

WENTWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE SCHOOL POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Wentworth C of E Junior and Infant School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the school.

Aims

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum;
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements;
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance;
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Expectations

- To respect themselves and others;
- To do all they can to attend the school regularly and punctually;
- To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied;
- To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging;
- To be happy and encourage others to feel happy.

What we expect of our Parents/Carers:

- To ensure that their child attends the school regularly;
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, either before the absence or on the first day of absence;
- To ensure that their child arrives at the school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness;
- To work closely with the school and other outside agencies to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance;
- To only take holidays in school holiday time.
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATS.
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend regularly. Parent should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them.

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Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend the school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that Parent carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

What our pupils and parents/carers can expect of the School:

- To create an ethos that pupils want to be part of;
- To meet the legal requirements set out by Government;
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance;
- To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention;
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the Education Act (1995);
- To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance;
- To encourage open communication channels between home and the school;

The school will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Routines and Record Keeping

- The class teacher will take a register recording who is present at and absent from the school at 8.45am.
- At 9.05am the registration information is sent to the school office. Any late pupils should then enter the school through the main entrance.
- If any pupil arrives late the office staff will ask the parent to sign a late book that records the name, class, time and reason for lateness. If a child arrives unaccompanied by a parent the office staff will complete the record asking the pupil to offer a reason.
- All staff need to be aware that any child arriving late MUST register at the office for purposes of fire regulations.
- The register officially closes at 9.30am and any pupil arriving after this will be marked absent for the session.
- During the morning the absences from that morning and the previous afternoon will be recorded onto the electronic registration system and all the present pupils marked present. The offered reasons for lateness absences will be assessed and the appropriate code entered into the system.
- Reasons for absence may be offered verbally by phone.

Please note: A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents who have not offered a reason and after a two week process will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

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Monitoring

- The Head Teacher (and when appropriate the Local Education Authority) will review the attendance of all the schools pupils on a half termly basis and any pupils identified as cause for concern or have less than 90% attendance on a more regular basis will be noted. (10% non-attendance is now classified as persistent non-attendance by DFE Sept 2011)
- In the first instance the Admin Team will contact the parents and hold a discussion about the concerns and endeavour to work together to find a solution and offer support.
- If non-attendance persists, a letter will be sent to the parents of any pupil identified as having attendance problems informing them of the school's concerns and again offering support to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending. A face to face meeting with the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher will need to be arranged. Hopefully this will help to overcome any issues preventing the pupil from attending. A support plan and review date will be agreed at this meeting.
- If the parents do not attend the meeting or after such meeting the attendance of the pupil does not improve a formal referral to the EWO will be made.

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school strategically manage attendance issues.

Requests for Holidays in Term Time

From 1st September 2013, schools and academies are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for holidays in term time Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Any children absent from the school for holidays in term time will be marked as unauthorised absences.

Pupils with unauthorised absences will be reported to the Local Education Authority. The Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice for unauthorised absences in line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The cost of these notices are £60, payable within 21 days; rising to £120 if unpaid and a further 7 days to make payment. This penalty applies to each child for which permission has been refused.

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Requests for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

If a parent wishes to request a period of leave for exceptional circumstances they are required to complete a Leave of Absence request ahead of the absence period. This form is available from the school administrator. If the request is denied the school will inform the parent of the reason and the request will be noted in the electronic register. Please note: Leave of Absence cannot be granted after the absence.

Strategies Used to Promote Good Attendance

- Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they have and can succeed.
- Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.
- Pupil attendance figures will be published with the annual academic reports.
- Positive verbal reinforcement is given to pupils who have been absent from the school for a period of time and an education action plan developed to help them catch up with any missed curriculum and promote future attendance.

Policy Agreed by: Governing Body

Effective Date 2014

This policy was reviewed December 2016. Next review, December 2019.