



Waverton Primary School

Learning Together; Achieving Together

Attendance Policy

Waverton Primary School recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. Good attendance helps a child to realise their potential and ensure they are motivated, confident and enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Our school policy and prospectus promote good attendance. The school monitors attendance and ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting children's wellbeing and attendance. A child must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, and is published on our school website. It will be sent to Parents with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated. As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. The Attendance & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Timings of Waverton C P School Day for KS1 & KS2:

School gates open from	:	8.40am
Doors will be open at	:	8.45am
Register taken at	:	8.50am
Children arriving between 8.55am - 9.05am	:	will be marked as "Late" (L) in the register
Children arriving after 9.05am	:	will be marked as "Unauthorised Absence" (U) if no prior notice of absence given/ received

Morning registers formally close at : 09.05am

Afternoon registers formally close at : 13.10pm

School day ends : 15.20pm

The timing of the school day for RECEPTION are the same as above with the exception of the end of the school day being : 15.05pm.

1) Legislation

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. Regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, opportunities and further development.

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence".
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 - Meaning of "parent"

For the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a 'parent' and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

2) Registers

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents and the register may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance in school.

'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006' (section 6)

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, morning (a.m.) and once during the second session, afternoon (p.m.).

On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

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

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system as a priority and returned to the school office in a timely manner.

This is used to download data to the School Census.

- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention and support processes that may need to be implemented.

The register should be marked using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies,

independent school and local authorities. Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) (See Appendix 1).

In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

3) Procedure

Children are expected to attend school regularly, unless there is good reason for absence.

There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves a pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where school will not approve the absence)

The school has a duty to safeguard all its pupils. If a child is absent, the parents/carers should inform the school on the **first day of absence** and each following day of absence, stating the reason.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day-to-day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that any child in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child is unable to attend school;
- contact the school each day their child is absent by using the school telephone number or email by 8.30am, providing the information below:

Please ensure that you telephone the school on 01244 268985 - Option 2 or via email admin@waverton.cheshire.sch.uk prior to **8.30am** to inform them of your child's absence stating clearly the following information:

- **Child's first name and surname,**
- **the reason for absence**
- **please remember to sign off with your own name and surname too as well as your relationship to the child.**
e.g., Lily Brown, tonsillitis - seen GP and has antibiotics. John Brown (dad);
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We would encourage discussion where there are any issues arising that the school could support in school to avoid absenteeism e.g. management of an on-going health issue. Please contact the school to arrange a meeting to discuss any issues around attendance.

4) Lateness and Punctuality

At Waverton C P School we will apply a robust day to day process to track and follow up on absence and poor punctuality. We will ensure registers are completed accurately and on time, twice per day, in accordance with the timings set out below. This will indicate which pupils are absent from or are late for school.

- Our gates open at 8.40am and classroom doors open at 8.45am
- We expect all pupils to be in their classroom by 8.50am ready for registration. If your child is in class at this time, they will be marked as present.
- Registers close at 9.05am. If your child arrives at school after 8.55am but before 9.05am they will need to enter the school by the main entrance and be signed in by a parent/guardian. They will be marked as late and will receive the **L code**.
- If your child arrives at school after the registers have closed 9.05am, they will need to enter the school by the main entrance and be signed in by a parent/guardian. They will be marked as late after registers closed and will receive the **U code**. This is an unauthorised absence for that session.
- Afternoon registers will be taken at 1.00pm.

In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Children who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of other children. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, you will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

You may approach the school at any time for support and advice if you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time or maintaining regular attendance.

5) Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.10am the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If the family is not reachable by telephone an email will be sent.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact the school will complete a home visit if appropriate or send a letter of concern to parents/carers to invite them into school to discuss their concerns with the Head Teacher.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by this policy may result in further action, an application for a Fixed Penalty, Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.
- While it is understood that a child may have specific medical needs, school reserves the right to seek evidence to support such absences. **The school will always ask for medical evidence where a child's attendance falls below 90%, this evidence could include hospital admission or discharge reports or GP notes printouts following an appointment.**

6) Expectations

Attendance %	Level of concern	Action by the School
96% and above	None - on track attendance	None
90% to 95%	Concern as below school target	Letter sent to parents (termly basis)
Below 90%	Persistence Absence	Meeting with parents/guardians and Head Teacher

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day; and
- discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher any problems that discourage them from attending school.

What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.). RSA will be specifically targeting this cohort of pupils, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	1.4 Weeks	45 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	3.4 Weeks	95 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	5.4 Weeks	145 Lessons
80%	36 Days	72 Sessions	7.1 Weeks	180 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	9.3 Weeks	240 Lessons

We expect that school staff will:

Attendance Task	Member of Staff Responsible
keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily - (pupils arriving late due to transport issues will not be penalised)	Admin Officer in her absence Bursar All teaching staff
monitor every pupil's attendance and by publishing attendance statistics	Admin Officer in her absence Bursar
contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence	Admin Officer in her absence Bursar
follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence	Admin Officer in her absence Bursar
provide a welcoming atmosphere for children; provide a safe learning environment; and provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns	ALL staff
respond promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils	Head Teacher
inform parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arrange meetings with them if necessary and follow attendance procedure if the irregular attendance continues	Head Teacher

7) School Organisation

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

Head teacher, governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- adopt the whole policy;
- ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence;
- consult and liaise with the EWS and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified without delay;
- work in close collaboration with the EWS reviewing register analysis during register inspections.
- monitor and evaluate attendance concerns with the Education Welfare Service.

Class Teachers to:

- complete registers accurately and punctually twice daily;
- follow up any unexplained non-attendance; inform the school office of all reasons for absences so they can be recorded in the School Information Management System (SIMS);
- inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of concerns; be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and report these concerns as soon as possible to the Senior Leadership Team.

8) What can parents/carers do to help/and working partnership with parents/carers?

Let the school know straight away why your child is absent. Home/school communication is extremely important in supporting your child to achieve and feel settled in school. Try to make any dental/GP appointment outside of school time.

It is important that school and parents/carers work together with a shared plan and outcomes when supporting a child's attendance and wellbeing. If, despite persistent attempts to work with parents/carers, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then legal procedures may be followed to secure engagement and school attendance.

As a school we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children. We require all parents/carers to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents/carers to make contact if they have any concerns about their child.

We will provide parents/carers with information about Emotionally Based School Non-attendance to discuss needs and strategies to support their child, as appropriate.

9) Absence Monitoring

School robustly monitors and analyses attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns and allow for early interventions to support the child/family's underlying needs. This will include -

- Weekly attendance code analysis
- Specific cohort and group monitoring - particularly for vulnerable groups
- "Welcome back" meeting for all pupils that have been absent for 5 days - to check Wellbeing and ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact attendance
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

10) Early Identification and Intervention: assess, plan, do and review

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and Waverton C P School sets high attendance expectations for all pupils. Waverton C P School will consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For any child / child person who is absent from school it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted, evidence-based interventions and support can be put into place. All staff have a part to play in promoting attendance. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school, including Form Tutors, attendance, pastoral and SEND staff work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the child/young person and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed utilising a range of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, when needed.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs such as a SEND assessment and wellbeing assessments or may include the holistic needs of the family, such as a TAF assessment. Assessments will include the views of the child/young person as well as parents/carers, and identify strengths (what is working well) and needs (what is working less well).

Assessments undertaken may identify that a child/young person is experiencing underlying emotional based needs that are contributing to non-attendance. Cheshire West and Chester Council has developed guidance for schools - Emotionally Based School Non-attendance: Good practice guidance for schools. This is a whole school framework with a graduated approach to support the early identification and intervention of children/young people who may struggle to cope in school/attend school.

Information from assessments will inform a SMART action plan with focussed targets developed in partnership with families, and other services as appropriate. For example, Early Help and Prevention and Social Care may have a part to play in the delivery of support and intervention to promote engagement and attendance. SMART plans should be personalised to effectively meet a child / young person's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Regular reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, specialist teaching and education services.

11) Medical Absences

Absence due to illness should be reported to the school by phone or by email admin@waverton.cheshire.sch.uk prior to 8.30am on the first day of absence and any subsequent days. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received. The school will ask about the child's symptoms in order to record their absence accurately.

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals.

Only where the school has a **genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity** of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. In instances of **long-term or repeated absences for the same reason**, however, seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods. If a parent proactively seeks out a note from a GP, it does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicit in their letter.

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, then we will offer support in accordance with the school's policies and statutory guidance relating to Children with health needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

As a school we need to plan how children can access Education and how and when the child will return to school. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the school must also demonstrate that reasonable adjustments are made to meet child's Educational Needs.

For children who have a medical condition and cannot attend school, the school will refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Medical Needs Team.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/medical-needs-service/medical-needs-policy-latest.pdf>

Their policy states that referrals must come directly from the child's school and must be supported by medical evidence from one of the following health professionals:

- consultant paediatrician or adolescent psychiatrist
- consultant child psychiatrist
- hospital consultant

Supporting evidence from a General Practitioner alone cannot be accepted.

As from 19th August 2024 schools must make a sickness return to the Local Authority and provide the full name and address of all pupils who have been recorded with the code I (Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority to agree any provisions needed to ensure continuity of education of pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on Education for Children with health needs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

Medical Appointments

It is appreciated that there can be difficulties obtaining appointments but "routine" dental checks, optician appointments and Drs appointments should be made out of school hours. The school does not have to mark these as medical in the register unless confirmation of the appointment is provided.

Medical Leave

If your child requires an operation or recuperation after an operation during term time, please contact the school office for the leave form. This form needs to be completed and returned to school at least two weeks prior to the date of the first requested leave day (unless it's an emergency operation). A member of staff will make contact with parents to discuss any additional support that maybe required to ensure a quick and safe return for children after an operation or recuperation period.

10) Unauthorised Absence and Fixed Penalty Notice

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

- i. no reason for absence has been given
- ii. medical evidence is not received when requested
- iii. a request for a leave of absence has been unauthorised
- iv. a pupil arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.05am and received a U code.

Parents/carers should be aware that Waverton C P School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

1. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
2. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 Days, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
3. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
4. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
5. A FPN may be issued per parent per child.
6. Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if:
 - Unauthorised absences of at least 10 consecutive school sessions (five school days).
 - Sessions either side of a weekend or school holiday will be counted as consecutive school days.
 - For poorly attending learners, at least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during a school term. These do not need to be consecutive.
 - For poorly attending learners, persistent late arrive at school in a term. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.

- The presence of an excluded child in a public place in the child's first five days of exclusion (*N.B. points 2 to 4 do not apply where a FPN is issued for an excluded pupil in a public place.*)

12) Application for Exceptional Circumstances

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Head Teachers are only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

The Head Teacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request Exceptional Leave of Absence, they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form available from the school office. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carers.

The following is an example only of requests that will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carers' working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

A child's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring any attendance issues are dealt with in line with school policy.

Religious Observance

We recognise that some pupils may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance.

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs

We ask that parents/carers notify Waverton C P School in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

12) Enforced School Closure

If Waverton C P School was forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. The expectation is children will still engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

13) Changing schools

It is important that if families decide to send a child in their care to a different school, they inform Waverton C P School office staff and their case worker for EHCP if appropriate as soon as possible. The information is required in written form and must contain the following information:

- Name of Child
- Year Group of child
- Date of leaving school
- New school address and contact details
- Date due to start new school
- New home address and contact numbers - if applicable

A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until all are satisfied that the child is accepted on to the roll of an alternative, appropriate school.

14) Impact

All pupils will achieve well by developing knowledge and skills on their journey through school. Due to robust monitoring of attendance, all pupils, including vulnerable children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will have fair and equitable access to school in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils will leave Waverton C P School ready for a successful transition to secondary education.

Policy written by School Admin Officer

Reviewed by Head Teacher - November 2024

Approved by Governors - December 2024

Next review - November 2025

Appendix 1 - Absence Codes: According to the DfE guidance the following codes are used on the register. **New Attendance Codes from 19th August 2024**

Attending a place other than the school.

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school

Absent leave of absence - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause. - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code G	Leave of absence not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed