



Attendance Policy 2019-2021

Approved by ¹	
Name:	Kerrienne Lloyd
Position:	CoS Chair
Signed:	K. Lloyd
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This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Persons responsible for writing the policy: Acting Head Teacher, Miss Amanda Ross, and the Chair of Governors, Mrs Catherine Winzor.

Governor with responsibility for attendance: Mrs Kerrienne Lloyd.

Our Aims

Waberthwaite CE School aims to meet its obligations, in regards to school attendance, by:

- Promoting good attendance from all pupils with attendance records being consistently over 95.5% per year, and reducing absences, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring communication between home and school, in regard to absences, is extremely effective.
- Promoting punctual attendance and discouraging lateness.

The Legal Framework

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'
(The Education Act 1996, Section 7)

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Why Regular Attendance is so Important

Central to ensuring that all pupils can fulfil their potential is the fact that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and persistent absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

The government expects parents to:

- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly.
- Ensure pupils are punctual to their lessons.

Safeguarding: Your child may not achieve their full potential if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance/Children Missing Education (CME)
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis may be considered a safeguarding matter where there is justification to do so.

Our Obligation

- We will mark the registers daily at 9.00am and 1.00pm. Information from the registers will be entered into the school's information management system (ScholarPack). If information is given to the class teacher, regarding the reason for absence, they must ensure that information is added to the comments box on the register for that child or passed on to the secretary. If necessary, the secretary will complete the details for absence using information provided by parents or staff.
- Children arriving late after the Register has been saved on ScholarPack must enter school via to the school office. The Secretary or Head will update ScholarPack with the information.
- The Attendance Officer (the Secretary) will be responsible for checking the ScholarPack system for those children who are absent without reason. The Attendance Officer will then ring parents/carers to enquire about reasons for absence.
- We will close attendance registers at 9.15am and 1:15am.
- Overall attendance figures will be shared with the Full Governing Body termly.
- We will actively encourage promptness and attendance.
- The attendance of any child causing concern through patterns of absence or dropping below 90%, will be monitored by the head teacher and the governor with responsibility for attendance and you may be called in to discuss the absences and any support school can put in place.
- Where there is no response to school intervention, and where the absence or pattern of absence has persisted without explanation, the school can refer to the Children Missing in Education Service, if the pattern of absence meets the service referral criteria.
- Promote attendance each week during praise assembly by handing out our attendance bear to the class that has the best attendance that week.
- To keep parents better informed about their child's attendance, at the end of each half term every parent/carer will receive attendance information notifying them of their child's attendance for that half term:

Green	If their attendance for that half term has been between 96% and 100% and is not causing concern.	Receiving a green notification, is a reason to celebrate and your child should be praised.
Amber	If their attendance for that half term has been between 90.1% and 95.9% and is potentially causing concern.	If you receive an amber notification, this means that we are monitoring your child's attendance closely and we hope to see an improvement the following term.
Red	If their attendance for that half term has been below 90% and is causing serious concern.	If you receive a red notification, this is a more serious concern and, depending upon the circumstances, you may also receive a letter asking you to come to a meeting to discuss this. This meeting will be with the head teacher and possibly, the child's class teacher. If your child continues to receive red notifications, we may contact our Access and Inclusion Manager.

Your Obligation

- Ensure your child attends school regularly.
- Report your child's absence before 9.15am by telephone or emailing admin@waberthwaite.cumbria.sch.uk.
- Ensure your child is not late for school. Doors are opened at 8.40am and are closed at 8.50am. Children arriving after this time must enter school through the school office.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time - school is not able to authorise term-time holidays. Only the head teacher can decide if the reason given for absence is acceptable. If the head teacher decides that the reason given for absence is unacceptable, the absence will remain unauthorised.
- Avoid taking your child out of school for non-urgent matters (hairdressers, clothing purchases, extended weekends, etc.).
- Ensure that medical appointments cause the minimum of disruption.

- Do not allow your child to be absent for a whole day when their medical appointment is only a short, local one.

Lateness

If a child is late, they must enter via the school office. It is to be expected that very occasionally a child may be late for a genuine reason. The concern is in regard to any persistent late arrivals where there is no avoidable reason.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence:

Only the head teacher has the authority to authorise absence. Absence may be authorised for:

- Sickness, where the head teacher is satisfied that the illness is genuine.
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments. Whenever possible, such appointments should be made outside school hours.
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional family circumstances.

Unauthorised absence:

Absences may not be authorised for:

- Birthdays or other special occasions.
- Paid or unpaid work during school hours.
- Shopping trips.
- Caring for family members.
- Term time holidays.

Head teachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. **Parents should be aware that there are very few circumstances that would be deemed to be exceptional.** Head teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

In order to request an absence in term time, parents/carers need to complete our **Request for Absence in Term Time** form. **All absence requests must be completed on this form - letters will not be accepted. This should be returned to the school at least 7 days before the start of the holiday. All requests must be made prior to the leave being taken. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.** You should clearly state the dates and an explanation of the 'exceptional circumstances'. This form can be found on our school website, or you can request a paper or electronic copy from the office.

Legal Sanctions

Any absence that is not deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances' by the head teacher will be recorded as unauthorised. This may then be reported to the Access and Inclusion Manager, who may decide to take legal action. Parents/carers who take children out of school during term time for holidays can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. The amount of the fine is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days. This is per child.

Responding to Attendance Problems

The Department for Education (DfE) states that pupils are persistent absentees if they miss more than 10% of their possible sessions in a school year. Should any child's overall attendance cause concern during the school year, parents may be contacted and offered additional support, or we may request evidence to substantiate the reasons for absence. Depending on the concerns and reasons for absence, parents may be asked to engage with school and other professionals, if appropriate, via an Early Help Assessment. This process will be discussed with parents and we would need consent to do this. If there is no improvement, we will contact the Access and Inclusion Manager.