



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2015
Next review: Spring 2017

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

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Date:

Rationale

In accordance with the Hampshire Guide to Schools 'Maintaining and Improving Attendance', the Governing Body and staff of this school agree that 'regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school life'. At West Tytherley Primary School, we are committed to maintaining and improving pupil attendance. We also believe that punctuality is of equal importance.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy document is to set out ways in which matters of attendance and punctuality should be managed in this school, in order to ensure that the school and parents work together to achieve and maintain high standards in this area.

School responsibility for attendance

In order to achieve this, the school will:

- Promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere in school, where children feel safe and their presence is valued
- Create attitudes towards high standards of attendance and punctuality, which pupils should retain throughout life.
- Ensure that attendance is maintained effectively and absences or late arrivals are followed up promptly.
- Meet legal requirements, with particular reference to identifying unauthorised absence.
- Check registers regularly, to note unexplained absences and identify patterns of absence and lateness, if they are occurring.
- If absence/punctuality becomes a matter for concern, use strategies devised in order to raise parental awareness of the importance of attendance and

punctuality, so that they will make more effort to ensure their child attends school punctually and regularly.

- Involve other agencies when difficulties arise, and the school needs extra support or help as appropriate e.g. the Education Welfare Service, Education Psychology Service, Social Services).
- Ensure all staff are aware of the School Policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Ensure information on attendance/punctuality is available for governors, as required.
- Ensure good liaison when a change of school occurs.
- Raise awareness of the importance of good attendance to parents
- Enable parents to feel that their support of this Policy is recognised by the school as a vital contribution towards their child's education.

Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

It needs to be highlighted that whilst at primary school, children are dependent on their parent/carers, who are responsible for their level of attendance and punctuality. It is vital that children enjoy coming into school and will, therefore, whilst being encouraged to attend regularly and on time, not carry the blame or be made to feel unhappy if their parents are not supportive or effective in this area.

Registers

The school uses an Online Register through SIMS to record attendance twice a day. Registration takes place between 09:00 and 09:10 in the morning, and 13:15 and 13:25 in the afternoon.

Symbols used for absence are:

/ \	Present
B	Education off site (NOT Dual registration)
C	Other authorised circumstances (e.g. bereavement)
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)
E	Excluded
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registration) with reason
V	Education visit or trip
W	Work experience
!	DfES X – non-compulsory school age absence (under 5's
Y	Enforced closure
#	school closed to pupils

If the child arrives at school after registration but within 10 minutes of the closure of registration, the register will be amended to record them present but 'late' ("L"). However, if the child is still absent after 09:20 or 13:35 respectively, this is classified as an unauthorised absence and the register will not be amended.

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to take the register. Teachers should also be aware and report any concerns they may have to the Headteacher.

The Online Registers will be checked weekly by the Finance Officer and Admin assistant for any attendance issues/trends. They will pass on any absence concerns to the Headteacher.

Absence

Parents are asked to telephone school or to send a note if their child is ill and when possible to let us know as to how long they expect their child to be away; daily telephone calls are not then necessary. A note will be given to the class teacher of the reason for the child's absence on that morning so that the class teacher knows why a pupil is absent.

When the absence report shows that a child has been absent without explanation, parents will be sent a letter requiring a reason to be given. If no satisfactory response is received, the Education Welfare Officer will be informed, as is also the case in the event of persistent absenteeism i.e. 20 absences within a 50 day period.

Punctuality

Children arriving after 09:10 should report to the school office where they are required to be signed in. Parents of children who persistently arrive late should be approached and encouraged to ensure that their child arrives at school promptly. This may be done initially by the class teacher and subsequently by the Headteacher. It should be explained that any form of lateness is sufficient to interrupt the education of not only their child but also of others in the class.

If a child arrives 20 minutes or more late (after 09:20), with no reason given by the parent, this will constitute an unauthorised absence.

If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know in advance.

If the child has a regular pattern of lateness, a note/letter will be sent to the parents asking them either to come into school and explain if there is a difficulty causing lateness, or to ensure that punctuality is maintained. In rare circumstances, if the school is aware of the situation, an arrangement allowing some flexibility can be agreed with the Headteacher.

Repeated unexplained lateness, or lateness with no acceptable reason, will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and the Social Services, if relevant who may issue a penalty notice or prosecution under the Education Act 1996, section 444.

Holidays

“Parents do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term-time holiday or any other reason without the prior approval of the headteacher,” this is quoted directly from DCSF guidance.

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school you will need to explain why the circumstances are ‘exceptional’. In these exceptional circumstances, up to ten days may be ‘authorised’ upon receipt of a request form, available from the school office or through the school website:

www.west-tytherley.hants.sch.uk/documents/admin-forms and completed **before** the absence commences. Other factors such as punctuality, previous attendance records and timing within the school year may be taken into consideration.

Should the parents decide to take the children out of school regardless of the Headteacher’s decision, the pupil’s absence must be recorded as unauthorised using the appropriate registration code. The parent is then committing an offence and may be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted under the Education Act 1996, section 444.

Procedures

All unauthorised and authorised absences will be noted on the child’s school record and annual reports to parents.

Any concerns about a pupil’s attendance or punctuality (89.0%) will be discussed with the parent first. If there is no improvement, a letter will be sent home (85%). [See Appendixes]

The school will discuss attendance concerns with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when:

- a pupil’s attendance is less than 80%
- contacts with home have not brought about any improvement in attendance
- there is poor communication with home regarding explanations for absence/lateness.

The school will refer to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when:

- a child has 20 or more sessions (10 days) absence in 100 sessions (within a 50 day period)

Appendix A

Attendance action timeline

Appendix B

Attendance leaflet for parents

Appendix C

Attendance Letter 1, 2 and 3

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE ACTION TIMELINE

Jan 2015

Action	Who?	When?
FGB to approve the attendance policy	FGB	Jan 2015
Send out Attendance Policy to parents and place on school website	MW	Feb 2015
Follow up slip sent home/phone calls if no reason given for absence. Reason for absence logged and recorded on SIMS.	KF/JN	At least weekly
Print out 'Attendance Overview for each class x 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One copy placed in blue register and is swapped each week. Previous week's sheet is put into Attendance Folder (admin) • One copy given to Headteacher. 	KF/JN KF to MW	Every Friday
Print out 'Attendance Overview for whole school x 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One copy filed in Attendance Folder (admin) • One copy given to Headteacher. 	KF/JN KF to MW	Every Friday
If no specific illness or authorised reason for absence, Class Teacher (CT) speaks to parent. CT to initials and date printout to confirm this has been done.	CT	95% or less
Letter 1 is sent out to parent and logged on their SIMS attendance.	KF/JN	89.9%
If no improvement after three weeks, letter 2 is sent out and logged on SIMS	KF/JN	89.9% or less
Meeting held with parents	MW/CT	85% or less
No improvement – referral - 20 absences in 100 (ie 10 days)	MW	Immediately

APPENDIX B

Do you know your child's attendance figure? Would you guess it to be above or below 90%? Is 90% attendance enough?

Your child's classteacher has up-dated attendance figures weekly. Please ask if you are unsure of your child's current attendance figure.

We understand children are susceptible to illness, particularly at a younger age, however, it is the additional absences that soon add up. Parents often tell us they are sometimes unsure if their child is genuinely ill. If you feel your child is prone to 'phantom' tummy aches and but they do not have a temperature or other obvious symptoms, send them to school! We will always phone a parent when a child is genuinely unwell and most children 'recover' very quickly once they are in school.

It is also very important that your child is in school on time. Children need to be part of the everyday class routines and can feel very self-conscious if they frequently arrive after their friends. Late children often miss important inputs, news and starter activities too. When a child arrives after the register has closed at 9.20am, they receive an unauthorised absent mark on their record, this can have a significant impact on their overall attendance percentage.

All of our children are entitled to an education. At primary school age they are reliant on an adult to get them here and most are still reliant on adult support, even if they walk to school on their own. Developing a good attitude to coming to school and getting here on time will help them take responsibility for attending school when they are old enough to travel independently.

We are here to help and can offer advice and support to families who are struggling to maintain good attendance. Please talk to us.

**Do you know your child's attendance figure?
 Would you guess it to be above or below 90%?
 Is 90% attendance enough?**

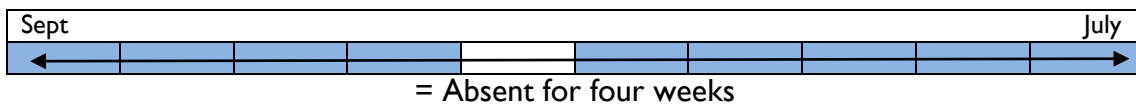
Peter is currently in Year 2. His attendance rates at school are always around 90%. *He thinks that this is pretty good!*

BUT 90% attendance for Peter = 20 days absence.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI

90% attendance means that Peter is absent from lessons for the equivalent of **one half-day every week**

In Year 2, Peter's 90% attendance rate means that he missed the equivalent of **four whole weeks** of lessons in the school year.



What does your child's attendance figure mean as learning time lost?

Attendance Rate	Approx days absence by the end of year	School time lost by the end of Primary School
100%	0	0
95%	10	14 weeks
90%	20	28 weeks
85%	30	42 weeks
80%	40	56 weeks

There are 38 weeks in a school year!

Is your child's attendance or punctuality rate affecting their performance in school?



West Tytherley C.E. (Controlled) Primary School



West Tytherley

Salisbury

Wiltshire SP5 1JX

Headteacher: Mr Mike Warren

Finance Officer: Mrs Kimberley Furness

Telephone: 01794 340338

admin@west-tytherley.hants.sch.uk

ATTENDANCE LETTER 1

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear [Parents Name]

RE: POOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE [Pupils Name and DoB]

I am writing in connection with your son/daughter, [Pupils Name]'s absences from school.

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. The Department for Education has published data on their website that clearly shows the link between attendance and attainment. This shows that there will be an impact on your child's education if attendance is not consistently above 95% throughout a pupil's schooling.

This letter serves as a formal reminder of your legal duty to ensure regular attendance at school. According to school records, from [Week Period] to [End of Week Period] your child has been absent from school on [Number] occasions out of a possible [Number] attendances.

Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Staff will contact you if they feel that your child is not well enough to be in school. Repeated absences may require the school to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery and agree a management of the child's education during this time. It would also be useful for the Head Teacher to understand any health related matters which may be affecting [Pupils Name]'s school attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Mike Warren



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ATTENDANCE LETTER 2

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear [Parents Name]

RE: POOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE [Pupils Name and DoB]

On [date of letter 1] I wrote to you advising that you son/daughter, [Pupils Name]'s attendance was a concern to the school.

Unfortunately, there has been no significant improvement in his/her attendance. Currently, according to school records, from [Week Period] to [End of Week Period] your child has been absent from school on [Number] occasions out of a possible [Number] attendances.

This letter serves as a formal reminder of your legal duty to ensure regular attendance at school and it is important that any issues that may be the cause of poor attendance are addressed as soon as possible. Please contact me in the next few days so that we can arrange a time to discuss [Pupils Name]'s attendance.

I enclose for your information a copy of your child's attendance report.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Mike Warren



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admin@west-tytherley.hants.sch.uk

ATTENDANCE LETTER 3

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear [Parents Name]

RE: POOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE [Pupils Name and DoB]

I note that there has been no significant improvement in [Pupils Name]'s attendance since [date of letter 1]. [Pupils Name]'s attendance for this academic year has fallen to [percentage]%. Furthermore, I have not received any satisfactory explanation for [Pupils Name]'s absences.

Your child is now at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. This means attendance is now at 85% or below.

As such, a referral to an Education Welfare Officer will be considered and a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings may be incurred by parents or/and carers.

Should you have anything you wish to discuss concerning this matter, I will continue to be available. Please contact me on the above number should you require an appointment.

I enclose for your information a copy of your child's current attendance report.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Mike Warren