

# Attendance Policy

<b>LEADER/CO-ORDINATOR</b>	C. Mason
<b>GROUPS INVOLVED IN DISCUSSION</b>	Administration Staff Gateway Team Curriculum Committee All Staff Full Governing Body WOWS Networked Learning Community
<b>LINK TO SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b>	Achievement of School targets in attendance and attainment.

## INTRODUCTION

Good attendance and punctuality are important for life in general and indeed poor attendance and punctuality can have a significant impact on how a child settles into class, their friendship groups and their general progress. We therefore encourage our children to attend regularly and on time and as a result our attendance rates continue to improve. There are 190 days in the school year.

As has always been the case, holidays are actively discouraged during term time and the majority of our parents are to be praised for following the guidelines. However, some do not and for others special circumstances arise.

Wigan Schools have agreed to follow common procedures with the intention that term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed as a rule with parents/carers being discouraged from arranging holidays during term time.

The government expects schools and 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

In addition, parents are expected to:-

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- All pupils are to be punctual to their lessons

The legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explain how they apply to local authorities, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupil and parents are contained in:-

- The Education Act 1996 – sections 434(1)(3)(4) & (6) and 458(4)&(5)
- 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 2013PURPOSE

## REGISTRATION

- Each day legally consists of two sessions, each of which must be registered.
- The class teacher is responsible for the administration of the register.

- The registration period commences at 8.55am each morning and 1.10pm each afternoon. It closes upon completion of the register which means that if a child is “late” if registered after completion of the register regardless of the time.
- The class teacher is responsible for the correct completion of the registers.
- The teacher can, at any time, request an attendance report for any given period for any given child. This might be used to confirm suspicions regarding absence patterns.
- Registers must always be returned to the school office immediately after registration.
- Concerns about attendance should be communicated, in the first instance, to the Learning Mentor.
- As part of the summer school report, all parents will receive a detailed analysis of the attendance performance of their child for the current academic year.
- Termly, the Headteacher will report attendance data to the full Governing Body.
- The reward system, which encourages good attendance will be operated by the school.
- Parents are expected to contact school upon a child’s first day of absence. When the child returns to school, a letter must be sent to confirm the reason for absence.
- Teachers marking the register must mark a child either present or absent at the registration period. Spaces must not be left blank.
- Letters from parents and carers which are sent into school regarding absence must be sent to the school office in the register.
- The details from the manual registers will be inputted to SIMS Assessment Manager by the Office staff.
- The Office staff will code absences for which they have received information from the parent. The coding for absences is to be completed in accordance with the following schedule:

- I Illness
- C Authorised absences
- O Unauthorised absences
- R Religious observance
- L Late before registration closes
- U Late after registration closes
- D Dual registration
- V Educational visit
- H Holiday (authorised in advance)
- G Unauthorised Holiday
- M Medical / Dental
- P Approved sporting activity
- B Educated off site
- E Exclusion
- N No reason yet provided
- Y Enforced closure
- T Traveller absence
- # School closed to staff and pupils
- ! Non compulsory school attendance

When the teacher or office receives no information from the Parent with regard to absence, the **N** code will be used. A letter will be sent to parents requesting an explanation for the absence. If no response is received within a fortnight, the attendance will be coded as **O**.

### **Contents of Attendance Register**

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:-

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

## Notes on use of approved codes

	Comments
<b>I</b>	Illness. Parents are required to a) telephone school on first day of absence and b) provide written explanation upon child's return
<b>C</b>	Authorised absences are those authorised by the <b>Head</b> not by the <b>Parent</b> . Sickness absence does not fall into this category. Parents are required to a) telephone the school on first day of absence b) provide written explanation upon child's return. If in doubt on any authorisation issue see the Head.
<b>O</b>	These are determined by the Head – usually unsatisfactory explanation for an absence or retrospective explanation for an absence. If in doubt on any authorised absences, see the Head.
<b>R</b>	Occasionally the Head will authorise, upon written request, an absence for religious observance reasons.
<b>L</b>	Late = after the register has been completed but in any event <b>no later than 10.00am or 1.30pm.</b>
<b>U</b>	Late after registration closes. Registration closes at 10.00am. Any child attending after this time will be marked as unauthorised late. This will not count as an absence mark.
<b>V</b>	Applies to residential visits and to day trips
<b>H</b>	The holiday absence procedure is rigorously enforced by the Head. Head and Governors are increasingly taking a hard line on this issue.
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday.
<b>M</b>	Medical / dental only authorised by notification of appointment <b>in advance</b> to the Headteacher. Sometimes, depending upon circumstances, the Head will require a medical / dental appointment card as evidence.
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity means that <b>approved by the Head</b> . This may be representing a national squad or the like.
<b>B</b>	Educated off site, e.g. refers to pupils who may be receiving education from another source.
<b>E</b>	Exclusion – coding self evident
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure
<b>!</b>	Non compulsory school attendance

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The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on the school's electronic register

### Amendments to Attendance Register

Every amendment made to the attendance register must include; the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

### Preservation of the Attendance Register

Every entry in the attendance register must be preserved for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

### Children at Risk of Missing Education

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded.

### Home Educated Children

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school.

## **CONCERNS ABOUT ATTENDANCE / PUNCTUALITY - PROCEDURE**

- **Teacher** mentions concerns **to parent** and asks for improvement
- **Teacher** informs Learning Mentor of concerns
- Where no improvement is forthcoming, the Learning Mentor will discuss with the **Headteacher** and may contact the **parent**.
- Depending on circumstances, the Learning Mentor will contact the **parents** and / or make a referral to the Gateway Team.
- Each term Mrs Jones will produce, using the SIMS module, a percentage attendance figure cumulatively for each class and for the whole school. These will be given to the Headteacher and to all staff.

## REFERRALS

- Referrals to the Gateway Team, via the Learning Mentor will be considered when:
  - a) There is an unexplained absence of 3 consecutive days.
  - b) Absences which result in 90% or less attendance.
  - c) Patterns in existing intermittent absence.
  - d) Truancy is suspected.
  - e) Frequent absences are condoned by parents.
  - f) The child / parent refuses to attend.
  - g) There is concern over the social / emotional / medical well-being of a child
  
- The Head must have made a prior specific attempt to contact parents prior to a referral to the Gateway Team.
- Upon referral, the Gateway Team will decide:
  - a) To accept the referral and include it within his/her case load.
  - b) To request further information.
  - c) To refer the case on to a more appropriate agency.
  - d) To take no further action.

Government policy stipulates that any child who has 10 or more unauthorised absences (one morning or afternoon is classed as an absence / session) within a term, could be fined up to £100. If further unauthorised absences follow, court proceedings may occur.

The Gateway Team will be invited to talk about attendance to parents/carers of pre-school children at the Reception Induction Meeting in the summer term.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.
- All requests for Leave of Absence must be made in writing using the appropriate form available to parents from the office (See appendix).
- Requests must be made at least six weeks in advance.
- This form must be passed to the Headteacher who will consider the request and decide to authorise/not authorise.
- Any granting of leave does not set a precedent for similar future requests.
- The Headteacher will return the standard form to the Admin staff who will forward this to the class teacher to be given to the pupil to take home.
- Where appropriate parents must sign the Home School Contract and return it to school to acknowledge that a requested absence has been agreed.
- When leave is taken without permission a letter will be sent to the home address by post and the Gateway Team informed.
- Children who do not return to school within 4 weeks of the date of the first absence may be taken off the school roll and will no longer have a place at our school.
- The office staff will keep a copy of all correspondence on file for reference.
- The Admin staff will complete the SIMS Attendance Module with the appropriate code.

## PERSISTENT ABSENCES

The Department of Children, Schools and Families has given new guidelines to schools to address poor attendance. The Government has now formed a new a category entitled 'child with persistent absence'.

A child with persistent absence is classified as follows: (**Note** – a session is half a day so 10 sessions would be 5 full days)

- ✓ A child with 14 sessions or more absence from September to the October half term.
- ✓ A child with 28 sessions or more absence from September to December. (Autumn Term)
- ✓ A child with 40 sessions or more absence from September to the February half term.
- ✓ A child with 52 sessions or more absence from September to Easter. (Spring Term)
- ✓ A child with 64 sessions or more absence from September to July. (Full academic year)

If any child falls into the above category then the school and the school's Educational Welfare Officer will closely monitor the attendance.

If the pattern of non attendance continues then there could be the possibility of legal action either by penalty notice or court proceedings.

## CONTACTS

Gateway Team  
Central Park  
Montrose Avenue  
Wigan  
WN5 9XL  
01942 487080

## Appendix 1

- The following information is available on request from the school office.
- Letter from Director of Children and Young People's Services – Leave of Absence in Term Time
- Letter from Mrs Mason re Holidays in Term Time
- Holiday / Leave of Absence Request Form
- Home School Contract
- Letter re refusal to grant request for leave of absence / holiday
- Letter re leave taken without permission

<b>DISCUSSED AND AGREED BY RELEVANT STAFF</b>	October 2014
<b>DISCUSSED AND AGREED BY GOVERNING BODY</b>	October 2014
<b>MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>	Ongoing reports to Governing Body re: progress made in improving attendance and punctuality
<b>THIS POLICY WAS LAST UPDATED ON</b>	October 2014