

Woodmancote School

**Attendance Policy and Procedures**

Designated Member of Staff	G Tucker and K Holder
Committee with responsibility	Safeguarding
Date of Issue	May 2019
Frequency of Review	Annual
Next Review	May 2020

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of Changes
1		New Policy
2	February 2015	Updated
3	September 2017	Reviewed
4	May 2019	Reviewed

**Rationale**

At Woodmancote School we believe that good attendance and punctuality are essential for a child to reach their educational potential and enjoy a feeling of belonging to their class and school community.

In promoting the belief that attendance and punctuality are important values we are preparing children for life and for a successful future. Prolonged and consistent absence, in any year group, results in limited progress and low levels of achievement. The children quickly begin to fall behind their peers and often never fully catch up with gaps in their skills and knowledge.

Repeated and consistent lateness is an unsettling start to the school day for both the child and school. Children will miss out on important learning opportunities at the start of the day.

As a school we follow the **Department for Education** guidelines and expect children to maintain an attendance figure of 100% throughout the academic year.

### **Pupils**

- To attend school regularly and punctually.
- To arrive at school by 8.40am
- To attend registration promptly for both morning and afternoon registration.

### **Parents**

- To ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and ready to learn. **Regular attendance is a legal requirement.**
- To notify the school of absence by 9.30am.
- To provide written explanation of absences on the first day a pupil returns to school.
- To take family holidays in the school holiday period.
- To provide the school with up to date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility. **If contact details change then we must be informed of new details immediately.**

### **Teachers**

- To keep an accurate attendance register.
- To praise pupils for punctuality and good attendance.
- To monitor pupil absence and inform Mr Tucker when absence is impacting on achievement.

### **Senior Management**

- To have a named member of SLT responsible for attendance (Mr Tucker).
- To inform parents of school policy and procedures.
- To monitor attendance every six weeks as a priority and to develop policies and procedures to ensure the expectation of 100% attendance is met.
- To intervene early when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern.
- Develop a multi-agency response to attendance. (Appendix 5)
- Utilise the support of available specialists in relation to the attendance
- Report termly to the Governing Body.

### **Office Staff**

- To monitor late entrants into school and adjust system accordingly.
- To forward phone messages to class teachers regarding absences.
- To monitor register codings and alert staff of inconsistencies.
- To produce individual or class summary sheets.
- To produce attendance figures for end of year reports.
- To monitor attendance every six weeks as a priority and to develop policies and procedures to ensure the expectation of 100% attendance is met.
- Produce Report for SLT to discuss each term

## **Punctuality**

We expect children to arrive at school between 8.40 and 8.45am.

Registers open at 8.45am. They close 30 minutes afterwards at 9.15am.

When children arrive after 8.45am in the morning they will need to be signed in at the main school office by a parent or an adult and a reason for the lateness must be given.

Children who arrive after 8.45am and before 9.15am will be given a late mark.

If a child arrives after the register has closed at 9.15am an **unauthorised** late is recorded.

### **If a child is regularly late:**

1. The school will contact parents to inform them of the number of days the child has been late and to reinforce the school policy and expectations.

2. If lateness persists the Headteacher will invite parents to a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child to school on time. (Appendix 5)

3. The Headteacher may withdraw the privilege of the late mark for children who arrive persistently late after 8.45a.m and before 9.15a.m. An unauthorised late would be recorded.

4. When a child has accumulated **10 unauthorised lates in a ten-week period** the Headteacher will refer the family to the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team. They will take the late issue on as a case and investigate why a child has been late on the dates given. This investigation could result in parents receiving a warning notice.

Alternatively, a fixed penalty fine could be issued per child to each adult who has parental responsibility.

## **Attendance and Illness**

If a child is ill the parent's first action is to call the school before 9.30am and notify the School Office of the absence and the reason for the absence. **01242 674312**

This needs to be done every day of absence (unless the child is admitted to hospital, or has a long term illness-related absence for a period of time - in this instance parents do not need to ring every day).

If a child is not in school and we have not had a phone call by 9.30am one of our Office Staff will call parents to find out why a child is not in school.

It is expected that routine medical and dental appointments should be made out of school hours. The school will not authorise routine appointments.

## **Leave of Absence**

It is expected that families take holiday in the school holiday periods.

Any request for leave of absence must be made 4 weeks in advance. Parents should submit a leave of absence request form to the Headteacher. Forms are available from the School Office.

## **Other Authorised Absence**

The Headteacher may grant compassionate leave as authorised absence.

### **If a child's attendance falls below 95%**

1. The Attendance Officer in charge of attendance will write to parents to inform them that their child's attendance has fallen below 95%. Parents will be reminded of their legal duty and of the school's policy and expectations.

2. If attendance does not improve the Headteacher will invite parents to a meeting to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child to school every day.

3. If persistent absence from school continues, the Headteacher has the right to unauthorise any absence without the support of medical evidence.

4. The Headteacher will refer the family to the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team when a child continues to be absent (unauthorised) for:

- 10 sessions in a 10-week period when unauthorised holiday has been taken\*
- 28 unauthorised sessions in an academic year
- 20 continuous unauthorised sessions of absence

\*This equates to 5 days.

The Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team will take the absence issue on as a case and investigate why a child has been absent on the dates given. This investigation could result in parents receiving a warning notice. Alternatively, a fixed penalty fine could be issued per child to each adult who has parental responsibility.

Signed..... (Chair of Safeguarding)

Policies currently allocated to Safeguarding-December 2017
Acceptable Use
Anti-Bullying
Attendance
Behaviour
Children in Care
Code of Conduct
E-Safety
Equality
Intimate Care
Positive Handling
Preventing Radicalisation
Recruitment and Selection
Safeguarding and Child Protection
SEN
Supporting children with medical conditions

Policies currently allocated to Premises-December 2017 which have a Safeguarding element
Accessibility Policy, Audit and Plan
Anaphylaxis Awareness and Monitoring
Disability Discrimination Policy and Plan
Emergency Management and Response Plan
Emergency Asthma Inhaler Policy
Fire Risk Policy and Risk Assessments
Health and Safety Policy
Lone Working Policy
Lettings Policy
Off Sites Visits and Journeys
Security Policy
Travel Plan

*Appendix 1 - Sample request form for parents to use to request leave of absence during term time and for schools to use when communicating a response.*

*The sample request form sets out the necessary information the parents need to know at the time of making the request and the sample response from confirms to parents that they place themselves at risk if the child is absent and the leave has not been authorised.*

*In order for the LA to be in the best position to support schools with this type of legal intervention it is strongly advised that schools use the sample forms and letters included as appendices to this code of conduct. This is likely to avoid the need for LA to revert back to schools for further information if the LA proceeds to prosecution in the event on non-payment.*

*Appendix 1*

**Request for a leave of absence during term time**

Parents should be aware that the law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in "exceptional circumstances".

You may consider that a holiday will be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching and learning that their peers will receive whilst your child is away. Children returning from a leave of absence during term time are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed and arrangements need to be made for individual children to catch up on missed work. Disruption to the continuity of teaching and learning is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

If requesting a leave of absence, you will need to complete the form on the reverse of this notice, setting out the reasons. If the holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance it will not be agreed. If you nevertheless take your child out of school for the leave of absence this **will be recorded as unauthorised leave**.

**In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence the headteacher may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice without further warning to the parent. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Thereafter, if the penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.**

All leave of absence requests should be completed on the attached form by the parent with whom the child ordinarily resides. This should be returned to the school at least seven days before the start of the holiday. All requests must be made prior to the leave being taken. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

I hope you will support our efforts to maintain good levels of attendance and attainment.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

**Appendix 1**

**Request for a leave of absence during term time**

Pupil Name .....Class/Tutor Group .....

Date of first day of absence .....Date of return to school .....

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school .....

*If a pupil fails to return within ten school days following the anticipated date of return and no reason is provided, there may be grounds (under some circumstances) to delete your child's name from the Admissions Register and register them as a Child Missing Education.*

Please detail the exceptional circumstance for which you are requesting leave of absence

.....  
.....  
.....

***I understand that if the absence request is not authorised and the holiday is taken the Headteacher may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay this it may result in legal action.***

Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application:

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Forename.....Surname.....

Address: .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Forename.....Surname.....

Address: .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

(Please ensure you are giving at least seven days' notice of the proposed absence, retrospective applications cannot be authorised)\_\_\_\_\_For

school to complete and copy retained: AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED (please circle)

*Appendix 1*

**Request for a leave of absence during term time - school response**

*This response must be sent to each parent and a copy retained by the school*

Dear.....,

Child's Name..... Class/Tutor Group.....

Your request for absence on the following dates: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_  
(totalling.....days, has been considered and is

AUTHORISED       UNAUTHORISED

- a) Their attendance is currently:.....
- b) The request **does / does not** meet the criteria for 'exceptional circumstances'

Please note: An **unauthorised** absence may be notified to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning

Signed..... (Headteacher)

Date \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Print name: .....

*Appendix 2 - This sample letter should be sent to the parents when no request for leave of absence was made and the Headteacher has determined that the absence is to be coded as G (unauthorised family holiday)*

*It informs the parent that the holiday is not authorised and provides the basis on which the Headteacher decided to code the absence as a G Code.*

*Appendix 2*

**Leave of Absence - when no request for leave was made by the parents but the headteacher has coded the absence as unauthorised family holiday (G Code). This would need to be sent to each of the parents the school intends to request a penalty notice for**

Parent's address (send by post as this is formal)

date

Dear (parent's name)

**Re: Leave of absence without request**

**Child(ren)'s Name(s): Date(s) of Birth:**

I am aware that your child(ren) was/were absent from school from (date) to (date). I have tried to contact you with regard to these absences but have been unsuccessful and now understand that you were on a family holiday. I believe this to be the case because.....

As you will be aware, as of 1st September 2013 Headteachers are no longer able to grant any leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional/unavoidable circumstances. It is also stated in our school policy that all requests for leave of absence should be made in writing, in advance of the proposed absence.

As we are unaware of any exceptional circumstances that might apply, the absence has **not been authorised**. However, if you feel that the absence was due to an exceptional circumstance or illness, please provide supporting evidence to this effect no later than (Date - **allow two weeks**) and I may be able to reconsider my decision.

I must warn you that failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school is an offence under Section 444 of The Education Act 1996. The Supreme Court Judgement from 2017 (Isle of Wight Council v Platt [2017] UKSC 28) has determined that 'regular' means 'in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'.

If the reasons given for your child(ren)'s absence from school are not considered to be exceptional (and therefore the absence is unauthorised) then I may request, without further warning, that the Local Authority take legal proceedings against you for your failure to comply with the law. This may result in a Penalty Notice requiring the payment of a penalty of up to £120 per parent per child. Failure to pay the penalty due may result in prosecution before Magistrates Court.

Please refer to the school's attendance policy (available on our website and in hard copy upon request) and Gloucestershire County Council's website for further information.

If you wish to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,  
Headteacher

*Appendix 3* - sample warning letter for lateness (U Code)

**Sample warning letter in respect of penalty notices for persistent lateness (U code).**  
**(This will need to be set to any parent that the school subsequently names in any request for a penalty notice).**

Date

Name

Address

Dear (Name)

**Re: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**  
**Warning of penalty notice for persistent lateness after the register has closed**

Under the Education Act 1996, parents have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within an agreed Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

(Name) has been marked absent from school for ( ) sessions in the previous ( ) weeks without prior authorisation or an acceptable reason being given to the headteacher. Please note there are normally two sessions in each school day. Arriving after the registers have closed for the morning or afternoon session will result in an unauthorised absence mark for the entire session.

This absence has therefore been recorded as unauthorised in the school register.

I need to inform you that the level of (Name's) unauthorised absence places you at risk of a penalty notice and/or court action by the Local Authority.

Providing there are no further unauthorised absences within the next fifteen school days, which will start two days after the date of this letter (to allow for postage) a penalty notice will not be issued on this occasion.

I must also draw your attention to the fact that should (Name) have more unauthorised absences related to lateness within the next twelve months following this warning letter, you may receive a penalty notice without further warning.

Yours sincerely  
Headteacher

Appendix 4 - form for schools to complete to request a Penalty Notice

*In order for the LA to be in the best position to support schools with this type of legal intervention it is strongly advised that schools provide the information set out on this request form. Providing this at this early stage is likely to avoid the need for the LA to revert back to schools for further information if the LA proceeds to prosecution in the event on non-payment.*

**Request to Issue a Penalty Notice  
Education Inclusion Service**

**This form will be used in any legal action under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 S103 & The Education Act 1996 S444 relating to non-school attendance of a registered pupil at the school.**

The completed form should be signed by the headteacher/principal and returned to Education Inclusion Service  
Inclusion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Block 4, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2TP  
Telephone: 01452 427274 or e-mailed (securely) to [attendance@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:attendance@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Pupil Details:					
Name:		School:			
Date of Birth:	Male/Female:				
NCY:	CiC Yes/No	CPP Yes/No	SEN Yes/No	Traveller Yes/No	
Parent(s) Details:					
Title:	Surname	Forename		Date of birth (if known):	
Address & postcode:				Relationship to pupil:	
Telephone number:				Child resides with this parent: Yes /No	
Title:	Surname	Forename		Date of birth (if known):	
Address & postcode:				Relationship to pupil:	
Telephone number:				Child resides with this parent: Yes /No	
Title:	Surname	Forename		Date of birth (if known):	
Address & postcode:				Relationship to pupil:	
Telephone number:				Child resides with this parent: Yes /No	

Reason for Request: Please select		Enclosed Documents: Please confirm (tick)	
<b>Unauthorised holiday (Code G)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed and dated registration certificates showing at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence in the preceding ten week period</li> <li>• The school's attendance policy showing the definition of regular attendance contained within and the expectations about term time leave</li> <li>• The request for leave of absence completed by the parent(s) and the response from the school (the appendix 1 letter)</li> <li>• Where no request was made, the basis on which the headteacher decided this was a family holiday (the appendix 2 letter)</li> </ul>	
<b>Persistent late arrival at school - after the registers have closed (Code U)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of a warning letter and a fifteen school day monitoring period (the appendix 3 letter)</li> <li>• The school's attendance policy showing the definition of regular attendance contained within and the expectations about punctuality</li> <li>• Evidence of the supportive work the school has done to address the persistent lateness</li> <li>• Signed and dated registration certificates showing at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence in the preceding ten week period</li> </ul>	
<b>Child found in a public place (in school hours) during an exclusion</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of exclusion letters to parents</li> <li>• Evidence of the offence</li> <li>• Signed and dated registration certificates showing the dates of the exclusion</li> </ul>	
Headteacher Confirmation			
<p>I confirm that this pupil is on roll at the school named above and that he/she has had at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence in the immediately preceding ten weeks or has been present in a public place in school hours during a period of exclusion. I confirm that the attached, signed attendance printout is an accurate record of the attendance register for this pupil.</p> <p>I also confirm that I understand I may have to prepare a witness statement and/or attend court in the event of a penalty notice being unpaid.</p> <p>I also confirm that I have taken reasonable steps to establish that the contact details provided for the parents are correct and that the school is liable for any data breach arising from subsequent legal notices in relation to this matter being incorrectly served.</p>			
Name (headteacher)		Signed	Date

**Appendix 5**

**Education Performance & Inclusion**  
 Education Act 1996 and Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003  
**Attendance Improvement Meeting - Review**

**Name of School:** \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed as a contemporaneous record of the meeting and a copy given to all attendees at the close of the meeting. If parent(s)/carer(s) do not attend a copy of this record should be sent to them by post.

Name:	Year:	D.O.B.
Date of Review:		
Present:		
Initial AIM Date :	Current attendance	%
Sessions of absence since AIM meeting:		
Authorised		Unauthorised
<p><b>Have all the agreed actions from the AIM been met by all parties?</b></p> <p><b>Provide details:</b></p>		

**Action**

(please tick appropriate box below)

Targets met - No further action	
<b>or</b>	
Improvement but targets not met - plan to continue - Review	
<b>or</b>	
Targets not met - Request for legal action to Education Performance & Inclusion team	

Review Date: .....

As Parent /Carer of ..... I understand that failure to meet these targets may result in legal proceedings taken against me.

**Signed:**

**Parent** ..... **Parent**.....

**Date:** .....

**Pupil** ..... **School** ..... **Other** .....

**Date:** .....

**For use if parent(s)/carer(s) do not attend**

**Date plan posted to parent(s)/carer(s):** .....

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....