

## Attendance Policy 2016

### Introduction

Woodlands Academy of Learning is committed to protecting the rights of all children to education as stipulated in article 28 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Our school Attendance and Punctuality Policy is designed to give clear information in respect of our Attendance Management processes to parents, children, school staff, governors and the wider community. We have developed our policy with our children, parents, staff and Governors and it is in line with statutory guidance and expectations of Walsall Children's Services.

This policy sets out our ambition for our children and recognises that there is a strong correlation between absence and underachievement. All our children are expected to attend punctually every day ready to learn. The school target for attendance for 2015/16 is a minimum of 95%.

### Home School Agreement

Our school will invite parents to sign a Home School Agreement whereby they are informed of expectations for excellent attendance. It is important that parents and school work together to ensure good outcomes for the children and help them achieve as much as they can.

### We will seek to achieve excellent attendance by:

- being a welcoming environment with teaching staff dedicated to help the children achieve the best they can;
- making attendance and punctuality a priority for pupils, parents, staff and Governors with everyone knowing how to fulfil their part in the process;
- rewarding pupils with excellent attendance and punctuality
  - Certificates for excellent attendance (termly)
  - Certificates for 100% attendance end of the school year
  - Star charts for good punctuality, uniform and attendance
  - Weekly whole class certificates
- challenging unsatisfactory reasons for all absences;
- focussing on reducing persistent absence (below 90%) and unauthorised absence;
- providing support, advice and guidance to families where needed;
- using multi-agency partnerships where necessary to address the needs of children leading to irregular attendance;

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Parental Role

Parents or carers have the legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Anyone with whom a child is living has the same responsibility as a birth parent. Where the term "parent" is used it also includes anyone caring for the child.

Your role;

- Contact the school on the first day of absence to explain the reason for the absence. Only the school has the legal right to decide on whether the reason given is acceptable and authorise the absence. Unauthorised absence means that the reason given is not an acceptable one or no reason has been given.
- If your child is going to be absent for more than 2 days medical confirmation may be requested which can be from a pharmacist, doctor or other health professional.

- If you are aware of any problems which are causing poor attendance please let the school know as soon as possible so support can be offered without waiting for the problem to get worse.
- Avoid taking your child out of school for things like medical/dental appointments if at all possible. If you do need to take your child out please make sure they attend for as much of the day as they can. They may be eligible to get their mark if they only miss part of the day.
- Holidays in term time **cannot** be authorised following a revision of the Government guidelines in September 2103. Any request for leave of absence is unlikely to be authorised which may result in a penalty notice being imposed. The Penalty is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120 per parent per child if paid within 22 to 28 days. Failure to pay will result in legal action being taken. Requests for leave of absence should be sent to Head Teacher and will be copied to Governors; parents will be informed of outcome by letter.

## **Role of School Staff**

### **Attendance Clerk/Pupil Welfare Support Team**

- Ensure registers are updated with appropriate attendance and absence codes based on reasons given by parents. Parent will be advised if the absence is to be recorded as unauthorised;
- Carry out unannounced visits to families who have three or more periods of absence without any contact;
- Absence letters are sent out to parents of absentee children every Friday;
- Liaise with Class Teacher and Head Teacher to report any emerging patterns of absence or when a child is absent without good reason. Possible action could include:
  - Parent Contract requiring parents to agree an action plan to improve attendance.
  - Letters requesting an appointment to discuss attendance
  - Warning letters
  - Referral to Education Welfare Service for further action
- Provide support to children and families where there are genuine problems resulting in poor attendance and make referrals for multi agency support as necessary;
- Identify children who have Persistent Absence (attendance of below 90%) or at risk of becoming Persistent Absence and notify parents that their children will be targeted for early intervention.

Referrals will be made to the Education Welfare officer in respect of any legal action for irregular unauthorised absence where there is no improvement in attendance despite support offered. The Education Welfare Service will be responsible for managing the process of all prosecutions and penalty notices for irregular attendance.

### **Punctuality**

Children arriving late for school regularly will miss a significant amount of learning time. Even a few minutes a day can quickly add up. This affects not only the child's learning but also the rest of the children in the class if the teacher has to spend time repeating information for the benefit of the child who is late.

- The times of our school day are as follows
- Morning session Nursery                      08:40 - 11:40
- Afternoon session Nursery                      12:30 - 15:30
- Morning Key Stage 1                              08:55 - 12:00
- Afternoon Key Stage 1                            13:00 - 15:10
- Morning Key Stage 2                              08:55 - 12:30
- Afternoon Key Stage 2                            13:30 - 15:20
- Morning Registration closes at 08:55 – any arrival after this will be counted as being late.

### **Appendix – Information for school staff and governors.**

#### **Targets for 2015-16**

Our school absence targets are based on the expectations as set out by the Governing Body and are in line with National Expectations and the Ofsted Framework

Overall Absence	3.8% (National 2013- 2014)
Reduce Holiday Absence	0
Persistent Absence	2.1% (National 2013- 2014)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher must ensure the absence management process in line with legislation and regulation. She must also ensure registers are maintained accurately in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006.

The Head Teacher will continue to raise education standards for children by encouraging regular school attendance.

The **Lead Person for Attendance** will report on the following

- Persistent Absence outlining the number of children trajectory to become persistent absence
- Authorised Absences report with comparisons to the same period 2014-15
- Unauthorised Report with comparisons to the same period 2014-15
- Number of Children who are chronically ill and level of support offer for these children

The lead person for Attendance will make sure there is contact between the school and home in respect of all absences and the elements and aims of the policy are being followed (see above).

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers will ensure their registers are maintained accurately in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 – this is a legal requirement. Class Teachers will ensure any information appertaining to a child’s punctuality or attendance is communicated to Lead Attendance Person at the earliest opportunity. This will avoid unnecessary telephone contact with families or cause them any undue concerns. Class Teacher will report any emerging patterns to Head Teacher and Attendance Lead person.

## **Woodlands Academy of Learning Management Process**

### **Daily**

- All class registers are marked accurately
- Reasons for absence will be screened to establish whether absence is authorised or not
- All daily absence will be scrutinised for reason and notification
- Parents will be contacted when the reason for absence is not satisfactory or unknown
- Parent will be advised if the absence is to be recorded as unauthorised

### **Weekly**

- Absence letters are sent out to absentee children every Friday

- All absences will be scrutinised for identification of repeat periods of absence or emerging patterns of absences
- Pupils having three or more periods of absence without any contact being made to the school a home visit will be made
- Requests for leave of absence referred to Head Teacher and Governors, parents will be informed of outcome by letter

### **Half Termly**

- Letters to be sent to children on trajectory to becoming Persistent Absentees
- Identification of children who need multi-agency involvement to support concerns or complexities which include absence or punctuality concerns

### **End of Term- Autumn, Spring and Summer**

Report to head Teacher and Governors showing

- Number of pupils on trajectory to becoming persistent absence
- Overall absence compare to same period 2013/14
- Unauthorised absence compared to the same period 2013/14
- Number of referrals to Education Welfare Officer
- Identification of pupils ‘at risk’ of persistent absence and referrals made
- Ensure pupils with chronic medical conditions are properly supported

### **End of Year July**

- End of year report to Head Teacher and Governors
- “ year trend for Overall Absence and Persistent Absence
- Comparisons for National and Local Overall Absence and Persistent Absence
- Progress charts
- Precis of interventions of other agencies
- Impact of interventions
- Holiday absence level and comparisons
- Rewards and sanctions detailed

**Policy to be reviewed January 2017**

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