

Signed.....*C. M. Knight*.....

Dated.....January 2021.....

Review.....November 2022.....

### **Woodford Valley C E Primary Academy** **Attendance Policy**

*This school is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, learning and love.*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Woodford Valley Primary Academy is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, learning and love. In order to promote this ethos we work in partnership with parents with the aim of achieving good attendance and punctuality.

We believe pupils can only take full advantage of their education if they attend school regularly and punctually. The Education Welfare Service has the responsibility to implement the statutory duties in relation to school attendance.

This policy takes note of the LEA Attendance Policy.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **Parents and Carers**

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Most parents choose to fulfil this responsibility by registering children at a school.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance. They must:

- ensure that their child arrives to school on time

*[School begins at 8.45 a.m. and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Any child arriving later than 8.45 a.m. should enter school via the main entrance reporting to the School Office. If accompanied, a parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register. The child will then be sent to their classroom. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, further action may be taken.]*

- work in partnership with School to help their child gain an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- work in partnership with School to reinforce policy on homework, behaviour and approach to learning
- work in partnership with School and other agencies to resolve issues relating to non attendance
- notify School if their child is absent and each day following until they return to school, and an explanation provided in writing when the child returns; if a written explanation isn't received a reminder will be issued
- avoid arranging medical or dental appointments during school
- avoid booking a family holiday during term time.

### School

At Woodford Valley, we support the good attendance of our pupils. We try to:

- maximise attendance rates
- support parents in ensuring regular and punctual attendance
- respond promptly to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- be sensitive to the needs of individual parents
- be sensitive to the needs of individual pupils
- ensure that up-to-date attendance data is available
- provide regular meetings between ourselves and the Education Welfare Service
- provide effective home/school liaison
- ensure the policy is monitored and evaluated.

Our Attendance numbers are as follows:

2019-2020	2020-2021
96%	97%

### Wiltshire Council

The Local Authority discharges its responsibility through Education Welfare Officers who will promote excellent attendance by:

- monitoring attendance registers
- advising on action to be taken by the school
- identifying areas of concern and of good practice
- accepting and managing referrals
- Offering training.

## ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

The school keeps a record of **everyone** in school at all times in order to adhere to safeguarding children legislation and fire safety regulations.

### Pupils

We are required to take an attendance register at the start of a morning session and once during the afternoon session.

Attendance registers are legal documents which may be required as evidence in court.

This school uses SIMS Attendance and the Admin Officer is responsible for keeping data up-to-date.

Teachers are required to mark the registers using the set of symbols as specified by the Education (pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Registers must be kept for three years.

### Staff

Staff members, working outside of their contracted hours, are required to sign into the book in reception.

### Visitors

Any visitors to the school are required to sign in at reception and a visitor's lanyard should be worn and be clearly visible at all times.

## Holidays in Term Time Penalty Notices

Parents do **not** have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday, but School may choose to grant leave of absence of up to 10 days in any school year in **special circumstances**, such as:

- for personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time (i.e. Armed Forces R&R) if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during and after a crisis (i.e. respite)
- the wedding of a family member
- family bereavement
- prison visits.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for longer planned absence. All such cases should be discussed with the Head Teacher, as a child who is absent longer than 10 days after an agreed return date can legally be removed from the school roll.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Head teacher.

Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **after** a decision has been made by the Head Teacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the special circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Holiday absence will not be authorised because of:

- availability of cheap holidays
- availability of desired accommodation, including time shares
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- overlap with beginning or end of term
- parents deeming the trip to be 'educational'
- parents' work commitments.

In considering whether or not to authorise leave for a family holiday, school will consider each case individually, taking into account a child's overall attendance and the reason for the holiday. The school will not authorise holidays taken in May as this is the time we assess pupils in school, and also at the beginning of the academic year. Leave of Absence forms can be obtained from the school office, and all requests should be submitted at least two weeks before the first day of intended absence.

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which we encourage parents to seek to avoid.

If an absence has not been authorised by the school and is taken, where the child's total unauthorised holiday absences amounts to **10 or more sessions (5 school days)**, continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year (including the most recent unauthorised holiday), schools are expected to notify the Education Welfare Service.

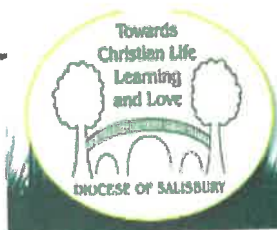
### **FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR POOR ATTENDANCE**

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
- unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence).

With effect from January 2005, Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence are available for use in Wiltshire. The school is expected to notify the Education Welfare Service if the total unauthorised holiday absences amounts to **10 or more sessions (5 school days)**,

The penalty notice shall be £120 if paid within 28 days. This shall be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Court action will commence if payment is not received within 28 days. The penalty is **per parent, per child**.



## Woodford Valley CE Primary Academy Absence/Holiday Request Form

**Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.**

Schools may agree up to 10 days holiday absence in **special circumstances** with consideration being given to pupil's attendance, attainment and public examinations. Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Circumstances which are notified to the school or Local Authority **after** a decision has been made by the Head Teacher will not be considered. Therefore please be certain to provide details of the special circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Please note; if 10 sessions (5 days) are taken, this request will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. Please read the Local Authority leaflet, printed on the back of this form, which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holidays during term time.

Name of child(ren)	
Date of birth	
Class	
Date of first day of absence	
Date of return	
Number of days requested	
Reason (delete as applicable)	HOLIDAY - WEDDING - BEREAVEMENT - FORCES R&R - PRISON VISIT - SCHOOL VISIT - EDUCATIONAL TRIP (Able Gifted & Talented)

I / we would like the Head Teacher to consider the above application

Signed.....Parent/ Guardian - Print  
Name..... Date:.....

**For office use only:**

Attendance%.....Total sessions pupil absent this academic year.....Total unauthorised absence this year.....

Approved  Rejected  Defer to Education Welfare officer

Reply Slip

Child's Name.....

Leave of absence APPROVED for.....days

Leave of absence NOT APPROVED  
(will be recorded as unauthorised)

Referred to Education Welfare Office

Signed Head teacher.....Date.....

## HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Dear Parents,

The following legislation will take effect at Woodford Valley Primary School from the week beginning 01/09/2010.

### **Holiday Absence**

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday. The law says that schools have the discretion to grant up to 10 days authorised holiday absence in a school year if:

- the parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the holiday; **and**
- there are special circumstances for the holiday.

### **What if the child is not going on holiday with the parent they usually live with?**

Whilst the application must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, there is no restriction on who takes the child on holiday. This is a matter for the parent, not the school. If the parent with whom the child normally lives does not apply for the holiday, this would be considered as unauthorised holiday absence and this parent would be liable to the issue of a Penalty Notice. Holiday absence cannot be authorised if anybody else applies for the holiday.

### **What is unauthorised holiday absence (Code G)?**

- A parent has made a request to a school for a holiday in term time and this has not been agreed by the school;
- A parent has not applied for holiday absence in advance of the holiday (the regulations do not allow retrospective approval); and
- If the parents keep the child away from school for longer than was agreed, the extra time is recorded as unauthorised.

### **In what circumstances could holiday absence be authorised? (Code H)**

Schools have the discretion to authorise up to 10 days absence in a school year in **special circumstances** for example:

- for personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time (i.e. Armed Forces R&R) if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during and after a crisis (i.e. respite).

### **In what circumstances should holiday absence not be authorised?**

- Availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation, including time shares
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- If the parents deem the trip to be 'educational'
- Due to parents' work commitments

### **Penalty Notices for unauthorised holiday absence**

If the holiday absence has not been authorised by the school and the holiday is taken, where the child's total unauthorised holiday absences amounts to **10 or more sessions (5 school days)**, continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year (including the most recent unauthorised holiday), schools are expected to notify the Education Welfare Service. The penalty notice shall be £100 if paid within 42 days. This shall be reduced to £50 if paid within 28 days. Court action will commence if payment is not received within 42 days.

### **Who receives a Penalty Notice?**

A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child named on the notification. In all cases this will be parent with whom the child lives. For absent parents, step-parents or partners it may be helpful to consider the following:

- With whom the child was on holiday?
- Was the absent parent aware of the holiday?
- Has the school sent a letter of refusal to all concerned?
- Does the absent parent have regular contact or live nearby?

### **Leave of absence not regarded as a 'holiday' (authorised code C, unauthorised code O).**

There may be other circumstances when a parent may request leave of absence for their child. These would not be classified as a 'holiday' but may involve some time away from home. Examples of these include:

- the wedding of a family member
- family bereavement
- prison visits.

Schools should consider each request individually taking the following into account:

- the nature of the event for which leave is sought
- its frequency (is it a one-off or likely to become a regular occurrence?)
- whether the parent has given advance notice
- the pupil's overall attendance.

Consideration should also be given to whether the family will need to travel during the absence. If the parent requests longer time than would appear reasonable the extra time could be classified as 'holiday'.

In some cultures specific religious occasions are very important (for example a child's first communion) and the family may want to return to their country of origin to celebrate this with family. Consideration should be given as to whether or not the absence is authorised due to 'special circumstances' and whether there is a 'holiday' aspect.

### **Medical treatment abroad (authorised code M, unauthorised code O)**

Some families return to their country of origin for medical or dental treatment for a number of reasons. In most cases doctors will provide a letter stating that a child has an appointment or is undergoing medical treatment. Consideration should be given to how long it would be reasonable to allow for travel and any time requested that is in excess of this could be classified as 'holiday'.