

Winnington Park Primary and Nursery School



Policy for Attendance and Truancy

Date: Summer 2022

Review Date: Summer 2024

VISION

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills and knowledge, which will equip them for life. We believe that children can reach their full potential by receiving full-time education, through regular and structured attendance. We expect all pupils to arrive and leave school punctually, to have an attendance rate of over 96%, and we emphasise this to parents.

Winnington Park Primary school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community, and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school.

All staff are concerned for the children's welfare and happiness and everyone plays a part in promoting regular attendance among the pupils. However, children should not attend school if they are unwell.

Aims of this Policy

- ◆ To foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community – teachers, parents and pupils.
- ◆ To provide a framework, with agreed roles and responsibilities.
- ◆ To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils.
- ◆ To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, including set procedures for attendance information.
- ◆ To develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data.
- ◆ To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce unauthorised absence.
- ◆ To implement a system for rewards and sanctions.
- ◆ To promote effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies.

Communication

The importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained at the Pre-school Induction Meetings held every year for children about to enter Reception Class. This reiterates that parents and children should arrive at school on time, so that each child can be given the best possible start to the school day. It is also stressed that young children particularly should be collected promptly, as they can become upset if left behind on their own. Parents are asked to share any worries that their child might have in school. Parents need to be aware that even little things can upset children, which means that they might become unhappy and might not want to come to school.

Good attendance and punctuality is discussed at the start of each year during 'meet the teacher meeting' when a child changes year group. Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various Year Groups. All parents requesting a place are asked to make an appointment with the Head Teacher. At this meeting, the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted, together with other school routines.

Holidays and Requests for Absence during Term Time

The School's view is that during term time the priority is education. Therefore, following statutory guidance, the school adopts the position that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The fundamental principles defining 'exceptional' are: rare, significant, unavoidable (an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time) and short.

The school's attendance data, which includes authorisation of leave, is monitored by the Local Authority and the school is held to account for decisions made. The school therefore tries to be consistent in the application of the guidelines we are provided with, as follows:

- If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise absence - absence during term time for holidays/vacations is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.
- Absences to visit family members are also not normally granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absences for important religious observances can be taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities. Families may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis.

Where requests for absence are not exceptional, parents must complete the absence request form and understand that this absence will not be authorised; both parents with parental responsibility must complete the absence request form to meet our safeguarding children criteria. Information is required, in writing to inform us of the child's whereabouts and to meet our safeguarding children statutory requirements. Failure to inform the school of absence may lead to the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer.

Registration and Lateness

Winnington Park Primary School and Nursery uses a computerised registration system and the register is completed in the morning and afternoon at 9.00am and 1.00pm. A pupil will receive a late mark after 9.00am. All pupils who arrive after 9.00am must report to the office. The school gates open at 8.40am.

Fifteen minutes after the close of registration a late mark becomes an unauthorised absence. The register will officially close at 9.15am and after this time a child will be coded "U" which statistically counts as an unauthorised absence.

The school office team are responsible for collating attendance records in school and notify the Headteacher if there is any reason for concern. At the end of the year, each child's attendance is analysed and a copy is given to parents. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken. In the first instance this will involve a discussion with the parent or carer followed by a letter home if the situation does not improve.

Winnington Park Primary & Nursery School operates a first day response and any absence not reported will trigger a phone call to parents to ascertain the child's whereabouts and reason for absence. Any safeguarding concerns due to the absence are reported to Designated Safeguard Teacher and Headteacher. If the pupil is absent the following day, school must be informed and the procedures above repeated.

Winnington Park Primary & Nursery School's expectation of attendance is 96%. Where attendance falls below this, parents will be sent a letter requesting improvement: if attendance falls below 90% school will contact EWO.

Across a year, 15 minutes of lateness each day is the same as missing two whole weeks of school, exemplified in the table below:

On time each day	0 learning lost
5 minutes late each day	3 days of learning lost
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days of learning lost
15 minutes late each day	10 days of learning lost
20 minutes late each day	13 days of learning lost
30 minutes late each day	19 days of learning lost

Electronic registers are examined regularly. If there is a frequent pattern of absence, school will telephone the parents to ascertain the reason for persistent absence. If there are concerns about a child's non-attendance or unpunctuality, the class teacher consults the Headteacher immediately. Details of attendance or late percentage are extracted from the computer database each month. The Head Teacher shares this to the parent(s) during an

informal discussion. If absences or unpunctuality persist, the Head Teacher contacts the Education Welfare Officer.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- At least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive.
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival
- Truancy
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

Absence Through Illness

We monitor attendance of those pupils who are absent from school because of short-term or chronic illness, and close links are maintained with parents.

If a child is ill, parents and carers should notify school by telephone as soon as possible on the first day of absence and on subsequent days if the child is still unwell.

- In cases of infectious diseases, it is essential that school is informed.
- If a child has diarrhoea OR sickness, they should not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of illness. If a child has diarrhoea AND sickness, they should not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of illness
- If a child becomes ill during the day, their parents or carers will be contacted. Therefore, please let us know immediately if you (or named emergency contacts) change your address or telephone number.

The chart below provides a useful guide regarding returning to school following an illness.

**means there is no need to stay off school but school should be informed.*

When should my child return to school?



Chicken Pox When all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis None*	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever None*	Hand, foot & mouth None*	Impetigo When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies After first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek None*	Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
	Flu Until recovered	Head Lice None*	Threadworms None*	Tonsillitis None*	

Educational support, including the provision of work and materials is provided for those pupils who are absent from school, with medical conditions for more than 5 days. ICT is used if practicable, including, e-mail and the school website to access information. The teaching staff liaise with Medical Advisers and/or Home Tuition Providers, so that, during prolonged absence, pupils receive suitable work for their age and ability group.

The reintegration of children into school after a long absence through ill health is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including, the class teacher, Teaching Assistants, Learning Mentors, and Home or Hospital Tutor, meet to discuss the return to school. Friends and other pupils are encouraged to help the child settle back in school. Extra support is provided (subject to available resources) after an analysis of the child's needs.

The school will work closely with families and children where emotionally based school non-attendance is a concern. Families and children will be supported by the Senior Leadership Team, Family Support Worker and Class Teacher to work with the pupil and their family in overcoming any barriers that may be making attendance feel challenging as quickly as possible.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Please let our school office know, in advance, if your child has an appointment during school time. Please also let us know at what time you will collect your child for the appointment and please sign your child out and then sign in again at our school office upon their return to school.

Truancy

All staff at Winnington Park School believe in the importance of continuity in every child's learning. Staff are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although truancy is very rare, if staff are suspicious that a child might be playing truant, action is taken immediately.

If truancy is suspected, the Head Teacher and the Educational Welfare Officer are notified. Parents are contacted, either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents to bring their child to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved. If the Head Teacher is unable to talk to the parent(s), he or she talks to the child to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If problems are identified, these are discussed and resolved with the class teacher/member of staff/other pupils.

At Winnington Park School we endeavour to discover, through discussion with the individual pupils, classes and the Children's Council, what the children like and dislike about school. The staff consider the children's opinions and, if possible, adjustments are made to teaching and learning procedures and the school environment.