

# Attendance Policy



**Policy Review:** March 2022

**Date for Next Review:** March 2024

## **Legislation**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools and Academies are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

The government expects all schools and academies to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence and pupils in vulnerable groups
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and to act early to address patterns of absence
- Make appropriate provision for pupils with medical conditions
- Encourage parents to perform their legal duty in ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend both punctually and regularly.
- Support pupils to be punctual to their lessons

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 – sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended
- DfE Statutory Guidance

## **Aims and Values**

Through this policy Yealmpton Primary School aims to:

- Improve pupil's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the Educational Welfare Service to enable all pupils to realise their full potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence
- Establish a robust system for monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
- Recognise the key role of staff but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance
- To safeguard the welfare, health, social and emotional development of children
- To provide a welcoming atmosphere and safe learning environment

## **Statements concerning Rights and Responsibilities in Managing Attendance**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

### **Yealmpton Primary**

- We will actively promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence
- We will work closely with parents/carers where a pupil's absence is cause for concern
- We will support pupils to achieve good attendance and punctuality
- We will support pupils returning to school after prolonged absence

### **Pupils**

- To attend regularly and on time
- To be punctual
- To attend with the correct books and equipment

### **Parents**

- To ensure their child attends the school on those days it is open, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn
- To ensure their child attends every day the school is open unless they are too ill to do so
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time
- To inform the school immediately if their child is unable to attend
- To avoid making medical appointments during school time as far as possible

### **Good attendance is important because regular attenders:**

- Make better progress, both socially and academically; missing out on lessons can leave children vulnerable to falling behind.
- Can maximise a child's educational achievement and social development; Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Children are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.

### **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**

- The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).
- Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not a parent/carer) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

### **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

- All references to family holidays have been removed. Leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application has been made in advance and where the Head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Head teachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Whilst the Head teacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents/carers must be aware that requests will normally be refused.
- Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be coded as unauthorised (G code) and a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent/carer for each child (where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded as a result). The DfE have not provided any guidelines as to what they would consider to be exceptional circumstances, this is solely at the discretion of the Head teacher. Yealmpton Primary School works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to determine whether to authorise leave of absence requests to ensure a consistent approach to all leave of absence requests.
- If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, in accordance with the Devon Code of Conduct (£120 per parent/carer, per child or £60 if paid within 21 days) where there have been 20 sessions or more of unauthorised absence recorded. If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will instigate legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.
- In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

**The Attendance Policy also takes into consideration the requirements from:**

- 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

**Children Not Collected From School at The End Of The School Day**

When children have not been collected at home time the class teacher or office staff will contact parents/carers. If there has still been no contact at 4:45pm other agencies will be notified and involved.

**Flexi-schooling**

The school believes that all pupils of a compulsory school age are entitled to a full time education. The school does not offer part-time schooling and would only consider this in very exceptional medical circumstances. This is when a medical need may mean that a child could attend school on a part time basis as part of a re-integration package into attending school full time.

Parents/Carers can contact the head teacher to discuss whether a flexi-schooling arrangement would be in a child's best interests. This may be, for example, where a child has missed a significant period of education through illness and requires a transitional approach back into attending school full-time. Any request would be considered on a case by case basis; a parent/carer must demonstrate that the child would find immediate full-time attendance difficult to manage. We would expect to see some independent, professional evidence in support of a request. Any agreement will be time-limited and will be reviewed regularly.

### **Punctuality/Registration Times**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at school on time. Punctuality is monitored by the school and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving to school on time. If a child persistently arrives after the registers close, cases will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

School opens at 8:45am and pupil registration is at 8:55am. Children who arrive after 8:55am must enter through the main school reception so that their lateness and an explanation are recorded. The register officially closes at 9.15am. Pupils arriving between 9:05-9:15am are coded as **(L)** late before register closes (present). Pupils arriving after 9:15am are coded as **(U)** late after register closes (unauthorised absence). Lateness is monitored by the school and any patterns of lateness will be followed up by the Head teacher.

***Adjustments to the school day may be made in specific circumstances, such as in response to COVID-19***

### **Authorised Absences**

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Where LA transport has not been provided to a child that is entitled to it
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement
- Time spent with a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children are travelling with their parents

### **Absence in Term Time**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

Permission must be sought in advance to take a pupil out of school during term time and this can only be requested by a parent/carer with parental responsibility and with whom the child normally lives. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child's attendance being satisfactory up to the date covered by this request. If the school withdraws authorisation due to the attendance dropping to an unacceptable level, the parent/carer will be informed of this in writing. If a request is refused and the child is taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may then be liable to a penalty notice, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Absence for non-medical reasons must be applied for in advance using a S2 form and with a minimum of four weeks' notice. Parents/carers are able to request a S2 form from the school office, via email/class dojo or by downloading from the school website.

### **Procedures for parents/carers if your child is absent**

- Parents/carers must contact the school each day of absence either verbally or via email/class dojo, to provide a reason for their child's absence.
- Medical appointments are advised to be outside the school day; parents/carers should provide a medical appointment card/letter/screenshot if requested in school time.
- Parents/carers should be made aware that, where a child appears to be having an unacceptable level of absence due to medical reasons, the school may request that medical evidence (such as appointment cards or prescribed medication) be provided to cover all absences.
- Failure on the part of the parent/carer to provide such medical evidence will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and referral to the Education Welfare Service will be considered.
- There is an expectation to work with school and/or the Education Welfare Service to resolve any attendance issues.

### **Changing schools**

If families decide to send a child in their care to a different school they need to inform the school administrator as soon as possible and provide the following:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- the address of the new school
- the new home address (if known)

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible.

### **Children Missing in Education**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

### **When Attendance Causes Concern – what happens:**

- School letter and meetings – If a child's attendance drops below 90% the school will contact parents/carers to advise them of their child's low attendance/persistent lateness and provide appropriate support if required to help improve the child's attendance/punctuality.
- Referral to EWO for possible legal intervention, meetings – Where action taken at school level has failed to improve attendance/punctuality leading to percentage attendance being below 85% for a particular child, Education Welfare Officer will be informed and appropriate action taken. This will take the form of an official letter or contact from the EWO. A legal meeting may follow.
- Referral to the Local Authority for Formal Legal action – Action could be the issue of a penalty notice with one notice being issued to each parent/carer for each child involved. Currently, each Penalty Notice is for £60 if paid within the first 21 days, this rises to £120 that must be paid before the 28<sup>th</sup> day. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school. Please note, if a Penalty Notice has already been issued within the previous 2 years then the Local Authority will proceed straight to Magistrate's Summons.
- Prosecution – You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to three months. The court will also provide you a Parenting Order.

### **Pupils with Medical Conditions**

Yealmpton Primary is an inclusive community that aims to support and welcome pupils with medical conditions and complies with the DfE Statutory Guidance for 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'. It has a responsibility to make the school welcoming and supportive to pupils with medical conditions who currently attend and to those who may enrol in the future. This school aims to provide all children with all medical conditions the same opportunities as others at school.

### **Attendance Management Procedures**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

- The school administrator monitors pupil absence daily to ascertain a reason for absence, if the parent/carers have not informed the school will endeavour to make contact.
- If there is no response after a couple of attempts the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.
- Lateness will be monitored by the class teacher and school administrator. Should there be an emerging pattern of persistent lateness; the class teacher or administrator is responsible for alerting the Head Teacher.
- When a problem affects a child's attendance we will offer early help by identifying strategies to improve attendance in partnership with parents/carers and the child concerned to try to identify and resolve the issues relating to poor attendance as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.
- Attendance percentage will be shared with parents within the end of year annual report.
- Attendance will be monitored regularly for those children who are in vulnerable groups.

### **Education Welfare Service – Attendance Advice and Guidance**

- Provide advice and guidance on any problems that may impact on the ability of a child to access or sustain an acceptable level of attendance in education, including welfare issues, behaviour and special educational needs.
- Monitor school attendance against Government targets and develop strategic policies and procedures in partnership with schools and other agencies to improve performance. Continually work towards the reduction of persistent absence in Devon. Liaise with children and their families, schools and other support agencies to address issues leading to individual poor attendance.
- Ensure the safeguarding and safety of children in the educational settings by providing regular and appropriate training to all individuals working with young people, working collaboratively with other agencies to identify, continually monitor and adequately support 'children at risk'. Identify children currently missing in education to reintroduce and reintegrate learning into their lives.
- Work collaboratively with schools and other agencies to help reduce youth crime, through the reduction in persistent absence and the use of rehabilitation work including the engagement in appropriate activities of existing offenders and those young people most at risk of becoming involved in criminal activities.

### **Reference to Safeguarding Policy**

Our school also has safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of our pupils and this policy should be read in conjunction with the WeST Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (available on the school website).

### **The Registration Codes:**

Attendance Policy

Version Date: March 2022

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

*Please note: Sub Codes are being used in addition to the Registration Codes mentioned above to record attendance in relation to Covid-19*

## Monitoring and Review

Attendance Policy  
Version Date: March 2022

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance and information regarding attendance is provided regularly to the local governing body (LGB) and the Trust Board of Westcountry Schools Trust. The LGB also has responsibility for this policy and ensuring that it is implemented. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

**Yealmpton LGB**  
**March 2022**