



Inspiring and Achieving Together

Wick CE Primary School

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Rationale

- Regular attendance and punctuality are important if children are to take part fully in the life of the school and to take advantage of the learning opportunities offered by the school.
- We recognise that attending school regularly and punctually is vital to the educational process and encourages a good pattern of work.

Purposes

- To encourage good attendance and discourage lateness.
- To monitor patterns of absence and take actions to seek improvement if appropriate.
- To identify unauthorised absence and take appropriate action.
- To differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence

Success criteria

- A low level of unauthorised absence is maintained and will be below LA average.
- All registers are filled in correctly and promptly.
- Parents/carers are made aware of their responsibilities for attendance and punctuality and are involved in the discussion when the attendance and punctuality cause concern.
- The Local Authority is satisfied by the efforts made by the school to promote high levels of attendance.

Guidelines

- We accept our role in partnership with parents/carers.
- Parents/carers have the responsibility to ensure regular attendance and punctual arrival in the morning and collection at the end of the school day.

Our responsibility is to support attendance and examine problems that may lead to non-attendance. To do this we keep a register of attendance at the start of every morning and afternoon session. These registers are legal documents and must be kept for three years after the date on which they were last used. Care must be taken to record information accurately.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Executive Headteacher/Head of School

- a) The Headteacher must ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements e.g. the maintenance of registers and the submission of all data
- b) The Headteacher will make sure that effective monitoring, support and intervention is in place for children whose attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern.
- c) It is only the Headteacher of the school that can authorise absences and requests for Holidays in exceptional circumstances where children have a history of very good attendance.

Governors

- a) The governing body has responsibility for setting the school's attendance target and monitoring of the school's attendance rate.

Parents and carers

It is the law that parents or carers must ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and punctually. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents or carers may be reported to the Local Authority if their child(ren)'s absence from school is a significant cause for concern. **We define regular attendance as being above the yearly target set by the school each year.**

100% Attendance	0 days missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 days of absence 1 week and 4 days of learning missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 days of absence 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 days of absence 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very poor
80% Attendance	38 days of absence 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 days of absence 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed	Unacceptable

With regard to this, parents and carers must follow the school procedures for reporting any absence:

- If a child is unwell, a telephone call or an email sent before 9:30 a.m. on the first day of absence stating the reason the child cannot attend school
- If a parent or carer has failed to notify the school office of the absence through either a telephone call or note, they will receive a text or a letter for clarification or it will become **unauthorised**.
- Absence which remains **unauthorised** will be reported to the Local Authority
- Parents and carers should make all medical appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. Notification of absence for unavoidable medical appointments must be made in advance of the appointment by telephoning the school on 01179372399.
- Parents or carers must, when requested, provide proof, such as an appointment card, when absences require further justification.
- Parents or carers should be aware that a letter or phone call does not in itself authorise the absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation will authorise the absence.
- Parents or carers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that their child arrives punctually to school every day. If punctuality problems are of a persistent nature, parents or carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to improve the situation.

Children

- Children should attend school every day unless prevented from doing so due to circumstances which the school would normally authorise.
- Children must arrive at school punctually at 8.40am ready to line up for **8:50am** start. This is the latest time we would expect a child to arrive for registration.

Staff

- Every half day of absence has to be classified by the school (not the parent or carer) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why a reason for absence is always required.
- All teaching staff must take the electronic register on SIMS at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Authorisation of absence can only be made by the school who will code each absence in line with the DfE absence codes. Authorised absence would normally be for cases such as sickness, unavoidable medical/dental appointments and days off for religious observance or exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement.

Authorisation **will not** be given for absence from school due to shopping trips, birthdays, going to the airport, visiting relatives, buying shoes, going for a haircut, parent or siblings illness.

Beginning and end of school day

The school accepts responsibility for the supervision of pupils on its premises from 8.40am when the school gates are unlocked and a member of staff will be on duty in the school playground. Parents are regularly reminded that children should not arrive in school before 8.40 am. Unless attending Breakfast Club. Pupils attending breakfast club will be escorted to the classroom at 8.50am.

Parents will be able to enter the school playground from 3.00pm when the school gates will be unlocked and pupils are dismissed at 3.15pm. If pupils are taking part in after-school activities, written information will indicate when supervision of pupils will end.

Medical Appointments

We monitor the amount of time missed due to medical appointments carefully. We acknowledge that hospital and specialist clinic appointments, including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a student having time out of school. Our expectation is that the minimum amount of learning lost. We seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. **Proof of unavoidable medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school.** Routine, non-urgent appointments must be made after school time and during the 13 week school holidays.

Requests for Absence during Term Time

The Department of Education's guidance encourages the school to take a much firmer stance on absence authorised in term times. Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays, but the school may choose to grant a single leave of absence up to 5 days in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher where there is a history of regular attendance.

Circumstances that would not meet the criteria include:

Relatives coming to visit

Cheaper holidays in England and abroad

Family day trips

Visiting family who have different half terms or holiday.

Grandparents have booked a holiday and parents were not aware of the dates.

Re-occurring car/traffic problems

Holidays

The Government and Local Authority discourage parents from taking their children on holiday during term time. Therefore the Policy is that parents cannot have authorised school holidays and can only have up to 5 days absence in any one academic year and this will be noted as unauthorised absence. Any sickness either side of a holiday will be treated as unauthorised and if exceeds 5 schools will result in LA fixed penalty. They cannot expect it by right – it must be agreed by the school and you **MUST SEND A LETTER TO THE HEADTEACHER** before you book the holiday!

Any requests for holidays must be placed in writing at least four weeks in advance alongside a copy of the booking form for the holiday.

NO HOLIDAYS WILL BE AUTHORISED EXCEPT IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. These are crucial times for children socially as well as academically.

Advance dates of school terms are always published on the South Gloucestershire website however the school will also advise of additional training days once they have been agreed. It is important that parents and carers only book holidays during the stated holiday periods.

Penalty notices

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2012 and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013

Section 23 (1) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. (Section 444 of the education Act 1996)

The following circumstances may result in a parent/carers being issued with a penalty notice:

- General non attendance of more than 10 unauthorised absence sessions (session is half day)
- Holidays taken in term time (G code)
- Truancy
- Persistent late arrival at school after registers closed (U code)

In each case a written warning of a Penalty Notice will be sent. A penalty notice of £60 per family per child will be issued after consultation with the Governing Body or Chair of Governors. If unpaid after 21 days it will rise to £120 if unpaid within 28 days it will be

forwarded to the magistrate's court. (See South Gloucestershire Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices)

Procedures for responding to absence and unauthorised absence

- We operate an everyday call system and if a reason for absence has not been communicated to the school office by 9:30 a.m. a call or text message to the parent or carer will be made. Every day calling is an effective measure that helps ensure children are safe.
- If, despite attempts to contact parents or carers to ascertain a reason for absence the absence remains unauthorised, a letter detailing the date of the unauthorised absence may be sent home. This letter has a tear off slip where parents are expected to write the reason for absence and return the slip to the school office.
- If a child is absent from school for more than 3 consecutive days (without any explanation being given) a member of the school attendance team may contact the Local Authority.

Procedures, strategies and sanctions for responding to unsatisfactory attendance and persistent lateness

The school attendance team oversee the school's attendance policy and are, therefore, responsible for the management of attendance, absence and punctuality across the school. High levels of attendance will be encouraged through a range of approaches and joint working:

- Attendance data for each Year Group is reviewed by the attendance team every term which highlights those children with unauthorised absence, unsatisfactory levels of attendance, concerning patterns of absence or lateness and high levels of authorised absence from school
- Prompt investigation into issues where a child is experiencing attendance difficulties will be undertaken by the attendance team.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff will regularly use attendance data to help inform meetings with children e.g. mentoring meetings, progress review meetings and pastoral intervention. The links between attainment and attendance will be explicitly made at every opportunity
- Close monitoring of children with below satisfactory attendance and those from vulnerable groups such as, looked after children, SEN, ethnic minority children and children entitled to free school meals
- Effective use of attendance data to inform early intervention programmes or action plans for children who are experiencing emotional or social issues which affect their school attendance.
- Partnership work with a range of external agencies such as, the LA, School Nurse or Social Services Department to support children and families where wider issues affect school attendance
- Having a high regard for critical times such as transitions into school, within school (moves into new year groups) and exam periods.

School attendance meetings

For children whose attendance and lateness consistently falls below a satisfactory level, parents or carers and children will be invited to attend a school attendance meeting with the Advocate for the Child and, if appropriate, the LA. These meetings provide a useful opportunity to review the reasons for absence and lateness and agree actions that will support the children in making the necessary improvements. These plans set specific targets for attendance and may include the school requesting evidence in support of a child's high level of absence, such as, copies of prescriptions, appointment cards as well as parents or carers providing written permission for the school to contact professionals in the Health service by signing a medical consent form. The school may decide to not authorise any absences unless proof of illness or medical consent is provided. A referral to the school's LA officer may be made at this stage.

School attendance panels

For any child whose attendance continues to fall below a satisfactory level with no good reason, a meeting will be held in school. This is a more formal meeting which sets out the parent's or carer's responsibilities in ensuring regular attendance to avoid the possibility of legal action. This is the first stage of formal legal proceedings for unsatisfactory attendance at school.

We always encourage parents or carers to work in partnership with the school at all times and not to collude with their child's absence from school. If a child is experiencing problems attending, it is much better for the school to know straightaway so that we can offer our support to you and them. The LA also work in partnership with parents but do have the power

to issue Fixed Penalty notices as well as prosecute parents or carers in the Magistrate court for failure to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. In other circumstances, they may also apply for an Education Supervision order on the child.

Promoting attendance

- Certificates and medals will be presented to children with 99 – 100% attendance at the end of the school year.
- Certificates and stickers will be presented to children with 100% attendance each term.
- A class with 100% attendance for a week will chose a class reward
- A reward will be chosen for the class with the highest attendance at termly intervals.

Conclusion

We believe that excellent attendance and punctuality has a positive impact on educational progress and that this policy and the 'attending school' leaflet will help parent/carers support our attempts to provide the best possible education for the children.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is a working policy and will be subject to regular review in practice. The school will periodically review the process to ensure that it continues to work effectively.

Written by: Robert Cockle Date: 1/9/22

Approved by: FGB Committee Date: 3/10/22

Reviewed by: FGB Committee Date: 3/10/22

Next review: October 2023

Signed..... Date

Chair of Full Governing Body