



**Wilberforce Primary**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Governor Ratification: October 2019

Next Review: October 2020

Headteacher: Mrs C Macfie

**WILBERFORCE PRIMARY**

**ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**1. Ethos and aims**

We believe that punctuality and good attendance are essential for all pupils, to ensure they can benefit fully from their education to reach their full potential, both academically and socially. We aim to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any barriers to this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible. The school aims at 98% attendance for pupils and promotes good punctuality, as this sets a positive work ethic now, and for the future.

Parents/carers should be aware that if they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually they may be prosecuted under section 444 Education Act 1996 by the Local Authority.

**2. Roles and responsibilities**

**Parents/carers and pupils**

Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age are legally required to ensure that they receive full-time education.

Parents/carers are also responsible for informing the school of any absence as soon as possible; the school expects to be contacted each day of the absence before 08.45am. This can be done by telephoning the school, by personal contact, by written note or by email. The reason for absence and when the pupil is expected to return to school should be stated.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school punctually. Persistent lateness is managed in the same way as poor attendance by the school. Parents should ensure that their children arrive prepared to begin the school day.

**Governors**

Termly reports are made by the Headteacher to the Governing Body on the issue of attendance and punctuality.

**Teachers**

Registers are computerised and are taken between 08.55am and 09.00am and 1.15pm and 1.20pm. Teachers contribute to procedures by promoting good attendance with

their class and highlighting those with poor attendance/punctuality to the Attendance Officer. Teachers must immediately alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they believe or suspect that an absence may be due to a CP issue.

### **Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer manages the operational aspects of attendance monitoring, for example; collating and analysing attendance data. Attendance is regularly monitored so that pupils at risk of persistent absence can be identified. Investigations are made to understand the nature of the problems, identifying how the school can support parents in meeting their legal responsibility. A range of actions may be taken according to the percentage of absence and reasons provided by parents/carers; these may include a referral to Early Help or to the ACE Team.

### **3. Leave of absence**

The school can approve absence. The school does not have to accept the parent/carers offered explanation as a valid cause for absence. There are certain circumstances outlined in the DfE guidelines that the school categorises as authorised absence. The guidelines are based on the needs of the community and the reasons parent/carers may wish their children to take leave of absence.

### **4. Holidays during term time**

Wilberforce Primary operates the DfE zero tolerance approach to extended holidays and notifies parents/carers of this so that they can make informed decisions about removing children from school for this reason.

We refer children with unauthorised extended holiday absence to the local authority who arranges for fixed penalty fines to be issued. Fixed Penalty Notices incur a fine of £60.00 per child if paid within 28 days. After 28 days and before 42 days the penalty will increase to £120.00 per child. Failure to pay the penalty by day 43 will result in court action being taken.

Our intention in issuing fines is to emphasise the importance and negative impact on children's progress and achievement caused by extended periods of absence.

After 10 days unauthorised absence the pupil will be reported to Early Help/ACE Team (depending on the case) as a "child missing in education". After 20 days the child will be taken off roll and an application to admissions will have to be made by the parent/carer to re-admit the child into school.

## 5. Appointments

The school expects that all appointments, other than emergency ones, are booked outside of school hours. Children returning to school must report to the office. Other than in an emergency, a letter or appointment card must be presented at the office in order for the school to be able to authorise the absence.

Authorisation will not be given for early collections for reasons such as:

- Seeing off or collecting someone from the airport
- Going on holiday early
- Going to a birthday, wedding or other celebrations early

Notice must be given in advance if a pupil needs to attend an appointment, interview or educational activity at another venue.

## 6. Persistent absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the year. Absence at this level is damaging to the pupils' educational prospects and must be tackled by school. Staff contact parents as soon as attendance is a concern. This may be through phone call, letter or meeting depending on circumstances.

## 7. Lateness

The gate is opened at 08.45am and closed at 08.55am. Children arriving after 08.55am are late and must enter the school via the office. Parents of children who are late have to complete a lateness slip with the time and reason for lateness. Staff contact parents as soon as punctuality is a concern. This may be through phone call, letter or meeting depending on circumstances.

Lateness after the registers close (09.30am) is marked as unauthorised absence.

## 8. Late Collection of Children

Persistent late collections are monitored and the school attempts to support parents/carers with this by helping to develop strategies to improve their punctuality in collecting their children. On collection the late afternoon pick up folder must be completed with time and reason for lateness. If a pupil has not been collected by 4.00pm, the school may contact MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

## 9. Encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality



attendance reward.

Every half term pupils with 100% attendance (and no lates) will receive an