

Attendance Policy

Warwick Road Primary School



EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. 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.

Children need to attend school regularly in order to become established within their class and to become confident members of the school community. They need to be able to take full advantage of the curriculum offered and in order to do this they need to be in school. We need parents/carers support to ensure children attend school regularly and on time.

School is open to children 190 days per year and we expect that they attend for as much of that time as possible. However, we do realise there are going to be times, mainly because of illness, when pupils will be absent.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all 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 morning and afternoon session of each school day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 7 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Session times are:

SESSION TIMES		
NURSERY	RECEPTION & KS1	KS2
8.45-11.45	8.45-11.30	8.45-12.30
12.15-3.15	12.30-3.15	1.30-3.15

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents 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 9:00 am or as soon as practically possible by telephone (01924 455593) or email (attendance.warwickroad@kirkleeseducation.uk). Absence can also be reported through the school app. All calls are logged and the information is recorded by the attendance officer.

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

The school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

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. **Please note medical appointments in term time do affect attendance figures.**

Parents should visit the school office prior to the appointment, with their appointment letters or sight of a text message. All parents are encouraged to provide written proof of the appointment, which can be supplied to the school office after the appointment.

Medical absence forms a large proportion of authorised absence, particularly at primary level. Parents need to be aware that the school **will** respond to persistent medical absence. Broken weeks are a concern as it may be an indicator of family problems or child stress. Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence, not a parent.

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 and punctuality

School doors open at 8.40 am and registration is at 8.45 am.

A pupil who arrives after 8.50 am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after 9.30 am will be marked as late after registration, using the appropriate code. **Please note that a late mark after registration has closed will affect the attendance figures.**

It is important that classes make a prompt and effective start to the school day. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individuals learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is of extreme importance therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

All late arrivals are monitored on a weekly basis. Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will make verbal contact with parents/carers. If the concerns persist, the Attendance Officer will write to the parents/carers. In the event of persistent lateness, the school will invite parents in to school for a meeting and a plan will be put in place. Children who are persistently late will be monitored termly.

Children arriving late to school must be accompanied by an adult and report to the office to register. The adult will need to explain why the child is late. A child coming to school late regularly misses out on the

start of lessons, just 10 minutes late per day is equivalent to missing out on one Literacy or Numeracy lesson per week.

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 and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Unexplained Absence

If a child is absent and we have not received a reason by close of registers at 9.30 am, school will follow first day calling procedures:

The attendance officer will try and contact the parents by telephone or send a message through the school app. If there is no response by 10.30 am, the DSL will be notified and we will try to contact the parents via other relatives for whom you have supplied the school with contact details.

If we fail to obtain contact, we may arrange a home visit, when we will need sight of the child.

If parents refuse or we are unable to ascertain the safety of the child, we will request the APSO, social services or the police to visit the home to ensure the child is safe.

3.7 Reporting to Parents

Parents can request their child's attendance at any time and are provided with attendance figures twice per year on the school report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

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

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 Head Teacher'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.

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on leave of absence during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made 2 weeks in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent.
- Applications for Leave which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Kirklees Councils Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S44 Education Act 1996.
- If your child fails to return to school on the agreed date, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a penalty fine may be imposed. If there are concerns for the safety of a child a child missing in education referral will be made.
- The school also retains the right to remove your child from school roll should parents not adhere to the school policy. If a child is absent for 20 continuous school days, the school will remove the child from school roll on the 21st day and make a referral to the Attendance and Pupil Support Service.

Each application for Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

A leave of absence form should be completed at least **two weeks** before the departure date. The form is available from the school office and also the school website at:

<https://www.warwickroad.kirklees.sch.uk/page/?title=Extended+Leave&pid=15>

Forms are to be returned to the school office or to:

attendance.warwickroad@kirkleeseducation.uk.

Warwick Road Primary School understands that visits abroad are generally less expensive during term time but this does **NOT** count as an exceptional circumstance. Leave which is taken for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- Availability of cheaper flights/packages
- Poor weather experienced in school holidays
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Booked the wrong dates by mistake
- Booked by another family member
- Attending a wedding
- Pre-planned visits abroad to see ill relatives (which can be accommodated during school holidays)

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. A minimum consecutive absence of 10 school sessions will result in a penalty notice request being made. The sessions can be either side of a school holiday or weekends.

If issued with a penalty notice each parent of each child 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 Head Teacher, 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 leave of absence taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason (such as a medical appointment)

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular attendance at school. If found guilty you may be fined up to £1000 and you will receive a criminal record.

Note: Where parents continue to take unauthorised leave of absence, despite having previously been issued with a penalty notice, the Local Authority will consider a direct prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Warwick Road Primary School the staff and Governors endeavour to support parents in their responsibility of attendance by:

- Creating an environment in which pupils feel welcomed and valued
- Collating attendance data termly and analysing it in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, the school portal, parents' evenings etc.) of the importance of good attendance
- The Head Teacher will make a termly report to governors on attendance
- Head Teacher and SENCO may liaise with other agencies when this may serve to support and assist pupils who are experiencing difficulties

Each week we check the attendance records of each class as well as the whole school. A chart is displayed in assembly for the pupils to see how well their class has attended. The classes with the highest attendance in KS1 and KS2 are rewarded each ½ term. Children are individually rewarded each term if they achieve 100% attendance. Children are entered in to a prize draw for achieving 100% attendance termly and for the whole academic year.

Note: Children will only take part in the termly treat day and be entered into the prize draws for 100% attendance.

Please see the school website for more detail on our attendance rewards.

6. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents/carers are expected to call school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents/carers are expected to ring daily for each day that a child is ill.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents/carers to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents/carers a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. These children will be identified termly and will then be monitored weekly. Parents/carers will receive a letter to notify them of this and if no improvement is seen a meeting will be held in school with parents/carers and the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer from the local authority.

At this stage school will continue to monitor the pupil's attendance. If concerns persist a formal referral will be made to the Attendance and Pupil Support Service. A further meeting will be held in school and a school attendance improvement contract will be drawn up

Failure to adhere to the contract may result in legal action being considered. If legal action is approved by the Kirklees legal intervention panel, the matter is heard in magistrate's court for the offence of knowingly failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school (s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996). If found guilty, this carries a penalty of up to £2,500 or up to 3-months imprisonment and you will receive a criminal record. Additionally, other community orders may be attached.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

The school collects and stores attendance data using the management information system (G2). The school uses the attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular group of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils. Where attendance is a concern, the school will take data to analyse attendance by year group, classes, groups of pupils for example ethnicity or gender. The school uses attendance data to identify the main causes of absences within the school and to take action to address and improve those areas. The school will use data to monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The governors will act alongside the Head Teacher to monitor the attendance of all children and vulnerable groups (Pupil Premium, FSM, SEN Etc.) and ensure that this policy is being followed.

7.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher 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 individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head Teacher
- Works with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Head Teacher 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

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

7.6 The Attendance and Pupil Support Officer

On those occasions when a pattern of poor attendance or lateness is developing the Attendance Officer will work directly with the family to seek solutions. Should the problem drop below 90% then a referral to the Attendance and Pupil Support Service will follow. The function of APSO at this stage is the Compliance/Enforcement part of the service which delivers the Local Authorities statutory response where attendance has fallen below 90%.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Business Manager and Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Governing Body.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact the school

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveler absence	Pupil from a Traveler community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day