



Windmill Hill Primary School

Policy Document

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

	Adoption date	December 2015	
	Governors' meeting / minute number	FGB	
	Staff member responsible	J Grantham	
	Governor responsible	K Davison	
	Statutory / school policy	Statutory	
	Review period / date	TBC	
	Chair of Governor's signature	K Davison	
	Headteacher's signature	J Grantham	

Policy Statement

At Windmill Hill Primary School we consider good attendance and punctuality to be important life skills, crucial in order for children to achieve their potential and be successful in life. Only by regular attendance can children access the wide variety of experiences and quality education that is offered at Windmill Hill. We are committed to working with children and their families to ensure they have good attendance and punctuality.

This policy document sets out to make clear our expectations and internal systems for attendance and punctuality.

The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than ten days without explanation
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law

School expects all children:

- to attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
- to report to the office should they arrive after registration time
- to tell a member of staff (If they are able to) if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school

School expects all parents / carers:

- to fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
- to contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason
- to arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible
- to arrange holidays out of school time
- to speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school
- to provide a note, or other evidence, when the child returns to school explaining the reason for absence. This will be recorded and may be produced if requested by officers of the Attendance and Inclusion Service
- to complete a 'Request for Exceptional Term Time Leave' form at least 2 weeks before leave is required.

The following procedures set out how we aim to carry out the school's responsibility for managing attendance and punctuality.

Internal Procedures

School officially begins at 8:55am. Registers are taken at this time and at 1:10pm. Registers are a legal document and great care is taken to ensure registers are an accurate record of every child's attendance and punctuality. Teachers close the register in class at 9am. Any child arriving after this time must go to the main school office to sign in. They will receive an L mark (Late, before the register closes).

The register formally closes at 9:30am; children arriving after this time will receive a U (arrival after the register has closed). This contributes to the child's absence record.

If a child is not in school by 9:30am and the school has not received notification of the absence, contact will be made with parents / carers to establish the child's whereabouts. Parents are required to give the school accurate information as to the reason for absence so that this can be recorded in the school register.

If contact with parents / carers cannot be established and the reason for absence cannot be determined this will be recorded as N (No reason yet provided for absence). Once information regarding the absence has been established by the school this N will be changed to reflect the reason given for absence. If no reason is established for the absence within a two week period or the reason given is not a valid reason for absence the N will become an O (unauthorised absence).

Children Missing in Education (CME)

A child is considered to be missing from education if they are of compulsory school age (5-16) and:

- Are not on a school roll
- Are not being educated at home, privately or in alternative provision
- Have been out of educational provision for a substantial period of time

Sheffield Authority currently states that the substantial period of time is 10 school consecutive days. Any child who has been absence for 10 consecutive school days with no known reason for absence will be referred to the CME team and are at risk of losing their place at the school.

Monitoring arrangements

Schools must monitor attendance to identify children with poor attendance or punctuality. In line with Government guidelines from the DfE, schools monitor children at risk of becoming persistent absentees. This currently applies to any child with an attendance below 90%.

At Windmill Hill attendance of all children is monitored termly. We will analyse the attendance of any child that drops below 93% to determine the reasons for absence. If the reasons are unauthorised / unknown or sporadic periods of unexplained illness a letter will be sent home to parents and these children will be placed on the 'at risk of persistent absence list'. The attendance of these children will be monitored weekly and if no improvement is seen parents may be invited into school to discuss with the Headteacher.

If children's attendance drops below 90% these children will be placed on the persistent absence list. Attendance will be monitored closely and, if no improvement is seen, and attendance remains below 90% parents of these children may be invited to an attendance panel meeting which will be attended by a school governor and an LA Attendance and Inclusion Specialist. At this meeting an improvement plan will be put in place with any appropriate support identified. This may involve a referral to the Multi-Agency Team for support.

Punctuality will also be monitored; parents / carers of any children with 2 late marks in a week will receive a text informing of the late marks. At the end of a half term punctuality will be monitored, letters will be sent to the parents of any children who have more than 5 unexplained late marks. They will also be advised that continued poor punctuality may lead to them being invited to an attendance panel meeting.

School Rewards and recognition of good attendance

Within school we aim to promote good attendance by recognising and rewarding good attendance. We do this in the following ways:

- Class attendance figures are shared with all the children and staff as part of Monday's celebration assembly. Attendance figures are displayed on the attendance board in the KS1 building and are reported weekly in the school newsletter.
- Termly certificates are awarded to pupils with attendance 96% or above and all children are entered into an attendance prize draw.
- Children's individual attendance is shared with parents / carers at parents' meetings. The percentage attendance will be RAG rated based on the following percentages:

Green >96%
Amber 94-95%
Red <93%

Authorising Absence

Only the Head Teacher may authorise absence or the Deputy in her absence. Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the school will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is too ill to attend school
- The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause (at the discretion of the Head Teacher) and dependent on pupil's past attendance record
- The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs
- The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority unless the parents/carers have chosen to send their child to a school which is not within walking distance

- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents/carers who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- There is a close family bereavement
- Medical/dental appointment letters/cards have been evidenced by the office staff
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence.

Holidays during term time

The school uses and applies the guidance from the 'Exceptional Leave During Term Time Policy for Sheffield Schools'

Absence for illness

Parents must notify school on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. The illness will be an authorised absence unless school has good reason to believe the illness is not genuine. If we have reason to doubt the authenticity of the illness we may request parents provide school with medical evidence to support illness. School may record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness. We will inform parents of our intention to do this. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Penalty Notices (PN)

The school has a duty to refer to the Local Authority attendance issues that may be liable for a Penalty Notice fine.

Penalty Notice fines can be issued for the following reasons:

- 1) As a result of taking an unauthorised holiday during term time. In these cases the Penalty Notice is requested by school.
- 2) As a result of a second stop by a Truancy Patrol, where the absence is found to be unauthorised.
- 3) As part of School / MAST case management process.

The decision to action the PN lies with the Local Authority and not the school.

This policy is reviewed and updated periodically by the Headteacher and Governors.