

Welford-on-Avon Primary School.

Policy on Attendance

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly it is the parent's responsibility to ring school and inform of the reason for absence. The class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian if we have not had a message. This applies to children in Nursery and those in Reception who are not of compulsory school age.
- 3.2 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.3 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, for example, personal

family circumstances. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance, but normally this request will be granted.

- 4.2 'Amendments to the 2006 regulations **remove** reference to holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**' A 'request for leave of absence form', together with supporting paperwork must be completed for each child. These will be judged individually by the Headteacher. Parents of children who are not of compulsory age must follow the same procedure.

In addition to this new legislation, there are also new regulations in which the imposition of penalty fines for parents and carers taking children out of school in unauthorised circumstances will now be imposed more strictly by the local authority.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7.0 Punctuality

It is expected that children will be in class by 8.55 a.m. Arrivals after this time will be marked as late in the register. Children that arrive after 9.15 a.m. without explanation, will be marked as 'late after the registers closed', which is deemed an unauthorised absence. Late arrivals will be monitored and parents contacted if the problem persists.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will receive information termly from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

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- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 9.4 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Signed:

Date: