

# Woodlands Community Primary School

## Attendance Policy



<b>Ratified by Governors</b>	
<b>Date for Review</b>	
<b>Signed – Chair of Governors</b>	
<b>Signed – Headteacher</b>	

### **Philosophy**

At Woodlands we believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

Truancy is a matter that we treat very seriously as pupils are not only losing valuable learning time but they are putting themselves at serious risk as the school and their parents are not aware of their whereabouts.

We will do as much as we can to promote attendance and will deal with any problems as quickly as possible.

### **Aims**

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To have in place procedures to prevent truancy
- To achieve 95% as a minimum level for whole school and individual attendance

### **Expectations**

Every member of the school community has an important role to play in promoting good attendance

#### **We expect pupils to:**

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day
- Tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

#### **We expect parents to:**

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- Inform the school on the first day of absence
- Inform the school when an issue occurs that may affect their child's performance

**We expect school to:**

- Set an example of punctuality and good attendance
- ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date
- monitor class, group and individual attendance patterns
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher meetings
- contact parents when a pupil fails to attend school without a valid reason
- act early to address patterns of absence
- reward good and improved attendance
- regularly report attendance rates to governors and the school community
- Liaise with outside agencies

**We expect Governors to:**

- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders;
- monitor termly progress towards these targets;
- be responsible for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

**We expect the Education Social Work Officer to:**

- undertake home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- instigate legal proceedings on behalf of the LA, including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and applying for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- accept referrals that meet the ESWO referral criteria, initiate contact with parents or carers and undertake assessments.
- provide feedback to schools.
- offer strategic and policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance.
- support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

**Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality**

In order to promote good attendance and punctuality the following actions are taken:

**Daily**

- first day response phone calls
- communication and challenge to parents regarding poor attendance and punctuality

**Weekly**

- class attendance shared with school community
- reward (marbles) for class with highest attendance

**Half termly**

- letters sent to parents when a child's overall attendance is above 98%
- letters sent to parents when a child's overall attendance is below 94%
- letters sent to parents when a child's overall attendance is below 90% and a parent panel meeting set up with ESW, parent and school
- letters sent to parents when a child is late 5 or more times

**Termly**

- certificates given to children whose attendance is above 98%
- attendance rate shared with parents at parent teacher meetings

**Annually**

- prizes given to children whose attendance is above 98%
- prizes given to children who have significantly improved their attendance during the year

**Tackling Poor Attendance**

All absence is discouraged.

If a child has a medical appointment we ask for parents to make these out of school time in order not to disrupt their education.

The school liaise regularly with different agencies in order to promote attendance. When a problem occurs the school will identify the main barrier to good attendance and contact the relevant agency for support. This may be the ESWO, Social Services or in extreme cases the police.

If a pupil is thought to be playing truant or leaves school without prior permission then the school will inform the parent/carer and the police.

When a pattern of absence is noted or the attendance rate falls below 90% the following actions are taken:

- Parents are invited to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and Education Social Welfare Officer to explain their child's repeated absence.
- Support will be given if there are underlying reasons for the absence.
- If not, then the situation will be monitored for improvement.
- If there is no improvement then the ESWO will take the appropriate action including fixed penalty notices and court action as appropriate.

**Holidays During Termtime**

Leave of absence for a holiday will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Applications must be made in advance and if granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. If the child takes unauthorised leave for a holiday then a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

**Punctuality**

All children are expected to attend school on time. Late arrivals are recorded in the register and monitored by the school. Letters will be sent to those children who are persistently late (more than five times in a half term) reminding parents of their duty to ensure that children attend school on time each day. If there is not an improvement after this letter has been sent out

then the parents will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher and ESWO.

**Data Protection Act**

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.