



# Attendance Policy

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<b>Review Schedule</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Headteacher / Attendance Officer</b>

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### **Abbreviations**

ACE	Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service
LA	Local Authority
INSET	In Service Training
PSHE & C	Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship
L	Late
U	Unauthorised

## **1. Introduction**

Woodloes Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

Poor attendance disadvantages children. Any unnecessary absence from school will be to the detriment of the child's education. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually and would encourage all parents / carers to play an active part in their own child's attendance. Parents/Carers have access to their child's attendance on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

The school will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality. Unless a valid reason is provided the absence will be classed as unauthorised. The school will make the final decision as to whether the absence can be authorised or not.

The Local Authority (LA) will consider the issue of a Penalty Notice in those cases where a child's attendance has fallen below the level determined as the trigger for legal intervention AND it is considered likely that the issue of such a notice will bring about an improvement in attendance. In all cases, the LA will issue Penalty Notices in accordance with the published Warwickshire Code of Conduct

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a proper full-time education. Parents are responsible for making this happen, either by registering the child at school or by making other arrangements which provide an effective education.

To meet these objectives Woodloes Primary School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. Since September 2013, we are now working closely with the Warwickshire Attendance Compliance and Enforcement Service (ACE) who regularly review and audit our attendance.

### **Aims**

1. To improve the overall percentage of pupils attending school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To maintain a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
5. To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To promote effective partnerships with ACE and with other services and agencies.
8. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## **2. Procedures and Practice**

### **Equal Opportunities**

High levels of attendance and good punctuality will be expected and encouraged from every member of our school community irrespective of any race, gender, disability or ethnic minority group. This school promotes inclusions at every given opportunity making good attendance and punctuality essential.

Where there are specific reasons impacting upon a child's ability to attend school there is a clear expectation that families will engage with the school to provide appropriate support.

### **Organisation**

#### **Aim No. 1: To improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at school**

1. Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.
2. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
3. Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
4. Monitor progress in attendance measurable outcomes.

#### **Aim No. 2: To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors**

1. Use school prospectus.
2. Produce annual reports to parents/governors.
3. Produce newsletters.
4. Provide INSET training for appointed staff.
5. Display materials at focal points – entrance hall, outside noticeboard.
6. Discuss attendance issues in ACE/Pastoral staff evaluation meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings (e.g. attendance review meetings).
7. Discourage holidays in term time (appendix 2). Following receipt of holiday application form (appendix 3) Woodloes Primary School will use the Warwickshire LA calculation chart (appendix 4) before informing parents of decision by letter from Headteacher. Parents must make an appointment to see Headteacher if requesting extended leave (more than 10 days).

#### **Aim No. 3: To maintain a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks**

1. Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
2. Attempt to make phone contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence using the contact numbers which parents have provided to the school.

3. Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
4. Respond swiftly to lateness (in respect of both pupils and parents).
5. Define clearly the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
6. Have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Social Workers.
7. Review attendance regularly.
8. Be familiar with the Education Social Workers' referral and recording system.

**Aim No. 4: To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils**

Highlight attendance via:

- PSHE&C
  - Assemblies
  - Staff available to talk to pupils
  - Making use of available resources
  - Displays
1. Outline the support offered by the school.
  2. Set aside area/time for parents to speak to staff.
  3. Seek improved communication with parents e.g. when parents ring in.
  4. Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
  5. Involve parents from earliest stage.

**Aim No. 5: To maintain a systematic approach in gathering and analysing attendance related data**

1. Maintain a school register for attendance and ensure pupils are marked absent or present at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
2. Any child arriving after the 8.55am bell should be signed in by a parent, using the 'signing in book' situated in the porch area.
3. Any child arriving after 8.55am but before registration closes at 9.25am will be marked 'late' and clearly coded "L". Arrival after 9.25am will be an unauthorised absence and clearly coded "U" unless a legitimate reason is supplied e.g. doctor/optician/dentist.
4. Any child arriving after 1.10pm but before registration closes at 1.25pm will be marked 'late'. Arrival after 1.25pm will be an unauthorised absence and clearly coded "U" unless a legitimate reason is supplied.

5. Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.
6. Decide what information, if any, is provided for: governors/other school staff/parents/pupils (individual or groups)/ACE.
7. Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

<b>Time of Arrival</b>	<b>Code</b>
8.55am – 9.25am	L
After 9.25am	U

**Aim No. 6: To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school**

1. Initiate first day absence contact.
2. Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.
3. Our school target is 96.5%. In order to maintain this, every child's attendance is checked weekly. As a rule, once individual attendance drops below **93%** we are required by ACE to investigate further, primarily by sending a standard letter, and, if necessary, regular contact with the parent will commence. If a child's attendance should fall below 85%, this will be referred to the ACE Team, unless satisfactory medical evidence has been produced.
4. Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written where appropriate).

As a general rule:

Attendance Percentage	Action taken
93% or below	First contact with parents
85 or below	Refer to ACE unless evidence produced

**Aim No. 7: To promote effective partnerships with the Warwickshire Attendance Compliance and Attendance Service (ACE) and with other services and agencies**

1. Designate key staff for liaison with ACE and other agencies.
2. Give priority to timetabled meetings with ACE.
3. Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
4. Gather and record relevant information to assist ACE.

5. Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
6. Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. community police contact officer.
7. Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.
8. Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.
9. Support inset for school attendance co-ordinators.

**Aim No. 8: To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence**

Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils.

1. Involve/inform all staff in/of reintegration process.
2. Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.
3. Consider peer support and mentoring.
4. Involve parents as far as possible.
5. Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan.
6. Include Education Social Workers, parents and pupil in reintegration plan.

**Monitoring**

Attendance figures will be reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis in the Head teacher's report.

**Future Developments**

Full implementation of the policy.

## **APPENDICES**

<b><i>Appendix 1</i></b>	<b><i>Key points relating to Penalty Notices</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 2</i></b>	<b><i>Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service Extract</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 3</i></b>	<b><i>Holiday Application Form</i></b>

### ***Appendix 1***

The key points of the Code are:

- Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure their child/children's attendance at the school at which they are a registered pupil, and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- Penalty Notices can now be issued to parents/carers, as an alternative to prosecution for a first offence.
- In Warwickshire, Penalty Notices will be issued by ACE.
- Penalty Notices will only be issued when other interventions by ACE or other agencies have been offered, and when there is insufficient parental co-operation to bring about change.
- A formal warning will always be issued first, allowing a monitoring period of five school weeks during which parents will be asked to ensure that their child/children's attendance improves.
- At the end of this period, the Penalty Notice will be issued if the required level of improvement has not been achieved.
- The fine is £50 if paid within 28 days, rising to £100 if paid between 28 and 42 days. After this, prosecution will result if the fine remains unpaid.
- ACE will review the use of Fixed Penalty Notices at regular intervals and amend the general enforcement strategy as appropriate.

**Appendix 2**

# Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service

## **Attendance Policy Extract:**

### ***Leave of Absence***

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**

**Appendix 3**

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY**

**Important Information for Parents/Carers**

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 no longer permit Head Teachers to authorise leave for holidays
- Head Teachers may grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the parent(s)/resident parent/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child

**Please note: Parents do not have any entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.**

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Form Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Proposed Absence: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (*they can only be exceptional circumstances*) (see overleaf before completing)

.....  
.....  
.....

Total Days Requested On This Occasion

(For siblings) I have also applied to \_\_\_\_\_ School/Academy for leave of absence for

\_\_\_\_\_ (Insert child/children's name)

Signature of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**For school use only**

Timetable checked:

Form tutor consulted: Y/N

Previous leave checked:

Y/N

Attendance %:

\_\_\_\_\_

Consistent with school policy/regulations:

Y/N

Reasons for decision: .....

1<sup>st</sup> date of absence.....

Expected date of return .....

Authorised: Y/N

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: .....

Date: .....

**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 which come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state:**

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless** they consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher will determine how long the absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.
4. Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.

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- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996)
  - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996)

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- *Children need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education*
  - *Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind*

**Parents:**

- a. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
- b. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

***We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.***

**Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service**

