WINGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy and Guidance for

Attendance and Punctuality

Date amended: November 2021
Approved by GB: (July 2016)
Person responsible for implementation and monitoring: Jo Prosperini
Review Date: November 2022
Other relevant policies: Behaviour, Child Protection, Assessment

Rationale

Good attendance and punctuality are major factors in achievement within school; if pupils are not here then they cannot learn and progress with their education. Good school attendance is also vital to the pupil's social development.

It is important that pupils understand the importance of good school attendance from a young age. It is hoped that this good ethos will stay with them through the rest of their school career, and on into the world of work, for them to become successful adults in the future.

This policy has been devised under the requirement set out in the Education Act 1996 section 7 that, "Parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".

Aims

As a school we aim to achieve attendance of 96% or above. It is our duty to inform parents and pupils alike of the pupil's attendance and punctuality. This will be communicated in different formats.

Procedures

Initiatives and Reward Systems

Good attendance and punctuality needs to be rewarded and celebrated. The admin officer will develop and manage attendance reward systems within school. All other school staff to champion and support the initiatives that have been put in place. The following initiatives are in place:

- Weekly certificate and trophy presented to the class, in each phase, with the best attendance for the previous week – weekly assembly
- Charts in each class, for children to track their own attendance – prizes awarded every half term
- A display in the hall to demonstrate the attendance figures across the school
- Certificates, stickers and small prizes are awarded to EYFS every half term to children who achieve 96% and above attendance
- DVD and popcorn afternoon each half term for the best attended class in EYFS/KS1 and KS2
- A prize draw every half term for 100% attenders who've never been late
- Golden Time (iPads, games and bouncy castle in hall) for the class with the best punctuality the previous week
- Medals given to children who have achieved 100% for the academic year

School's roles and responsibilities

All staff in school play a major role in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. It is the legal responsibility of the teaching staff to mark the register twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon after lunch time is completed.

The admin officer will develop and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting good attendance in all areas of the school. The admin officer will ensure that the data is kept up to date and that the Head Teacher is informed on a weekly basis of the current attendance and punctuality figures. The admin officer will ensure that data is ready for any governing body meeting and is prepared for inspections.

The school's responsibilities are:

- To ensure the register is accurately and promptly taken every session (twice a day)
- To record any absences correctly, whilst remembering that, as a school, we can determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised
- To record late pupils correctly i.e. if they arrive through the main office, they then must be recorded as late
- To ascertain the reason behind the lateness
- To check absences on a daily basis
- To make first day contact to the parents and careers of those pupils who have not given a reason for absence
- To make priority home visits for pupils who are:
    1. subject to a child protection plan
    2. vulnerable
    3. already poor attenders
- To ensure each absence is recorded correctly on the SIMS system
- To publish attendance data for pupils and parents to access
- To produce a termly newsletter with information for parents
- To inform teaching staff of each individual pupil's data at the end of the school year, including unauthorised absences, for the end of year reports
- To regularly assess attendance for each pupil and appropriate action to be taken if it is lower than 96%
- To give guidance to new staff around the marking the register and recording absences
- To asses each leave of absence form, contact the parent to discuss, and ensure forms are completed correctly
- To contact outside agencies e.g. school health if attendance continues to be a concern
- To send out punctuality letters twice each half term, to parents whose children have had 3 or more lates. Each letter will also include the total lates in the academic year

- To issue parenting contract letters to those parents whose child's attendance is below 90%
- To refer children who have unauthorised absence, and are achieving 90% or less, to the Education Welfare Service for legal monitoring
- To praise and acknowledge improvement of attendance and punctuality.
- To notify all new admits about the expectations of attendance and punctuality at Wingrove.

Roles and Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

It is a legal responsibility that parents and carers ensure their child receives full time education.

They should therefore:

- Ensure that their child is ready and on time for school every day; they should be at school between 0835 and 0855 (0840 and 1225 in Nursery)
- Accompany their child to the school office any time that they arrive after the 08.55 buzzer
- Ensure that their child is collected on time, at 1515, (1530 from Nursery) from their class teacher, in the case of more than one child, the youngest is to be collected first
- Ensure they inform the school if they cannot pick up their child on time at the end of the day
- Ensure that school has up-to-date contact information for parents, carers, and other contacts
- Inform the school on the first day of absence (0191 2735466 / 2735842 option 1). This must be done as early as possible. We have a dedicated absence line
- Ensure that all medical appointments, where possible, are made after school or during school holidays
- Communicate with school if they are dealing with any specific problems at home preventing their child coming to school. The school can then offer support
- Consult the academic year calendar for Wingrove before booking a holiday
- Be aware that all schools may have different closure days and holidays
- Ensure that they attend any meeting set up to discuss attendance or punctuality. If the time isn't convenient, the school should be contacted and the meeting will be rearranged
- Communicate with school if their child has an issue in school which could affect their attendance

When would absence normally be authorised?

- Illness, meaning the child is too ill to attend school. This does not mean a cough or cold
- Visa renewal
- Citizenship ceremony
- Medical appointment (with appointment card/letter)
- Visit new school

When would absence normally be unauthorised?

- Going shopping
- Having a haircut
- Family events, such as meeting people from the airport
- Bad weather
- Parent illness (inform school to see if we can help)
- Helping in the household, e.g looking after a parent or other children

Holidays/leave of absence in term time

In accordance with government guidelines, holidays/leave of absence in term time will NOT be authorised. After meeting with parents, a copy of the leave of absence form and a letter confirming holiday requests are declined will be sent to home address. To ensure that the child is not taken off roll, and registered on the nationwide database as 'missing', a leave of absence form must be completed and handed back to the school office. Children may be removed from roll and lose their place in school, if they do not return to school when stated. Once the pupil has returned to school following absence, legal procedures may come into effect. A penalty notice will be issued by the Local Authority. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. A penalty notice is a fine of £60, if paid within the first 21 days which increased to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If a penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the magistrates' court.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance and punctuality are monitored on a weekly basis by the admin officer. The admin officer assesses the impact of the various strategies in place to improve attendance and punctuality on a half-termly basis. Feedback will be given to all stakeholders, including the Head Teacher and Governors.

At Wingrove, the admin office is Mrs. Prosperini. The role is full time and she is based in school. She is available most mornings at the main entrance to school. She will also take phone calls from parents to report their child's absence from school. She will greet all parents and children who arrive late to school and will ask parents to provide an explanation for the lateness. She is also available at the end of most days when she makes phone calls to parents of children who have not been collected from school on time.