



PORTICO
ACADEMY TRUST

opening doors, unlocking potential

Attendance Policy

Date Written/Reviewed: _____ January 2024
Next Review Date: _____ January 2027
Person Responsible: _____ Angela Atkin



Signature of Executive Headteacher: _____ Cheryl Howell
Date _____
Signature of Trustee: _____ Rachel
Date _____

Introduction

West Leigh Junior School values all its pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and punctuality and give appropriate support to resolve any difficulties.

There is a strong correlation between the amount of absence from school and the attainment of pupils. Every lesson in school matters and children who have regular absences tend to find it difficult to catch up. Regular absence can limit a child's future opportunities and set up bad habits for work and life.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education suitable for their age and ability.

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. The Education Regulations 2006 requires our school to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning and then again at the start of the afternoon session.

Categorising Absences

The registers must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at an approved educational/sporting activity, representing the school
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Registers must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by the parent/carer. All absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation, with evidence, for a pupil's absence has been received.

Authorised absences are mornings and/or afternoons away from school for reasons such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. For example:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping trips or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays which have not been agreed

Absence Procedures

Parents/carers are requested to:

- Contact the school before 9.30am on the first day of illness
- Keep the school informed of longer term illness by contacting every 48hrs thereafter

Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness or medical appointments. This may be in the form of a letter, an appointment card, prescription or doctor's note, or text message or email from a professional etc.

Leave of Absence

Current law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child out of school during term time. The Education Regulations 2013 prohibits the Head of School from granting any leave of absence during term time unless there are '**exceptional circumstances**'.

Parents/carers will be asked to complete a '**Leave of Absence Form**' at least one month before any leave is required, with supporting evidence identifying why the leave has been requested.

A letter will be sent out with the decision made regarding the absence. If the leave of absence is not authorised the letter will include a warning that a penalty notice may be issued if the leave is taken.

Penalty Notices can be issued if:

- **There have been 10 sessions (5 consecutive days) or more of unauthorised absence due to leave taken during an academic year;**

AND

- **Attendance is below 90% with 10% of unauthorised absence in the preceding 8 weeks before the leave was taken;**

The school will contact the Local Authority, who will decide whether to issue a penalty notice. (£60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days).

Attendance Interventions

Pupils with attendance between 95% and 90% attendance:

- Attendance will be closely monitored on a weekly basis by the school attendance officer
- Letters or emails may be sent to parents if patterns of absence occur
- **This action is rated Level 1**

Pupils with attendance less than 90%:

- The parent will be notified via email or letter.
- If deemed necessary parents/carers will be invited in to attend a meeting in school with the Head of School and/or attendance officer.
- **This action is rated Level 2**
- Parents/carers may be requested to complete a parenting contract which will state that they agree to comply with specific requirements. The school will agree to provide the support needed to enable a parent/carer to comply.
- Parents/carers will be informed that no further absence will be unauthorised without supporting medical evidence.
- If this is not adhered to, the Local Authority Attendance Officer will become involved and can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or Prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
- **This action is rated level 3 and 4**

Pupils with regular lateness:

- Letters to parents may be sent if punctuality/lateness becomes regular or reaches a large amount of schooling being missed
- A meeting may be arranged with the school attendance officer and School Principle if this persists.

Roles and Responsibilities

West Leigh Junior School believes that improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, trustees, parents/carers and the pupils.

As such the Trustees will:

- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the Trustees to lead on attendance matters
- Monitor the school's attendance through termly reporting at Trustee meetings
- Ensure there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence to identify vulnerable groups

- Ensure data is understood and used to devise solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value good attendance and punctuality to pupils and their parents/carers
- Ensure there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance: with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Report school attendance data termly to the Trustees
- Ensure attendance data is collected and analysed regularly to identify causes and patterns of absence

All staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value good attendance and punctuality to pupils and their parents/carers
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance: with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and intervention

The parents/carers will:

- Instil the value of education, regular attendance and punctuation within the home environment
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences by making appointments outside of the school day
- Ask the school for help if a child is experiencing difficulties
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing the school bag and uniform the evening before
- Avoid taking the child on holiday during term-time. Where this is unavoidable, before booking the holiday, complete and submit a holiday form to the Head of School, who will consider whether the request should be granted

The pupils will:

- Be punctual for school and ready to learn
- Be prepared for the whole school day in terms of equipment needed, for example, swimming kit, P.E. kit, pencil, ruler etc.

West Leigh Junior School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and promote attendance. Equally parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils in the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.