

Waverley School



Attendance Policy

Approved by governors :

Date to be reviewed: 2024

Adapted from Enfield Attendance Model Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with: "Children Missing in Education" (DfE 2016) "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (DfE 2015) "School Attendance" (DfE Nov 2016)

1. Aim

The aim of Waverley School's attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that

encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as rigorously as is possible. Waverley School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents/carers, pupils, and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead to or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

This policy is supported by our policies on *safeguarding, anti-bullying, and behaviour*.

Waverley School is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this attendance policy accordingly, and to complying "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2016 (KCSIE), "Children Missing in Education" 2016 (CME)

2. Roles and responsibilities

Governing body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff;
- Review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents/carers and children to implement the policy effectively
- Nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance;
- The Development and Welfare Committee will ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site.

School leadership team

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- Meet with the health team monthly to review each child's attendance and target support as required, especially those with a drop in attendance or whose attendance is below 90%
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement;
- Coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full policy review;
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues
- Ensure that government legislation on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislation (KCSIE, CME) changes and how to implement them;
- The Headteacher and Attendance Officer will take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision
- Report to the governing body each term on attendance records, data and provision;
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively;
- Develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend;
- Document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.
- Work with the education welfare officer to ensure families have the support they need to be able to get their child to school
- Work with transport to assist pupils on transport to have good attendance

Teachers and support staff

The class teacher is the main point of contact for parents around attendance. As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming positive relationships with families;
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement;
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and that they seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue;
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is recorded daily;
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed;
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents/carers:

- Attend pupil progress meetings;
- Attend pupil annual review / EHCP conversion meeting once year;
- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school;
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home;
- Encourage and support their children's aspirations
- Follow school procedures for reporting the absence of their child from school and include an expected date of return
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours or at the beginning or end of the day so that the child can attend part of the day;
- Use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance;
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance;
- Do not take their children out of the school during term time. If parent/carers would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Headteacher using the Special Leave request form.
- Do everything they can to have the pupil ready at their designated pick up time (LA transport).

3. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

3.1 Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the

school in writing. Parents/carers cannot authorise absences. Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking register whether a pupil's absence is authorised or unauthorised.

3.2 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents/carers will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day/each day of absence. The reason for absence will be recorded in the register and form part of school records. We work closely with families regarding planned absence due to illness or operations. With the support of therapists and families we aim to get the pupil back in to school as soon as possible.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Parents/carers should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside of school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, pupils should attend school for as much of that day as possible. Therefore, appointments should be made first thing in the morning or last thing in the day.

3.4 Authorised absences

There may be some instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement.

3.5 Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The class teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

3.6 Family holidays and extended leave

Parents/carers should ensure that family holidays and special leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents/carers do not have the automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for this reason. Requests for leave from school must be made in writing to the Headteacher 3 weeks in advance of the leave being taken. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration. The headteacher will consider all applications for special leave. When deciding whether to authorise absence, the headteacher will take the special circumstances into account. Examples of these might be:

- Medical care, including treatment abroad
- Overseas respite

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing, and will, if appropriate, outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents/carers should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice.

3.7 Religious observance

Waverley School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, and will allow authorised absence for these times. Parents/carers will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

4. School action: following up absences

Class registers are passed to the school office at the end of the registration period. Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents/carers. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the Education Welfare Officer, Headteacher, Head of Department or class teacher will contact the parent/carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.