



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Date Adopted:	Summer 2018
Date of Review	Summer term annually
Policy Reference Number:	
Staff Member:	Jenny Callaghan
Governor Working Party:	John ApThomas



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

At Wild Bank Community School, we recognize that our pupils will get the greatest benefit from their education in school if they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As our pupils grow and prepare for their next stages of education and future employment they need to see good attendance and punctuality as important qualities that are valued by others and employers. We will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where pupils are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement.

Objectives

1. To ensure that all learners attend school well.
2. To ensure that all learners are punctual.
3. To win the support of parents in ensuring that their children attend school well and that they arrive on time.
4. To create visibility of attendance within the school and amongst parents and children.
5. To keep good records of attendance through the school registers and to take prompt action to follow up absences.
6. To investigate and act immediately where truancy is suspected or confirmed.
7. To work effectively with the Local Authority and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and efficiently.
8. To monitor closely pupils with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement.

Strategies

This identifies the information held by the school and will be considered when dealing with attendance and punctuality:

Registration

- Our gates open at 8.00am for breakfast club
- Nursery and Reception registration is at 8.55 am as they enter the Foundation Building and go to their family groups.

KS1 and KS2 registration is 8.55am. Class doors are opened at 8:50am for the class teacher to be meet and greet the children and their parent/carer. Class doors are closed at 9:00am. As a parent/carer, if you wish to speak with a class teacher, you need to visit the school office to arrange a suitable time to visit before or after the school day. At 8.55am, the staff need to welcome the children into school and attend registration.

- A child arriving between 9.00am and 9.05am will need to enter through the front entrance of school therefore will be deemed late. Children arriving in this way will be required to state their name, year group and reason for lateness. Parents or Carers of children who are regularly late will be contacted by the school office or Learning Mentor.
- All staff will complete registers accurately for each session.

- Registration Closes at 9:05am. Children arriving beyond that time will be marked as unauthorised absence, in line with DfE guidance. Office staff will be responsible for ascertaining a reason for this absence if parents or carers do not supply school with one.
- Afternoon registers are completed at 1pm in YR, 5 and 6 and 1:15pm in Years 1-4
- Children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside the normal hours must be signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of fire as an appendix to class registers.

Support

- Attendance to be regularly posted on the school newsletter to celebrate good class attendance.
- An attendance Class Complement is given in Monday's awards assembly for the class with the best attendance.
- Certificates are awarded at the end of each term for 100% attendance. This is celebrated in the final whole school assembly.
- For children who are identified as at risk, school will fulfil our reporting duties for non-arranged absence and inform the caring authority or case worker.

Punctuality

Punctuality is essential for a child to have a good start to the day. Poor punctuality is unacceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the school day, they will miss learning activities and important information or news that they may need during the day. Extreme lateness does not only disrupt the teacher leading the class, but disrupts other pupils' learning. Arriving late can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Lateness after 9:05am (when the registers officially close) will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If a pupil is persistently late, i.e five unauthorised late marks where pupils have arrived after 9.05am the Learning Mentor will contact parents and arrange a Punctuality panel to meet with her if necessary. If a child has ten late marks after 9:05am they will be referred to Education Welfare which may lead to a Penalty Warning or Fixed Penalty Notice. (Appendix 1&2) Once the referral has been made, Education Welfare will monitor the child's punctuality via the electronic system (SIMS).

The register will be amended on the electronic registration system (SIMS) during the day, with the appropriate absence codes. This system is used to provide many different reports and types of data to help school monitor attendance effectively.

The school's Learning Mentor and Head Teacher will work together to review the attendance of all pupils regularly. This is when pupils who are a cause for concern will be identified. The Learning Mentor will look at the registers every day and will note any problems with identified families. Action will be taken on a daily basis, such as telephone calls, Home Visits, letters sent; however, any child whose attendance is a 'Cause for Concern' will be referred to the Senior Leadership Team. A letter will be sent to parents of any pupil who has been identified as having low attendance, in order to offer support and address any concerns that may be impacting on the pupil attending school. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored, and if there is no improvement parents will be asked to attend an Attendance Panel to discuss the issue.

Absence

- Parents and Carers are required to inform the school office if their child is absent each day
- The school office will make telephone contact with the parent/carer and all other contacts on the first day of absence if the parents have not notified the school that their child is absent.
- The school will complete a home visit if we believe a child is on holiday, but this has not been reported by a parent/carer.
- The school will complete a home visit if no contact is made from parent/carer.
- The attendance and punctuality register will be checked weekly and half termly for persistent absence or lateness and a report shared with the governors
- **Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances:** Sudden, serious circumstances do occur, rarely, when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that school is informed by the parent of the circumstances as soon as possible. If no contact is made to school then the pupil will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- Parents/carers will be notified by an attendance report each half term if their child is developing a pattern of lateness or absence. (Attendance trigger: Falling below 95%)
- Attendance that falls below 90% is deemed as persistent absence and will result in a meeting with Mrs. Thompson-Learning Mentor (Attendance trigger: Falling below 90%)
- A child with persistent poor attendance may be referred to the Education Welfare officer who will visit the family. This is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. The school will work closely with the Local Authority to take action against those unlawfully keeping children at home. (Appendix 3)

Absence due to illness

If a child is absent or late due to illness, the parent must inform the school by telephone by 10.00am at the latest on the day that the child is absent, and on each subsequent day the child is absent. A specific reason must be given for the child's absence. It is at the school's discretion if the reason is authorised.

We encourage all medical appointments where possible to be made for children outside of the school timetable.

The parent or carer of any child leaving before the end of the school day for medical reasons must have informed the office of the reason by showing the official appointment card or letter. A copy may be made for our records.

Children with poor attendance due to medical conditions and or appointments which falls below 30 sessions will be referred to the Medical Enquires at Tameside. This will be communicated to the parents or carers prior to referral.

RELIGIOUS ABSENCE

The school will authorise one day 'leave' per religious festival, e.g. Eid, but no more than 3 days in any one academic year. Parents must request this leave in advance.

Leave of absence during term time (Appendix 4)

This policy reflects the DfE regulations which came into force in Sept 2013 which state:

‘Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.’

Absences during term time can have a serious and detrimental effect on students’ learning and parents should not take children out of school other than in exceptional circumstances. Medical and dental appointments should take place after school or in holidays wherever possible. The school takes the view that taking children out of school during term time can be damaging to a child’s educational progress. Children find it very difficult to catch up on the learning that they have missed and in the longer term this can have a negative impact on their progress.

Wild Bank Community School would interpret “exceptional” in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, outweighing the loss of teaching time. This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another but the normality will be that requests for authorised absence will be refused.

Wild Bank Community School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a School we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our School to celebrate achievement and attendance. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our School will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our pupils.

Our School gives a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil’s attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as **unauthorised**. In such cases the school may make a referral to Local Authority to consider that a Penalty Warning or Penalty Notice Prosecution be issued. We will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing. (Appendix 1 & 2)

Any unauthorised time off during term time, which meets the criteria, will be referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Service. They may decide to issue a penalty notice of £60, per parent, per child. This rises to £120, per parent, per child if not paid within 21 days. Where a fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance for the following reasons:

- If their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once
- If they go on holiday in term time (unless it is an exceptional circumstance agreed with the Head Teacher)
- If they have not co-operated with the Education Welfare Service following a referral from school after they have taken steps to address the absences with the parent/carer and pupil.
- If their child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued in relation to this matter.

LEAVERS TRANSFERRING SCHOOL

When pupils leave (other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School), and you have not given us the relevant information so that we can contact you, your child is considered to be a Child Missing in Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with other services, including the Police, Children's Services, Benefits Agency and any other relevant agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By following the information below, unnecessary investigations can be avoided:

If your child is leaving our school, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving in writing (a removal from roll form is available at the school office);
- Confirm that our school has your current mobile phone number;
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and allow records to be transferred;
- Let us know the date that you are moving;
- Until you notify us that your child has been admitted, they will stay on our roll, be expected to attend as normal and every day of absence will be recorded accordingly.

A child missing education is defined as follows:

- Children whose whereabouts are known but they do not have any educational provision in place.
- Children whose whereabouts are unknown and therefore so is their educational provision.

They are not:

- Children who are on roll with an education provider, but there are issues around attendance
- Children who are being Educated at Home.
- Children whose parents have applied for a school place where the application is going through normal admissions procedures.

The school will liaise with the Local Authority and share information accordingly if a child is deemed to be missing education.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parent/ Carer Role

- Parents/ carers will promote good attendance and punctuality for their child.
- Parents/ carers will telephone or notify the school on their child's first day of absence and subsequent days following
- To advise the school, by contacting the school office, immediately if they become aware of problems with attendance
- To co-operate with the school in promoting and improving attendance e.g. attending meetings, participation in Parenting Contracts and supporting the school in agreed intervention/action plans.
- Adhere to systems for late registration and pupil movement.
- Parents/ carers will support the school by booking holidays outside of the school year unless they have exceptional circumstances.

Emergency contact numbers.

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if you don't then you may miss something important. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year however, please inform us as soon as possible if your number changes.

Pupils

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school to ensure good attendance e.g. early bedtimes and getting uniforms ready the night before

School Staff

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate and efficient systems in place to promote and support the school attendance policy, that these are adhered to and training is given where appropriate.

However, Wild Bank Community School believes that all staff have responsibilities and a role to play in promoting good attendance by:

- Providing a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Providing a safe learning environment
- Ensuring an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Providing a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- Being aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- Being aware of the role all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils

- Adherence to the systems and procedures in place within school to promote good attendance and highlighting any concerns to the Head Teacher
- Participation in training regarding school systems and procedures
- Willingness to communicate with children and parents about attendance
- Raising any concerns about continued concerns about attendance and punctuality with a member of SLT.
- Completion of the attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the Head Teacher.

Some staff will have specific individual responsibilities to support the attendance policy and these are outlined in the procedures section of this framework.

Governors

- Ensure compliance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended.
- Adopt an Attendance Policy and review it annually.
- Agree targets for attendance at Wild Bank Community School.
- Ensure that they receive reports from the Head Teacher regarding school attendance as part of the school monitoring or school profiling exercise.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance target, or when the Governors believe there is cause for concern, to require a review of the systems and procedures in place to promote good attendance.
- To promote the strong link between attendance and educational attainment to parents and pupils where appropriate and ensure that the school attendance policy and procedures are communicated effectively.
- Authorize the Head Teacher (or other designated person) to consider and make decisions regarding leave of absence requests.
- Work with the Head Teacher in establishing criteria against which leave requests will be considered. This is important to ensure the process is equitable and consistent.

The Education Welfare Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

Outcomes

This school will do all it can to ensure that learners come happily, willingly and punctually to school to ensure that all gain the greatest possible value from their education.

If you are finding it difficult to get your child to school on time, please consider using the Walking Bus facility. For more information, please visit the ['Walking Bus'](#) page.

End of the Day

Nursery- 12 noon

YR-Y6 3:15pm

Please refer to our “Safeguarding Pupils walking to and from school policy” if your child is in Y5 or Y6 and you would like to give permission for them to walk home.

All children should be collected by their parents or other named adult (16 years or older) on their contact form. Any changes should be notified to school before the end of that school day. Children collected late will need to be signed out and regularly late collection could mean we may discuss further concerns with yourself and other relevant professionals. Children collected late can become anxious and it is not staffs responsibility to remain with the child after the school day ends.

Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety for a short time. If the school is not contacted to explain the delay, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and a referral to children’s social care may be made.

For the academic year 2018 -2019 the Governing Body has set an aspirational target of 96% for the whole school attendance.

If you are having difficulties talk to us – Your first point of contact for attendance and punctuality is Mrs. Thompson, one of our Learning Mentors.



WILD BANK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Demesne Drive

Stalybridge, Tameside. SK15 2PG

Telephone: 0161 303 7404

Head Teacher – Mrs J. Callaghan

Email: admin@wildbank.tameside.sch.uk

Dear Parents/Carers,

Penalty Notices for Non- school attendance – Information Letter

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any term (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice of £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. The penalty notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution.

In law, an offence is committed if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once
- They go on holiday in term time without school's permission
- The child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued for such an offence.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for help.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Callaghan
Head Teacher



WILD BANK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Demesne Drive

Stalybridge, Tameside. SK15 2PG

Telephone: 0161 303 7404

Head Teacher – Mrs J. Callaghan

Email: admin@wildbank.tameside.sch.uk

Note regarding previous payment of a penalty notice.

The issuing of a penalty notice is an alternative to issuing proceedings at court. As a proportionate response, the local authority is likely to give parents the opportunity to discharge their liability to criminal proceedings by way of a penalty notice on the first occasion.

Once a parent has discharged liability by paying a penalty notice on at least one occasion and where there is further unauthorised absence, they may not be given the option to pay a further penalty notice, but may instead be summoned to appear before Tameside Magistrate's Court to answer an offence under Section 444 of the education act 1996: failure to ensure regular attendance. If found guilty at court, a criminal conviction will be recorded against the parent which carries a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

Parents and carers of pupils registered at this school are reminded that they hold legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

Wild Bank Community School shares the Government's determination to raise levels of pupil attendance and achievement in order to ensure the best possible start in life for our children.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available from our school and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please contact me on the above number.



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Demesne Drive
 Stalybridge, Tameside. SK15 2PG
 Telephone: 0161 303 7404

Head Teacher – Mrs J. Callaghan
 Email: admin@wildbank.tameside.sch.uk

Dear

RE: - School Attendance – *****

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that ***** has been absent from school. Please find enclosed **** latest Attendance Report. You will see that ***** current attendance is only **%, which means that he has been absent for ***** sessions which equal to days, since to.

Since **date** ***** to **date** ***** the number of lates recorded for is currently **** minutes late for school.

At Wild Bank Community School we expect the level of school attendance for all primary aged pupils to be no lower than **95%**. As your child’s attendance is currently ***** which is below the target level. School will now monitor your child’s level of attendance each half term and we are looking forward to seeing an improvement.

Children with attendance below **90%** will be classed as having a persistent absence; this will mean they will be closely monitored by the school, the Local Authorities and the Department for Education, which could lead to a prosecution if your child’s attendance does not improve.

GREEN	95% - 100%	No action taken.
AMBER	90% - 95%	School will monitor child’s attendance half termly. A meeting with Parent/Carer may be requested
RED	80% - 90%	Education Welfare Officer and school will request a meeting with Parent/Carer and the child’s attendance will be monitored half termly. Further absence could lead to prosecution.

I
am

sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve **name** ***** attendance as it is important for your child to come into school every day in order for them to achieve their full potential. If we can help in any way, or if you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Michelle Thompson
 Learning Mentor



Tameside Education and Cultural Services

Application Form – Leave of absence in term time

The Governing Body of Wild Bank Community School has a discretionary power to allow pupils to be absent during term time in exceptional circumstances only and the pupil’s attendance record will be taken into account when any request for leave of absence is considered.

Parents are reminded that leave of absence during term time is not a right, and will only be granted with the greatest reluctance, as any absence has a detrimental effect on a pupil’s academic progress and overall attendance level. **Absence for holidays will be categorised as unauthorised.**

As the Governing Body must consider the request for absence, please ensure that the application is submitted to the school well before the proposed period of absence.

Please complete the following:

Pupils Name(s) _____ Year _____

Home Address _____

First Day of Absence from school: _____ Date of Return to school: _____

Reason for absence request: _____

Declaration

I confirm that the details given on this form are correct and that it is necessary for the absence to be taken during term time for the reason stated.

Signed: Date:
(Parent / Carer)

Name:
(Block Capitals Please)

For School Use

Application Granted		Application Denied	
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Signed: Date:

