



“Together we learn, Together we succeed”

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy has been written to ensure that the school's ethos, curriculum, and practices promote shared values. It also encourages staff, children and other members of the Welbourne community to understand others and to value diversity, irrespective of gender, race, belief and sexual orientation.

As a Rights Respecting School, we put the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos.

Policy Agreed	Reviewed by	Reviewed in	Approved by	Signature on behalf FGB	Next Review
June 2009	J Stone I Hussain	September 2020			September 2022

Welbourne Primary School

Attendance Policy

1. Rationale:

Welbourne Primary School promotes the view that regular attendance is important to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all of our children. Therefore we strive for all children to achieve to be in school on time every day.

We feel the whole school community should take responsibility for attendance. This policy meets the requirements of the School Attendance guidance from the DfE.

2. Aims:

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The school also has a Behaviour and Punctuality action plan that has targets that are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

3. School Procedures

3.1 Registration

By law schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in class by 8:55 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55 and will be kept open until 9:00. The register for the second session will be taken straight after returning to their class following lunch. Please see 3.4 for what is classified as lateness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8:55 or as soon as practically possible. This can be done by either informing the school office, texting/calling the school office or e-mailing the school. If the school is not contacted by a child's parent/carer regarding their absence, the school will send an absence text. Following this, if notification has not been received regarding a pupil's absence a letter will be sent to the relevant parents/carers.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration / school for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Evidence of medical or dental appointments must be given to the office in advance for the absence to be authorised.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness

During COVID-19 lateness is classed as any child coming into school between 9.05 and 9:15.

All children arriving after the gates are closed must sign the late book in the office and take a red token to pass on to their teacher.

Arrival after 9:15 is classed as an unauthorised absence.

Lateness is monitored every week, if children are late on more than two occasions, the school will write to parents asking for reasons. Where children have persistent lateness problems the school will invite parents into school to a punctuality meeting.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Children's attendance record will be summarised on their child's end of year report. Attendance record will be shared with parents/carers when there are concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be exceptional circumstances.

When exceptional leave has been requested, the following will be taken into consideration.

- The effect the absence will have on his/ her education and ability to achieve;
- Your child's previous attendance record, previous leave during term time;
- His/ Her welfare;
- Other circumstances surrounding your child's education at this school.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Only one day is authorised for religious observations.

4.2 Legal sanctions

The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance. These include:

Weekly

The headteacher presents the attendance cup to the class with the best attendance weekly in assembly.

The punctuality award is presented weekly in assembly to the class with the best punctuality.

Termly

Individual attendance:

One term with 100% will receive a bronze certificate.

Two terms with 100% will receive a silver certificate.

Three terms with 100% will receive a gold certificate.

Annually

The Headteacher invites the class who have had the best attendance that year to special reward.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence.

If parents/carers do not follow the procedure as outlined in section 3.2 for an unplanned absence to following will take place:

- If any child has not been registered or the school has not been notified about a child's absence, the office will contact the parent carer on the first morning, by text. Absence letters are sent out every Friday to ask for reasons for absences. Every half term letters are again sent out, if the school has no reply by the second letter, the child will be given an unauthorised mark. All letters sent are recorded electronically on G2 Integris.
- If the parent notifies the school of a child's reason for absence, but the child continues to be absent for more than a week then an update check will be made by the school in the form of a phone call.
- The school will hold Termly Attendance Meetings with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), Schools Attendance Officer and Family Support Worker. All families with attendance of 90% or below will be invited to discuss any issues with the Attendance Officer, Family Support & EWO.
- If the child continues to be absent for 10 days, the school will refer the child to Haringey's Education Welfare Office as a 'child missing in education'.

Text message reminders are sent to parents to remind them of key dates and times in the school calendar so that any possible confusion is minimised.

Throughout the year parents will be kept informed of school expectations and procedures through information, flyers and newsletters.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Refers to school nurse or family support worker if support is needed
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the attendance officer. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our safeguarding policy.