

## Attendance Policy

(See: Child Protection Policy)

Effective: Autumn 2023

Review: Summer 2024  
or if changes needed earlier

Person responsible for policy	FGB
Approval Date	20 November 2023
Chair of Governors	Terry Whalley

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Wrenbury Primary School, when in session, expects all children on roll to attend every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the School day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

### 2 Definitions

#### 2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note to /telephones the School to explain the absence.
- Only the School can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during School hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

#### 2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from School without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from School without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

#### 2.3 A Session

A session is a morning or afternoon of education. 2 sessions equate to 1 day of education; 10 sessions equate to 5 days of education.

### 3 If a Child is absent

3.1 Parents have a legal responsibility to inform the school regarding a child's absence. Parents are therefore asked to telephone the School if their child is going to be absent. The office is manned from 08:00 daily. Should a call not be received by 09:30 when registers close the school will telephone the family to investigate the absence. (This supports the school Safeguarding Policy.)

3.2 All absence needs to be coded in the register. This code will be determined on information received from parents or those with parental responsibility for a child. This information may be received in person, by telephone, text message or email.

3.3 A note/email/text/call may be sent to the School prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the School office. The School will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

3.5 If child's level of absence causes concern (below 95%) parents will be informed, asked if they require any support and reminded of the requirements of the law and the impact non-attendance has upon their child's education.

#### **4 Requests for Leave of Absence**

4.1 We believe that children need to be in School for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there may be some exceptional circumstances when a child may have to be absent from school.

4.2 Parents do not now have the right to withdraw their children from School for an annual holiday. We naturally prefer parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods and strongly encourage this. The Head-teacher is unable to authorise any holiday absence. Should parents wish to apply for leave of absence this must be referred to the Chair of Governors. Leave of absence can only be authorised for exceptional circumstances. These are few and limited. Each application will be looked at individually and will be considered within the strict legislative directive from the DFE.

4.3 If the school do not authorise the holiday/leave of absence and it is for 10 or more consecutive sessions, the school will contact the Local Authority and a fixed Penalty Notice will be issued regarding the unauthorised absence. (See Cheshire East Council's Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices. This outlines current costing's and timeframes.)

#### **5 Long-Term Absence**

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from School for over five days, the School will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their School work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside School.

5.3 If a pupil is away from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutively or cumulatively, because of sickness, school will contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service for advice and parents will be informed of this by school. Parents will be requested to provide supporting documentation (eg: doctor's/ consultant letter) for any further illness. We may ask a consultant / doctor to provide a letter to confirm that a high level of absence is consistent with the level of illness/ medical intervention of a pupil. This is to "help local authorities fulfil their duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to arrange suitable education for pupils of compulsory school age who would not otherwise receive suitable education because of illness"

#### **6 Repeated Unauthorised Absences**

6.1 The School will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit

the School and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the School will then contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service.

6.2 The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to School on a regular basis. (See section 7)

## **7. Penalty Notices and Further Action**

7.1 A Penalty Notice warning letter can be issued when a pupil has had 10 or more unauthorised sessions from school within a term or two consecutive half terms. Prior to this, school will send a letter to warn and inform parents that their child's/ children's attendance is reaching this threshold. The warning letter gives you a monitoring period of 15 school days. If at the end of this period there has not been an improvement or an improvement has been made but not sustained, a Penalty Notice may be issued

7.2 If a Penalty Notice is issued **each** parent/ carer will have to pay £60.00 per child. If this is not paid within 21 days, the payment increases to £120.00 per child **per parent**. Payments are not accepted after 28 days and cannot be paid in part or by instalments.

7.3 If parents do not pay the fine, the Local Authority will prosecute them in the Magistrates' Court. If prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court and convicted a parents will have a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £1,000

7.4 If parents do not co-operate with the school and the Education Welfare Service, then prosecution will be considered. The case would be heard in the Magistrates' Court and a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment could be issued. It will result in a criminal record.

## **7 Rewards for Good Attendance**

7.1 Each Base's attendance is reported each week in the Monday afternoon Y6 led assembly. The base with the highest attendance is awarded a certificate and the need for outstanding attendance is messaged.

7.2 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the year.

7.3 The Head teacher reports on the attendance for each Base in the HT newsletter sent home which also celebrates outstanding attendance. This is also shared on the school website.

## **8 Monitoring and Review**

8.1 It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

8.2 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

8.3 Where the absence of a child may be linked to other concerns eg safeguarding, the absence of the child will be reported to the Head teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead directly.

8.4 The School will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

## <95% attendance

Parents will be informed by letter, asked if they require any support and reminded of the requirements of the law and the impact non-attendance has upon their child's education.



## Attendance continues to fall

The School will contact the parent or guardian once more, informing them that the child's attendance has not improved. If a child has a repeated number of absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the School and discuss the problem to enable school to support further.

Further school absences may not be authorised. A Penalty Notice warning letter can be issued when a pupil has had 10 or more unauthorised sessions from school within a term or two consecutive half terms. Prior to this, school will send a letter to warn and inform parents that their child's/ children's attendance is reaching this threshold.

Parents will be asked to provide evidence for further absences eg: Doctors letter. Please note, when a child has low attendance, appointments such as dentists/ options such be be taken out of school hours.

School may contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service



## <90 % attendance

The school will contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service where the case and further actions will be discussed.

A fixed penalty warning notice may be issued/ a fixed penalty notice issued.

The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## <95% Attendance as a result of illnesses

Parents will be informed by letter.

Parents will be asked to provide evidence for further absences eg: Doctors letter. Please note, when a child has low attendance, appointments such as dentists/ options such be taken out of school hours.



## Attendance continues to fall

If a pupil is away from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutively or cumulatively, because of sickness, school will contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service for advice and parents will be informed of this by school. School will offer support.

Parents will be requested to provide supporting documentation (eg: doctor's/ consultant letter) for any further illness. We may ask a consultant / doctor to provide a letter to confirm that a high level of absence is consistent with the level of illness/ medical intervention of a pupil.



## <90 % attendance

If not already, the school will contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service where the case and further actions will be discussed.

A fixed penalty warning notice may be issued/ a fixed penalty notice issued.

The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to School on a regular basis.

# Holiday requested

The Head-teacher is unable to authorise any holiday absence unless in exceptional circumstances which is then discussed and holiday agreed by school governors.



# Unauthorised holiday taken

If the school does not authorise the holiday/leave of absence and it is for 10 or more consecutive sessions, the school will contact the Local Authority and a fixed penalty notice will be issued regarding the unauthorised absence. This is £60 per parent, per child. Eg: x2 children = £240 which will double after 21 days. [1 session is a morning or afternoon of the school day]