

Waterwells Primary Academy Attendance Policy

At Waterwells Primary Academy we believe that every child has a right to education. To enable this to happen, we need to ensure that all children are in school at every opportunity to allow them to reach their full potential. Irregular attendance can seriously disrupt your child's learning and emotional wellbeing, leading to underachieving. We want to avoid this where possible. Good attendance and punctuality are essential throughout life and we want to embed this into the children from a young age. When children attend school regularly, their experience of school life is enriched, both educationally and socially. Parents, carers, staff and children must work together to ensure excellent attendance is achieved.

What the Law says

By Law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full time education. Once a child is registered at a school, parents/carers are responsible for making sure he or she attend regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly, the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against you.

At Robinswood Primary Academy we expect pupils to attend every day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence.

Please note that there are two sessions/marks each day on the register - AM and PM.

Registration Times

Children can arrive at school between 8:35am and 8:50am where they should go straight to their classroom. The doors/gates will be locked at 8:50am and any child late after this time will need to be signed in at the School Office. Anyone arriving after 8:50am will be marked as 'late' on the register.

Arriving late to school can be very disruptive for your child, the teacher and other children in the class.

Unauthorised Lates

Children arriving after the registration period has closed, i.e. after 8.45am, will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless there is a reason given that is deemed acceptable by the Head of School. Ten or more unauthorised late marks within a ten-week period will lead to parents/carer being invited in for an Attendance Improvement Meeting with the Attendance Officer, which could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Illness

Parents/Carers must call the school on the first day of absence, before 9:05am. The message should state the child's name, class and their reason for absence, giving specific details. Parents/Carers should call the school every other day to inform the school if they continue to be absent for a longer period.

If your child has had a sickness bug or had Diarrhoea, they must be absent from school for 48 hours after their last episode as advised by the NHS and the HSC, Public Health Access.

In the case of long-term or regular illness', we will ask for evidence of this. This could include a letter from the Doctors or copies of prescriptions.

Medical Appointments

Medical appointments should be booked outside of school hours wherever possible. If an appointment falls within a school day, please bring your child in before and afterwards - if time allows - to enable your child to get their morning/afternoon mark on the register.

You must provide evidence of these appointments to the school otherwise we will be unable to authorise them.

Holidays

Holidays during term-time will not be authorised unless the Head of School deems there to be an exceptional circumstance. A Holiday Request Form must be completed and returned to school before the holiday is taken. Forms can be collected from the School Office. Holiday's will be recorded as unauthorised which can lead to the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice without warning. Penalty Notices are issued per parent/per child. This is currently £60, rising to £120 if it's not paid within a 21-day period. For example, if you have two children, you will be charged a total of £240.

Achievements

Recognition for high levels of attendance will be decided by staff in each school. This will be communicated to parents and pupils.

Role of Attendance Officer/ Administrative teams

- To liaise with the Head of School, Learning Mentors, SENDCo and class teachers regarding the attendance of individuals, concerns and trends within the classes.
- To advise staff on completion of registers and to monitor that they are completed correctly for both sessions of the day.
- To operate a first day call/text system if the school is not informed of the reason for a child's absence.
- To produce weekly reminder letters regarding unexplained absence to send to parents.
- To liaise with the Local Authority (LA) Inclusion Officer and Outcomes Co-ordinator when required.
- Review absence on a weekly basis and to send letters to parents of those children with less than 90% attendance.
- To promote good attendance with both pupils and parents throughout the school. This will include during assemblies, within the classroom and the school Newsletters.
- To produce reports to the Head of School, Executive Head Teacher and Governors when requested.

Monitoring

The Attendance Officer will monitor registers daily to ensure accurate records and will follow up any un-explained absent marks by phone or text message. If absences still remain un-explained, a letter will be sent to the parents/carer requesting a reason. If the slip isn't returned within a week, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

A report will be run each week to monitor any student whose attendance drops below 90%. A letter will be sent to the parents/carer to inform them of this and to request to see an improvement in the

coming weeks. Should there be no improvement then the school will write to invite them in for a Pre-AIM (Attendance Improvement Meeting).

Should there still be no improvement in the following 4-week period, we will write to parents again, asking them to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) which is the beginning of the legal process for non-attendees. During this meeting a plan and targets will be agreed and monitored over the next 4-week period with a review meeting at the end of it.

Should any of the targets not be met then the School will apply to the Local Authority to start legal proceedings.

All meetings will go ahead even if parents/carers fail to attend and a copy will be sent to them in the post.

A letter will be sent to parents/carers to acknowledge improved attendance.

Parental Responsibility

We encourage parents/carers to promote attendance and place a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. We therefore ask parents to encourage good habits by:

- Making sure your child has a good night sleep by going to bed at a reasonable time.
- Making sure your child arrives at school between 8:35am and 8:50am.
- Leaving a message on the absence line as soon as possible when you know your child will be absent from school.
- Contacting the school as soon as possible if your child feels reluctant to attend school so that this can be addressed quickly.
- To not take your child out of school for a holiday within term-time
- Make medical appointments outside of school hours where possible. If this can't be facilitated, evidence of the appointment should be provided.
- Attend meetings in relation to Attendance when asked to do so.

Definition of a parent

A parent is:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- Any person who has day to day care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

Anybody that comes under the definition of a parent will be held responsible for the attendance of their child.

Children Missing in Education

The school has a responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any child that is absent from school for a period of ten days or more without the school's permission.

Reports

A copy of your child's attendance statistics will be included in their annual school reports and their termly summary reports.

Understanding Attendance

Descriptor	Attendance Rate
Excellent	100%
Good	95-99.9%
Cause for Concern	90-94.9%
Unsatisfactory	85-89.9%
Serious Cause for Concern	80-84.9%
Critical	Less than 75%

Attending school every day = 100% attendance.

Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance (4 weeks missed per year).

Attending 3½ days a week = 80% attendance (more than half a term missed per year or 2 full years missed over the course of their school career).

An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

Being late for school reduces learning time...

- If your child is 5 minutes late every day, they will miss three days of learning each year.
- If your child is 15 minutes late every day, they will miss 2 weeks of learning each year.

Approved by Trust Board: 02/19

Next Review: 02/21