

Attendance Policy

This policy was formally adopted by Willow Green Academy on: 1st September 2021

The renewal date for this policy is: 1st September 2022

Mission Statement:

Willow Green Academy is committed to providing a quality education for all pupils. We believe that pupils can only benefit from the education in our academy through regular school attendance. We will, therefore, strive to achieve the maximum possible attendance for all pupils and we will make sure that any problems are identified and resolved quickly.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils. Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives:

- To achieve and maintain a whole school target of 96%
- To eradicate persistent absenteeism
- To ensure excellence and enjoyment for every child providing a safe environment and a relevant curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all our pupils
- To encourage full attendance and punctuality
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- To support families where attendance and punctuality is poor by removing any barriers which may attribute to this
- To safeguard all our children where there are safety concerns, such as a child missing in education, by working positively with external services such as the education Welfare Service and Children's Social Care.

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

School Start Time

The school gates open to children at 8:35am

The school starts promptly at 8:45 am

Morning Nursery begins at 8:45am and Afternoon Nursery begins at 12:15pm

Target

The school's target attendance figure is 96% or above.

Rewards for Good Attendance

Class attendance is monitored weekly. Children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole academic year will receive a certificate.

Absent Children

First Day of Absence – Parents are asked to ring before 9am if their child is not in school that day. The school office will ring parents / carers of any children who do not have a reason for absence. Home visits will be made where there are general safeguarding concerns, queries about a persistently absent child, or just to check that a child is too unwell to attend. The school has the right to un-authorise an absence if the reason given is not deemed to be valid.

Dentist and Medical Appointments

Parents are asked not to take their children out of school for dental or medical appointments with the exception of an emergency or an appointment with a consultant. An appointment card or letter must be presented to the school office. Non-urgent appointments made in school time will be unauthorised.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time will not be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and an Education Penalty Notice will be requested from the local authority.

If parents are planning to remove their children from school to take them on holiday we request that they completed a Leave of Absence form, which are available from the school office. If a Leave of Absence form is not completed for a term time holiday, then an Education Penalty Notice will still be requested.

The penalty is £60 per parent per pupil and if not paid within 21 days this will increase to £120.

Failure to pay the full amount within 28 days will result in a summons to appear in the Magistrates Court.

Unauthorised Absence

Parents of children with ten or more sessions of unauthorised absence (10 sessions = 5 days) could be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 per parent per child in line with the Local Authority Code of Conduct.

Procedures for Poor Attendance

Children who attend school for 90% or less without good reason will be contacted by the Head of Academy, who will talk to parents, agree an action plan to improve attendance, and refer to other bodies, ie. Social Care, Extended Service, if appropriate. Letters will be sent to the parents /

carers of all children who fall below 95% at the end of every half term, as this does not meet out whole school target of 96%.

Children Missing Education

The school follow guidance from the DfE regarding Children Missing Education (see Safeguarding Policy). Where children on roll at Willow Green Academy do not attend for ten consecutive days, and the Attendance Officer has made enquiries through phone calls and home visits, we will inform the Wakefield Children Missing Education Team for advice.

Procedures for Poor Punctuality

Any pupil who arrives later than 8.45am will report to the school office, so their attendance at school can be recorded. Children will receive a late mark (L) in the electronic register. Any pupil arriving later than 9:15am will receive an unauthorised absence (U) mark in the register for the morning session. The names of children who are late will be monitored weekly. Parents / carers of children who are persistently late over a half-term will receive a letter from the Attendance Officer and attend a meeting with the Head of Academy to a) offer school support to resolve the issue, or, b) refer to Extended Services for family support.

Confidentiality

As in all aspects of school data and pupil information, the school's Confidentiality Policy is adhered to.

Pupil Information

Willow Green Academy will endeavour to keep up to date and accurate information, in order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them. The school requires accurate an up to date information regarding:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- Names and addresses of all persons with parental responsibility
- Emergency contact details
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child
- A child who is or has been on the Child Protection Register
- Name and contact details of GP
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

Children Not Collected

The following procedure is followed when children are not collected by an appropriate adult at the end of the school day, or extra-curricular activity / school visit:

- If not collected at 3:20pm, children are kept safe with their Class Teacher / Teaching Assistant until 3:25pm (or the end of the Nursery session)

- If the child is not collected school staff will contact parents / carers to collect them as soon as possible. Other emergency contact numbers will be tried if parents / carers cannot be reached until an appropriate adult can collect them.
- If an appropriate adult cannot be contacted Children's Social Care / Police will be contacted so that appropriate actions can be taken.
- The same procedures will be followed if a child is not collected after school visit of extracurricular activity
- Year 5 and Year 6 children who go home alone at the end of the school day, or following an extra-curricular activity / school visit, will have consent from a parent / carer. It is the parent / carer's responsibility to update this permission if they wish to do so via the school office.

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