



Walter Infant School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Action	By	Date
1.0	Policy as at April 2011	Curriculum Committee	March 2011
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2.0	Approved	Full Governing Body	17 May 2011
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Next Review Date: **Spring 2018**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 By law, parents are required to send their children regularly to school. Good attendance is of fundamental importance. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children.

1.2 This policy is underpinned by the Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and come into force on 1 September 2013. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave must be made in writing for the attention of the Headteacher in advance.

1.3 This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff and parents to encourage pupils to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of the education opportunities available.

2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Education Authority

The Council has a statutory duty to promote and enforce regular school attendance, this duty being carried out, in the main, by Educational Welfare Officers. The Educational Welfare Officer will work with the school to track attendance

2.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- 2.2.1 pupils are registered accurately and efficiently;
- 2.2.2 attendance targets are set for individual pupils, classes and year groups;
- 2.2.3 parents and carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
- 2.2.4 pupil attendance and lateness are monitored regularly;
- 2.2.5 school attendance statistics are reported to the LA and Governing body;
- 2.2.6 the LA is informed about long-term absence or any unauthorised absence
- 2.2.7 the LA officer is given attendance records and supported in following up long term absence; and
- 2.2.8 pupils absent for long periods because of ill-health receive appropriate learning support.

2.3 The Teachers

The Teachers will ensure that:

2.3.1 the pupils are accurately and efficiently registered, pupil attendance and lateness is monitored by administrative staff; and

2.3.2 the pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and inform colleagues if there is a problem.

2.4 Parents

The school asks parent/guardians to make sure that:

2.4.1 their child(ren) arrive(s) at school on time, physically and mentally prepared for the school day;

2.4.2 their child(ren) attend(s) regularly;

2.4.3 they inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences;

2.4.4 they inform school if absence is expected to be more than 3 days;

2.4.5 a note informing school of a child's absence due to illness (or any other reason) is given immediately on their return;

2.4.6 they discuss planned absences with the school in advance and

2.4.7 a Leave Request Form is completed for authorisation of any leave requests in advance of absence.

The school requests that parents arrange leave out of term time to allow children to maximise their attendance, ie 190 days per year.

3 Practices and Procedures

3.1 Registration

Attendance is recorded in a class register twice a day, immediately at the start of the morning session and the afternoon session.

3.2 Late Arrival

Lateness is recorded as an absence. The child must be brought to the school office to be marked as present, and to provide a reason for lateness. Thirty minutes after registration (ie 9.20am for Years 1 and 2, and 9.25am for Foundation), lateness is unauthorised and is marked as such on the register to alert the Educational Welfare Officer.

3.3 Absence due to Illness

When a child is not able to attend school due to illness, it is not necessary to telephone the school – unless it is something which the school should be aware of or if the child is absent for more than three days. A note should be given to the child's class teacher on their return explaining the reason for their absence – this is advisable even if a telephone call has also been made.

3.4 Authorised Absence

- 3.4.1 Absence from school for anything other than sickness and health appointments needs to be approved by the Headteacher. The application for approval should be sought by completing a Leave Request Form (Appendix 1)
- 3.4.2 The school will only consider authorising requests to take a child out of school for a holiday during term time in exceptional circumstances. It is at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher as to whether or not the circumstances of a holiday are exceptional. If a parent or guardian feels that they have an exceptional reason for applying for authorisation to take a child out of school for a holiday during term-time, he/she should apply to the school stating the exceptional reason. For the avoidance of any doubt, the cost of a holiday will not be considered to be sufficient to be an exceptional reason.
- 3.4.3 Requests to take a child out of school to participate in a performance or sporting/musical activities or events will be considered by the Headteacher. The school appreciates that such opportunities are valuable to a child's overall education.
- 3.4.4 There will also be occasions where a particular family event takes place in term time and each application for leave will be considered by the Headteacher. In the case of a funeral, this will be authorised by the Headteacher. It is important, therefore, that each application for leave is completed fully and the reason for the absence is made clear.
- 3.4.5 The parent/guardian will be notified if the leave request is authorised or unauthorised and if a penalty notice will be issued.

3.5 Following up absences

If the school does not receive notification of the reason for a child's absence, this will be followed up. If the information is not provided the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

3.6 Unauthorised Absence

In line with Wokingham Borough Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and the Penalty Guidance Notes for Schools, unauthorised absence could incur a Penalty Notice. The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) may follow up individual cases by either letter or home visits in order to ensure the fullest possible attendance for the child concerned.

3.7 Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

- 3.7.1 As normal school procedure, a record of a child's attendance will be included in his/her end of year report.

3.7.2 The Headteacher will provide data on pupil attendance against the number of sessions taught, and will provide comparisons with previous terms and years on an annual basis. The data will be analysed by gender and year group.

4 Review

This policy will be reviewed by the governors bi-annually to reflect changes in school procedures and alterations to the legal framework.

APPENDIX 1
WALTER INFANT SCHOOL - LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please be advised that Wokingham Children's Services and the Department for Education have advised schools to only authorise leave of absence/holidays in exceptional circumstances, hence School will not approve any absence in term time, except in such circumstances. Please complete the section below and return to school at least one month before the requested absence. School will endeavour to respond to your request within 5 working days. If approved your child will be expected to collect and complete all missed work. Please note that taking your child away during the school term is detrimental to educational progress.

Please be aware that if holidays are taken without approval, this information will be passed to our Education Welfare Officer and a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning. Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days is £60 per parent/carer per child, between 22 and 28 days it is £120. Penalty notices are issued to each parent per child More details are on the Wokingham Borough Council website or from the Education Welfare Service.

Pupil's name: Class:

Reason for absence in term time (this must be completed). If the absence is for religious observance, please include the name and contact details of your place of worship.

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.....

Absence Period from (1st day of absence).....to (return date to school).....

Number of school days to be missed

Sibling details Name(s) / School(s)
.....
.....

Signature of Parent(s) / Carer(s)..... Date.....

Name of Parent(s) / Carer(s)

School use only

Attendance% Unauthorised absence% Authorised absence.....%

Previous Year's Attendance.....% Has holiday already been taken this school year? Yes / No

Walter Infant School – Leave of Absence Request Reply Slip

Name: Class

Your request for leave of absence has been considered and:
The Leave has not been authorised
Leave has been authorised for the following reason
The following code will be applied to the register

Signed:..... Date:..... Name:.....

Please read before completing the Leave Request form:

The Governors and Headteacher advise anyone considering an application for leave of absence, to seek authorisation **before booking**

As normal school procedure, a record of a child's attendance will be included in their end of year report.

Requests to take a child out of school to participate in a performance or sporting/musical activities or events will be considered by the Headteacher. The school accepts that such opportunities are valuable to a child's overall education.

There will also be occasions where a particular family event takes place in term time and each application will be considered by the Headteacher. In the case of a funeral, this will be authorised by the Headteacher. It is important, therefore, that each application is completed fully and the reason for the absence is made clear.

You will be notified by return slip or letter if the leave request is authorised or unauthorised.

NB: Unauthorised absence, in line with Wokingham Borough Council policy, could incur a Penalty notice