

WHITEFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Whitefield Community Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools & Families.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Bury attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00 am. The registers will remain open for thirty minutes. *[DFES guidance suggests a maximum of 30 minutes but schools can choose to use a shorter period.]* Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the Head will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00 pm (KS2); 1.10 pm (KS1)
The registers will close at 1.30 pm

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence.

If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day the school will try to phone to secure an explanation. Where the school is unable to make contact by phone a letter will be sent.

If, after the child returns to school no explanation of absence is given by the parents/carers, the school will write again. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised after 4 weeks if no explanation can be obtained.

Regular register checks are carried out by the School Attendance Officer. If attendance falls below 85% a letter will be sent home by the Head Teacher requesting an improvement and offering support. If the attendance rate does not improve the Head Teacher will liaise with the School Attendance Officer who may contact the parents/carers by letter, do a home visit or invite parents/carers to a formal meeting.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 20% or more absences)

Either authorised or unauthorised. A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.

Onward referral to support services (School Attendance Service etc)

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for one week will be discussed with the school's Link School Attendance Officer. The schools Link School Attendance Officer visits the school on a weekly basis to address any attendance issues. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Secretary to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health Adviser / School Nurse etc, if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Link School Attendance Officer.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School agreement can be used in this way.

Holidays in term time

The law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term-time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Head Teachers would not be expected to class any term time absence as exceptional. (See additional information from Bury LA).

If the request is denied school will inform the parent/carer of the reason by letter. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned holiday it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence**.

Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti Social Behavior Act 2003 empowers designated LA officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came in to force on 27th February 2004.

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Excessive holidays in term-time
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9.30 am)

Attendance Awards

There is an attendance cup which will be awarded to the class with the highest attendance each week. Children are given class rewards for this. At the end of each term children with excellent attendance are awarded certificates.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

The registration system

The School will use the computerised Integris Pupil Information System for keeping the school attendance records.

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

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink. However, the school records all attendance information on the Integris Pupil Information System and only uses the paper registers should this system not be accessible. The Secretary prints out a Report both after morning and afternoon registration to show which children are absent from school.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers/attendance information must be safely stored. They are collected in the Office following morning registration. The registers are then returned to the office and are stored in a cupboard overnight.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
 - [b] To any special needs he/she may have.
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Signed:

Date: