



## **Attendance Policy**

**Adopted and ratified by the Governing Body of  
Woodlands Academy on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

Signed by:

Chair of Governing Body

Date:

Committee with oversight for this policy –	Resources
Policy last reviewed by the	FGB
Policy last ratified and adopted by Full Governing Body	12 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
Policy / Document due for review	April 2017

# Attendance Policy

## As a school we aim to maintain:

- An attendance rate of a minimum of 96%
- Parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- Good time keeping

## Good attendance is important because:

Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement. If children attend regularly then they:

- Settle into school more easily.
- Find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Find learning more satisfying.

## Parents can help their children by:

Ensuring your child attends school regularly A child should only miss school if they are significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend, or if there is an unforeseen circumstance causing unavoidable absence.

Arranging all medical appointments (wherever possible) out of school hours, or during school holidays. If this is not possible, bringing the child to school prior to, or after the appointment is the expectation.

Telephoning on the first day of any absence to give the reason for the absence and telling us when your child is likely to return to school. You can do this on the dedicated absence telephone line.

Sending us a note confirming the reason for your child's absence when s/he returns to school.

Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has any extended period of absence.

Informing the school of any planned medical procedures as soon as you become aware of them.

Making sure we always have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, child minders and emergency contact links.

## We shall:

Follow up all unexplained absences with a phone call or letter.

Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in our school newsletters, via the school website and the Home-School agreement.

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Report attendance levels to the school's Governing Body and the Local Authority.

Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality.

Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.

If we have concerns, we will make a referral to the School's Local Authority allocated Educational Social Worker, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance issues.

### **Authorised Absence**

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as '*authorised absences*' for example if a child is ill. Where there are concerns about a child's attendance, we shall ask for evidence of illness in the form of a GP appointment card, or a copy of any prescribed medication.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as '*unauthorised absences*'. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waiting for a delivery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Going for a family day out</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sleeping in after a late night</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Going shopping or for a hair cut</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Because it is your child's birthday</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holiday during term time</li></ul>

Where there is no explanation for an absence, or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory, absence will be recorded as '*unauthorised*'.

If there are ongoing concerns regarding a child's attendance and/or punctuality, you will be asked to meet with the Assistant Headteacher and the Attendance Officer to discuss the situation. You will be asked to enter into a Parenting Contract which is legally binding. Where a child is particularly vulnerable and the school have not been notified of the reasons why they are not in school, the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance officer will conduct a home visit to ensure the child/ren are safe.

**Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action.**

### **Punctuality**

For all children, school starts at **8.55**; your child must be on the school site ready to enter the cloakroom by this time. The cloakroom doors to years 1 and 2 will be closed at 9 am, the Reception gate will also be closed at 9 am. Children who attend

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morning sessions at the Nursery should be at school at 8.45, the Nursery gate is closed at 9 am. Children who attend Nursery in the afternoon should be at school at 12.15 pm, the Nursery gate is closed at 12.25 p.m. Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 enter through the side gate that is open from 8.45am. The children line up and are in class by 8.55am, the side gate is closed at 9.00am. Any child who arrives to school after 9.00am must go through the school office where they are signed in.

It is important to be on time as the first part of the school day is often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest that day. If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected.

Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.  
**We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.**

Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance. All lateness is recorded daily.

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent this may be shared with other agencies. If your child has not been collected after a significant time, then Children's Services or the Police may be contacted.

## **Term Time Leave of Absence**

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of term time leave/family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off during term time. Leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body.

- Only in an exceptional circumstance will term time leave be authorized; at the discretion of the Headteacher. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence during term-time need to complete a form which is available from the school office. Permission must be sought at least 2 weeks in advance and before booking tickets or making travel arrangements.
  - It is recognised that some religious events occur during term time. As an inclusive school the decision has been made to allow each child 1 day's leave per year for the purpose of religious observance. The days of observance that this applies to are those detailed on [www.egfl.org.uk/religion](http://www.egfl.org.uk/religion). An application for leave must be made in advance in order for the leave to be authorised.
  - If a child is not present at the beginning of a school term and we have not received any information regarding their absence, we cannot guarantee that a place will remain available on their return to school.
  - If term time leave is granted and there are any delays to the specified return date, evidence will be required to support the late return.
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- If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and the parent may be liable for a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action from the Local Authority. In certain instances the child may be removed from the school roll.

Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly.

## **Leavers**

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High school) parents are asked to provide the following information in writing.

- Date of the move
- New address
- Current telephone numbers
- Your child's new school and the start date when known.

## **Children Missing Education**

When pupils leave and we do not have information about where they have gone, then your child is considered to be a '*Child Missing Education*'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try and locate your child. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

## **Legal Note**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on *Best Practice Guidance* produced by the DfE and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if these absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain the high standards to which we always aspire.

***Every day counts and every child matters.***

## **Rewards for good attendance**

We will reward the good attendance of children in the following way:

- Weekly attendance prizes in assembly
  - Certificate & trophy for the week for the class with highest attendance in KS2.

- Certificate & cuddly toy for the class with highest attendance in KS1.
  - Certificate & cuddly toy for the class with the highest attendance in the Foundation stage.
  - The school council are looking into special activities for any class with 100% attendance in a week.
- Half termly stickers for children with 100% attendance and zero lates.
  - Half termly stickers for all children with 95%+ attendance
  - Attendance medals at the end of each full term for all children with 100% attendance who have less than 5 lates.
  - A significant prize for every child who achieves 100% attendance with 100% punctuality for the school year- such as a scooter or tri-scooter. 100% attendance includes a discretionary 1 day leave for religious reasons which must be applied for in advance.

Attendance medals will be awarded to children who only miss 1 session throughout the school year or those who achieve 100% attendance with less than 5 lates.