

# Wood End Primary School



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Committee with oversight of this policy	Behaviour, Ethos & Wellbeing
Policy last reviewed	September 2024
Policy due for review	February 2026

## **Attendance**

We believe that pupils can only take full advantage of their education if they attend school everyday and on time. The school curriculum is carefully planned each day to ensure children receive rich and varied learning. A child misses valuable learning opportunities if they do not attend school regularly and on time. The learning they miss results in them having to spend time catching up, whilst persistent lateness or non-attendance could significantly disadvantage them throughout their school career.

### **At school we aim to:**

- promote excellent levels of school attendance and punctuality to ensure all children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential
- provide clear procedures and practices relating to school attendance for children and parents
- identify and deal with problems, which may lead to non-attendance.

Your child's school Attendance Target for this year is 94% for Early Years and 96% for Key Stage 1 and 2.

## **Legislation**

It is law that your child attends school every day. If you do not attend school it must be for a justifiable reason. Only the Attendance Officer/Head teacher can authorise the absence.

## **Parent and Carers responsibilities**

For every day that your child is absent, parents/carers MUST contact school by 8.30am. Please call 020 8422 6175 and press option 1 for further options followed by option 1 to leave an absence message. If we have not received a reason for your child's absence, parents/carers will be contacted by our automated text message system.

IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL FOR MORE THAN 3 DAYS. On their return to school, we request medical evidence (where appropriate) to be handed to The Attendance Officer. If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please ensure we have your current contact details; including telephone and email and any telephone numbers of emergency contacts.

Poor Attendance will be investigated by the school; The Attendance Officer will write to parents, invite parent/carers in for meetings and conduct home visits.

Parents/carers of pupils who are persistently absent could face a penalty (fine) or statutory action.

We request all non-emergency medical appointments are kept out of school hours. We understand that at times this cannot be avoided, therefore we would suggest that appointments are made at lunch time, (students return to school after their appointment). School requests that medical evidence is provided and handed to the Attendance Officer prior to the appointment.

## Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences” for example if a child is ill. Where there are concerns about a child’s attendance, we shall ask for evidence of illness in the form of a GP appointment card, or a copy of any prescribed medication.

## Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Going shopping or for a haircut
- Celebrating a child’s birthday
- Holiday during term time
- Visiting a sick relative abroad

Where there is no explanation for an absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory, absence will be recorded as ‘unauthorised’. If there are ongoing concerns regarding a child’s attendance and/or punctuality, you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to discuss the situation. You will be asked to enter into a Parenting Contract which is legally binding. Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action.

## Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of term time leave/family holidays. There is **no entitlement** to time off during term time. Leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body.

Only in an exceptional circumstance will term time leave be authorised, this is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence during term-time, need to complete a form which is available from the school office. Permission must be sought at least 2 weeks in advance and before booking tickets or making travel arrangements.

It is recognised that some religious events occur during term time. As an inclusive school the decision has been made to allow each child 1 day leave for the purpose of religious observance. An application for leave must be made in advance in order for the leave to be authorised. Every child has the right to follow their own religion while respecting other peoples’. If term time leave is granted and the agreed return date has been delayed, evidence will be required to support the reasons for the late return. If a child is not present at the beginning of a school term and we have not received any information regarding their absence, we cannot guarantee that a place will remain available on their return to school.

What action we take:

If term time leave is taken without prior permission granted by the school, the absence will be unauthorised persistent absence will result in:

- Attendance warning letters
- Home visits where necessary
- Parent contracts

Fixed-penalty fine - Parents may be liable for a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action from the Local Authority. In certain instances the child may be removed from the school roll.

Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child, creating gaps in their learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly.

## **Late Arrival**

### **Why do children need to arrive on time for school?**

- To commence learning promptly to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to achieve their best;
- To form good habits around punctuality.
- To support each child's transition from home to school.

### **Aims of the policy**

- To provide clear guidelines for staff and parents on the late arrival and collection of children at school.

**Procedures for late arrival at school for the start of the school day** The school day commences for pupils at 8.45am. The school is accessible for all pupils from 8.30am onwards. When the classroom doors or cloakrooms are opened by staff at 8.45am, pupils are to enter into the cloakrooms or classrooms. They will be expected to carry out a planned activity during this time.

At 8.55am registration has commenced in classrooms, therefore any pupil arriving after 8.55am is late. The classroom door will be closed and all pupils must enter the school through the main office to receive their late mark.

Registration takes place from 8.55 to 9am. The school uses an electronic registration system.

**Monitoring of late arrival in school** The Attendance Officer collates a record of late children every day. This information will be passed to their class teacher and is discussed at pastoral meetings. Children arriving after registration closes will be coded as 'U' which has the value of a missed unauthorised session.

- Pupils who arrive late will be asked for the reason.
- Lateness will be monitored per half term and Punctuality Letter 1 will be sent.
- If no improvement is seen, Punctuality Letter 2 will be sent and there will be an informal meeting.
- Continued lateness will then result in a meeting with the Headteacher or a referral to the Education social worker (ESW at Ealing)..

## **Late Collection**

### **Aim**

We aim to provide a safe and caring environment. In the event that a child is not collected or you are delayed, they will be reassured in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so if they are unavoidably delayed they will be aware of procedures being followed. In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we put into practice the agreed procedures, unless agreement to walk home alone has been obtained.

### **Methods**

Parents of children starting in the school are asked to provide specific information which is kept in our data file in the office including:

- Home address and telephone number of parents/ carers
- Place of work, and telephone number ( if applicable)
- Two Mobile telephone numbers (if applicable)
- Email address
- Names and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents/carers to collect their child from the school i.e. childminder, relative, neighbour
- Information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child
- Information about who has primary responsibility for the child

If there are any changes to any of the above we ask that the school office is notified immediately. When there is a change to the end of the day arrangements we ask that parents inform the school office. We inform parents that if children are not collected at the end of the day we follow the following procedures: In the event that the parent/carer is running late or has made alternative collection with a friend/relative they should ring the school to advise us of those changes so that both the teacher and child are aware. If it appears that there have been no alternative arrangements made for the collection of a child by the parent/carer, the school staff should take the following steps:

- Messages are checked to see if there are any changes to the end of day arrangements
- Parents/ carers are contacted at home or work
- If this is unsuccessful other authorised adults are contacted
- In the meantime the child will wait near the office under adult supervision

### **Charges for late / non-collection of children**

Under Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and relevant Regulations the school governing body has the power to impose a charge on parents or carers who fail to collect their child from school within a reasonable time after the close of the school day or after school activity. The governing body accepts that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure parents and carers are notified of the timing of the school day or after school activity and also when those times are varied for a specific event or date. The governing body has decided that, except in emergency situations, where children are not collected from the school within fifteen minutes after the school day or after school activity ends, a charge will be made to the child's parent or carer. The school accepts that a variety of emergency situations can arise due to unforeseen circumstances and will

ensure that the charge is not imposed on the parent where there is a genuine unforeseen emergency. Notification must be given to the school as soon as the situation arises or when collecting the child.

### **The Charging Arrangements**

On the second late collection within a half term, without reasonable excuse, the parent/carer will be sent a letter reminding them to collect their child from school at 3.30pm. If the child is collected late a third time, an invoice will be issued as follows: The purpose of the charge imposed is to meet the additional costs in salary and resources that the school incurs from the late collection. In cases where a child is not collected within fifteen minutes of the end of the school day or after a school activity a charge of £6.00 will be made to the parent/carer. The parent will be issued with an invoice and expected to pay within the date set on the invoice. Failure to pay will lead to further action being taken. If the child has not been collected after one hour (4.30pm) and no contact has been made or arrangements agreed with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer will be notified.

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### **Procedures for Non-Collected Children**

#### **Late Collected Children**

All late collected children will be recorded in the school's safeguarding system (CPOMS) and this information may be passed on to the school's Educational Social Worker (ESW) for further investigation. Where a child has 3 recorded late collections in one half term a letter will be sent home to the parents. Where there is no improvement in late collection a second letter will be sent and a referral made to the Headteacher.

#### **After School Clubs**

Where children are collected more than 15 minutes late from a school-run after-school club on 2 occasions they will automatically lose their place at after-school clubs for the rest of the academic year. If children are collected late or not collected, the Procedures for Non-Collected Children will apply.

#### **Non-Collected Children**

Under no circumstances are the staff to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them. If there has been no contact made after 2 hours, or no staff available on the premises, the police will be telephoned and given the child's details i.e. name, DOB, address, names of parents/carers and any other contact details. Children's Social Care may also be informed. If the police cannot locate an appropriate adult to come for the child, they will notify children's social care via the emergency duty team, who will arrange for the child to be cared for, (possibly with foster carers). Should the parent fail to collect the child before 5.45pm or no contact has been made, then senior staff will ensure that the child is taken to the police station or the allocated after hours social care. The police may decide to take the police protection order (PPO) as part of this process. If there are two or more such episodes within a six week period, staff will make a referral to Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer. A full report of the incident will be written and placed in the child's school file.

## **Persistent Late Collection**

If a family is persistently late in collecting a child then the head teacher will consider taking further action that may include a referral to Children's Social Care.

## **Good Attendance rewards**

We celebrate good attendance with certificates and prizes. Classes with high attendance can win a trophy every term and weekly attendance is celebrated in assembly. Children who have 100% attendance at the end of term/year can win a prize or other rewards. Promotion of good attendance will be done in parent workshops, new parent admission meetings and weekly school newsletter.

## **Leavers**

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to complete a leavers form which should include the following information:

Name and address of new school

Start date if known

New address and contact details if the family is moving.

If this information is not provided and we do not know where they have gone, your child is considered a 'Child Missing Education' This will then be investigated by the Local Authority who will liaise with the other services.

We value your support in helping us maintain the high standards in attendance and punctuality.