



Attendance Policy Pupils

Reviewed September 2021

Revised July 2024

Date of Adoption by the Governing Body: 09.10.2024

Taking measures to ensure that pupils attend school as often as possible is important for their education and progress overall.

The aims of this policy are

- To ensure that pupils attend school when at all possible.
- To ensure procedures are in place which meet legal requirements for pupil attendance.
- To ensure the legal requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting absence are met.
- To ensure that parents and carers understand the procedures and are encouraged where necessary to support school in its efforts to ensure attendance.

Ensures inspiring positive partnerships.

It is important in all matters of school attendance that parents are sure of any procedures and are kept informed of any concerns that the school may have. Generally good overall relationships should enable any concerns to be dealt with openly and frankly.

Parents/carers responsibilities

- Provide up to date contact details and notify school of any changes to these details. At least two contacts should be given, to ensure school can contact a responsible adult in an emergency.
- Ensure that their child arrives in school on time each day. The school day starts at 9am and finishes at 3:30pm.
- Notify the school, in person or by telephone when the child is unable to attend, with a reason for their non-attendance, by 9:00am on the first day of absence. This enables the absence to be authorised.
- Notify the school by 9am if their child is going to be late.
- Note that any absence will be recorded as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received by school for any absence.
- Contact the class teacher, in the first instance, with any issues or concerns regarding attendance. Parents/carers may also wish to use the home/school diary to communicate any upcoming appointments.
- When requesting a holiday during term time, parents/carers must complete a **Leave of absence form**. Authorisation will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, the holiday leave will still affect the child's and the schools overall attendance percentages throughout the year.

School responsibilities

- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored using SIMS (School Information Management System) and that patterns in non-attendance are explored.
- Children Missing in Education (2018) makes it clear that if children fail to attend school for a period of 5 days, and permission has not been sought from school, school have a duty of care to contact the Local Authority.
- Contact parents/carers directly, via telephone, text or email if the parent/carers fail to contact on the first day of absence. If we are unable to ascertain the reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Communicate effectively with multi-agencies with regard to issues around attendance or punctuality.
- Meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence.

- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Ensure that information is readily available for governors and parents via our school website, newsletters and policy documents.
- Have procedures in place to help children settle in after long absence including phased returns to school.
- Communicate attendance directly to parents/carers. Sending letters to parents/carers when a pupil's attendance level falls below **95%** informing them of the need to ensure the attendance increases and outlining parent responsibility.
- Send an additional letter to parents/carers when a pupil's attendance level falls below **90%** informing them of the attendance, their responsibilities and also offering support through a meeting within school, where an attendance contract may be created or an Early Help Assessment can be put in place to help the family.
- Meet with parents/carers who need additional support around attendance and put in place an attendance contract. They are a way for parents/carers and school to work together to help improve a child's attendance and for parents/carers to gain practical support.

Monitoring, analysis and action planning of attendance

Woodlawn School monitors attendance at both individual and whole school level. We analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future action planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters. Each day administrative staff enter registration data onto SIMS system which allows us to track and monitor attendance, producing statistics which can be submitted to the LA and DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families)

We collect the following attendance data:

- Whole school attendance rates.
- Numbers and proportion of persistent absences (PA's)
- Rates of unauthorised absence
- Attendance will be used to set a range of attendance targets for the whole school and for individual pupils.

Procedures for addressing absence

We will closely monitor pupil attendance and where there are concerns about attendance the school staged response will be implemented. The staged response includes:

Stage 1

Information letter sent home if pupil's absence has dropped to **95%** or lower (unless special circumstances known by SLT e.g. child is absent due to hospital stay and the absences are therefore unavoidable)

Stage 2

A further letter will be sent home when attendance is at **90%**. Parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss how attendance can be improved and an attendance contract may be put in place.

Stage 3

An invitation to meet with a senior leader in school will be issued, where an Early Health Assessment/ Team around the Family will be offered to support increased attendance. There will be occasions when school staff will make home visits when there are concerns about persistent, sporadic or unexplained absence or safeguarding concerns.

Stage 4.

When we have worked through stage 1, 2, and 3 of the attendance policy and there continues to be concern regarding the pupil's attendance the parents will be invited to a meeting with the head teacher. In this meeting pupil placement at Woodlawn School will be discussed. The impact of reduced attendance will be discussed and school's ability to meet the pupil's EHCP. We will then arrange an emergency annual review to discuss pupil placement and progress due to reduced attendance.

Leave of absence requests

The 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016' makes it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence requests from parents/ carers during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is because students miss out on valuable learning time and the absence also disrupts the continuity of learning. This can also have an impact on their present and future achievements.

Taking family holidays are not considered to be exceptional circumstances, therefore Woodlawn School will not authorise absence for holiday during term time. We therefore ask parents/ carers not to take their children on holiday during term time and to consider the affect a period of non-attendance may have upon your child's learning.

Any request for a leave of absence during exam periods will not be authorised as this is an important time in a child's education.

Leave of absence request forms are available from the school office. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the head teacher and must be made in writing at least two weeks prior to the required date.

Parents/ cares will receive a written letter stating whether the absence is agreed or not, along with the reason for agreement or refusal. The head teacher may contact parents to discuss the reasons for the application, while making it clear the impact this may have upon the child's education.

Where leave is granted, the length of authorised absence will be clearly documented including the date the child is expected back at school. All decisions regarding leave of absence are applied consistently, taking into account the medical and special educational needs of each individual child/ family.

Where the leave is declined and the student goes on holiday without permission the absence will be unauthorised and the school will request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority. The penalty notice will be £60 per child, per parent; this increases to £120 if not paid within 21 days. In the event that the fine is not paid, the parents/carers can be prosecuted by the local authority under section 444(1)/(1A) Education Act 1996.

If you take your child out of school without the school's permission, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which will also affect your child's overall attendance figures

for the year and may also result in each parent being issued with a fixed penalty fine for each child taken out of school. Under government guidelines, any absence marked as unauthorised can lead to involvement from the relevant Local Authority service in case of persistent poor attendance.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

Woodlawn School will follow the statutory guidance from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils in our care.

We therefore utilise the following measures when a child is missing from education:

We hold personal details and information for the parents/ carers along with at least one other named person (emergency contact) this ensures we can always contact a responsible adult with regards to a pupil's welfare and /or safeguarding concern.

Our Administration team will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence. If no response, we will text and email. If there is still no response we will contact the emergency contact for the child. If deemed appropriate a home visit may be done to confirm the whereabouts of the child.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school each day their child is absent.

This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

If after one week, no contact has been made the school must inform the Local Authority Admissions Team to find out if the child has been registered elsewhere.

After **10 days we are required to report a child as missing in education (CME)** to the Attendance and Placement Service who will follow the procedures for locating missing pupils.

If a pupil is missing school for 20 consecutive school days (4 weeks) we will remove them from our roll. Re admittance to the school will then need to be by application.

If a pupil has unexplained absence from school for a prolonged period, or fails to return from holiday, the school must follow the normal procedures for investigating pupil absence (telephone calls, texts, emails, letters and invitations to meetings at the school).

If, after **10 days the pupil does not return to school the matter must be referred to the Attendance and Placement Service where the procedures for a child missing education (CME) will be adhered to.**

Details of this process are to be found in 'Procedures for Locating Missing Pupils and the Removal of pupils from Roll Guidance Document'.

See the Children at Risk of Missing Education Policy for more information.

Supportive Documentation

This guidance contains additional documents.

Appendix A; Attendance letter 1

Appendix B; Attendance letter 2

Appendix C; Attendance letter 3

Appendix D; Attendance letter 4

Appendix E; Leave of Absence form

Appendix A

Re: Stage 1 – Attendance

Dear NAME

I am writing to remind you about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Our attendance has greatly improved the last few years and as a school we take attendance very seriously.

Days off school soon add up, missing lessons makes it hard to catch up and students have to work harder when they come back.

It may be useful for you to know what attendance figures mean for your child:

98% - 100% = Excellent

96% - 98% = Good

94% - 96% = Average

92% - 94% = Below Average

90% - 92% = Low

Under 90% = Persistent Absentee

Name's current attendance is:

If your child's attendance falls below 95% it triggers a cause for concern, if it falls to 90% it triggers interventions by the Senior Leadership Team. If these interventions do not improve attendance then further support will be requested via a referral to the Early Help team.

Please help your child to maintain good attendance by booking doctor, dentist, and optician appointments outside of school hours where possible. **Holidays during term time will not be authorised.** Any requests for absence should be put in writing to the Headteacher.

Our minimum attendance target is 95%. If your child is absent from school for whatever reason, **please call the school.** When your child returns to school, please give them a note and the appointment card/letter, you can also write a note in their home school diary or on see saw to the class teacher.

I hope you will support us in maintaining good attendance. If you wish to know your child's attendance figure or discuss anything related to attendance and punctuality, please ring the School Office on 0191 6432690.

Yours sincerely,



Gill Wilson

Headteacher

Appendix B

Re: Stage 2 – Attendance

Dear NAME

I am sorry to inform you that NAME's attendance has failed to improve since my letter of DD MONTH YYY and we are still concerned about your child's school attendance.

You may have reasons why your child is not attending school as much as they should and I would welcome an opportunity to discuss these with you so that I can offer you support and advice. I would like to invite you to a meeting as date below to discuss this further.

Woodlawn School on Day, Month DD, YYYY at XXXX.

If you are unable to meet with me, I would be grateful if you could telephone, email or write to me (see contact details above) with your explanations regarding your child's school attendance. Please include reasons for absence such as medical reasons, religious observance and any school issues – for example, bullying or difficulties with school work.

It is important that we work together to ensure your child's attendance improves, as this will have a direct impact on your child's ability to achieve to their maximum potential.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Gill Wilson

Headteacher

Appendix C

Re: Stage 3 – Attendance

Dear NAME

Following our previous communication about Name's school attendance I would like to invite you to a meeting at Woodlawn School on Day, Month, year at xxx with Name senior leader to discuss how we can support you to improve Name's attendance.

An Early Health Assessment/ Team around the Family will be offered to support increased attendance.

It is important that we work together to ensure your child's attendance improves, as this will have a direct impact on your child's ability to achieve their maximum potential.

Please ring school on the number below to confirm attendance at the meeting and discuss anything related to attendance and punctuality

School Office- on 0191 6432690.

Yours sincerely,



Gill Wilson

Headteacher

Appendix D

Re: Stage 4 – Attendance

Dear NAME

Following our previous communications about XXXXX's school attendance I would like to invite you to a meeting at Woodlawn School on Day, Month, year at xxx with Gill Wilson, head teacher, Woodlawn School.

We will discuss your child's EHCP and the impact due to their attendance. We will also discuss the school's ability to meet your child's EHCP and arrange an emergency review to discuss placement going forward.

It is important that we work together to ensure your child's attendance improves, as this will have a direct impact on your child's ability to achieve their maximum potential.

Please ring school on the number below to confirm attendance at the meeting and discuss anything related to attendance and punctuality.

School Office- on 0191 6432690.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Wilson

Headteacher

Appendix E

WOODLAWN SCHOOL - LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Student Details		
Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:
Address:		
Contact Telephone Number:		
Contact E-mail Address:		
I wish to apply form my child to be absent from school during the following dates:		
First day of absence from:	Date of return to school:	
<p>Please provide the reason for your leave of absence request from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Headteacher may authorise absence in exceptional circumstances but this must be requested two weeks in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Each case will be judged on its merit and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.</p>		
<p>Parents declaration: I make application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reason/s stated. I understand if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised.</p>		
<p>Signed: (Parent/Carer)</p> <p>Full name:</p> <p>Date:</p>		

For School Use only

I have carefully considered your request for your child to have leave of absence in term time, your child's leave of absence will be recorded as:-	
Signed: Headteacher	Date:

