- Absence without a valid reason or where no explanation is provided will be treated as unauthorised.

### **Authorised absence**

Authorised absence will only be granted for:

- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Religious observance

- Family bereavements
- Exceptional circumstances.

### **Changing schools**

It is important that if a child moves to another school that parents inform the school office as soon as possible. Once the following information has been received, a pupil will be removed from the school roll:

- The date the pupil is leaving and the date for starting the new school.
- The name and address of the new school.
- A new home address (if appropriate).
- The pupil's records will be sent to the new school. Failure to provide this information will result in referral to the local authority.

### **Celebration of Good Attendance**

Good attendance will be praised regularly through the following means:

- Children's names are displayed on a display board in the hall to celebrate 100% attendance
- Weekly praise in assembly
- Certificates and stickers
- Half termly prize giving (vouchers etc)
- Participation in attendance schemes
- Inclusion on the newsletter

### **Safeguarding**

At Willow Fields Community Primary School, we take safeguarding very seriously and hope to ensure our pupils flourish and develop both socially and academically in a safe and secure environment. Through being clear and consistent in our teaching and ensuring the school environment is safe and conducive to learning, we can encourage all pupils to realise their potential with confidence and enthusiasm.

We are aware that vulnerable pupils in this school (e.g. LAC, CP, CIN) may need extra support. For further details, please see Mrs Lindsay Robertson or Miss Alex Hillery.