

WESTON ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bath and Mendip Partnership Trust

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Review Due:	October 2021
Last Review	October 2018
Applicable to:	Weston All Saints Primary School
Reviewed by:	AB

Rationale

Attendance at school is a legal requirement between the ages of 5 – 18 years. Young people are entitled to formal education during this phase of their lives. It is important that they receive their entitlement for their present and future lives and for the economic and well-being of society. Weston All Saints Primary School is responsible by law for making sure that registered pupils of compulsory age regularly attend their school. The Government also has a priority in reducing unnecessary absence from school.

It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance. Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school. Weston All Saints Primary School is committed to ensuring that all our families understand how important this is. We give 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 are concerns about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/ carers and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Policy Procedures

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order.

Registration at Weston All Saints Primary School

An electronic registration system (SIMS) is currently used to register pupils. The morning register is taken at 9.00am. All pupil arrivals after this point are treated as late.

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Procedures for following up absence / lateness

Pupils who arrive late (i.e after 9.00) should be registered as L

Pupils who arrive more than 30 minutes after the beginning of registration should be marked late after the register has closed for that session (code U).

A Pupil Signing in Late system is kept in the school office where the names of pupils will be logged by the office staff and used to check the pupils in the case of a fire.

Any absences are regarded as unauthorised absences if no satisfactory explanation is given in a note or by telephone by the parents/carers.

Parents or carers dropping pupils off late must report to Reception and explain the reasons for lateness. This is also recorded in the SIMS electronic system.

It is the responsibility of the parent / carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. This can be done by leaving a message on the answer phone or phoning when the school office opens at 8.45am or by email.

In any case a parent/ carer should contact prior to 9.30am.

If this contact is not made, the parent/carers is contacted. If this fails to provide an explanation for the absence a Senior Leader will be informed. A letter may be sent to the parents / carers. In the event of persistent non-attendance and non-response, the school will organise a meeting with regard to that pupil's attendance inviting parents and relevant professionals. The meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance. The plan will be reviewed to consider if targets have been met and attendance improved.

Authorised and unauthorised Absence

"Leave" in relation to a school means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school. The Executive Headteacher will only consider authorising an absence during term time where an application has been made in advance and where they are satisfied that there are exceptional or special circumstances to justify the request.

The DfE (2013) now state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. It is acknowledged that occasionally, due to individual needs, the Executive Headteacher may apply special consideration to requests for compassionate leave. It may be necessary for the school to ask the parent/ carer to provide the school with written evidence of the reason for absence e.g. appointment cards, medical certificate or a letter from the GP.

If there is an extended period of absence due to medical reasons the school may ask for permission of the parent/ carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

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Strategies for promoting attendance / punctuality

Attendance statistics are monitored by the Executive Headteacher and the Governing Body and reported to the local authority. The target for attendance is 97%. Opportunities to maintain awareness of the need for punctuality and attendance are made to parents via newsletters and the school website.

Parents will be kept informed of all concerns regarding their child's punctuality and attendance. Any issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, will be investigated by the school through meeting with the child and the parent(s). It is intended that, through positive discussion, a solution to improve attendance may be reached. Specific targets may be set for improvement.

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of School will monitor the completion of the registers and absence rates and will arrange for a letter is sent out to parents if a child is persistently absent from school.

Sanctions for persistent lateness and Non – Attendance

A referral can be considered to the Children Missing Education Service in line with the BaNES School Handbook for CMES.

A Penalty Notice can be considered for unauthorised leave of absence taken without permission after ten sessions (5 days of absence). It will be requested by the Executive Headteacher after consultation with the Chair of governors. A Penalty Notice can also be considered for any unauthorised absence where there is no justifiable cause. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice. The Local Authority may impose an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Contract or Parenting Order in certain circumstances.

Pupil absence monitoring procedure

1. ALL registers must be completed to the office by 9.15am
2. All absent pupils will be contacted on their first day of unexplained absence by a designated member of the administration team to seek a reason.
3. Records of late arrivals will be made in the 'sign in system' and on SIMS.
4. If the parent/carer has not responded to the text by 11am, a member of the Leadership Team will be informed.
5. On making contact with the pupil's family, they will be informed that for every day the pupil is absent without explanation the family must contact the school to inform them of the pupil's progress. If they do not, then the school will contact them each and every day of absence.
6. If the admin staff are unhappy with the reasons given for a pupil's absence then the Executive Headteacher or one of the Heads of School will be informed of any concerns and will follow up with the pupil's family.
7. At the end of each term, the Executive Headteacher and/or Heads of School will review attendance using reports from SIMS. It will be used to inform individual pupil's families of any patterns forming. The information will also be used to inform the Senior Leadership Team and School Governors.

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Punctuality

At 9.30 the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark (code U) that shows them to be on site, but arriving after the register has closed. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with one of the Heads of School to resolve the problem. Persistent lateness should be discussed with the Executive Headteacher or one of the Heads of School.

Reporting Non-Attendance

In addition to the procedures set out above, the school will report pupils' attendance and unauthorised absences to homes in accordance with the legal requirements outlined by the Government.

Roles

Families / those with parental responsibility will:

- Notify the school on each and every day of absence OR
- keep close contact with the school if a pupil is on extended leave due to ill health

Teachers will:

- Keep an accurate and up-to-date attendance register of their class (see details on marking the register above)
- Liaise with Admin staff over any queries
- Keep records of pupils who arrive late and note down any details in planning books
- Liaise with a senior member of staff about attendance concerns
- Inform office staff if they receive any communication that a pupil will need to leave the school premises part way through the day by prior arrangement e.g. for a medical appointment
- Discuss the impact of low attendance on learning with families at progress and review meetings where appropriate

Senior members of staff will:

- As and when the need arises, enable attendance and lateness to be discussed and appropriate action to be taken

Administrative staff will:

- Maintain a record of pupil attendance on the school's computer system
- Telephone /Text pupils' homes as necessary re attendance
- Keep records and inform outside agencies as necessary to comply with local and national policy and procedures
- Store messages / notes from home on SIMS.
- Send out attendance letters as instructed by the Executive Headteacher.
- Correct any inaccuracies which may occur in the attendance register outlined above (see "Following up absences")

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Additional Relevant Documents

E.g, different related documents or policies such as in Equalities, the equality in recruitment, Equality action plan etc

The BaNES Children Missing Education Service – Guidance for referral.

DfE School Attendance – Guidance (Sept. 2018)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Registration Codes

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APPENDIX 1

Registration codes

Code Description

- / Present (AM)
- \ Present (PM)
- B Educated off site (NOT Dual reg)
- C Other Authorised Circumstances
- D Dual registration (attending other estab)
- E Excluded (no alternative provision made)
- F Extended family holiday (agreed)
- G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess)
- H Family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness (NOT med/dental appointments)
- J Interview
- L Late (before registers closed)
- M Medical/Dental appointments
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- O Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code)
- P Approved sporting activity
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller absence
- U Late (after registers closed)
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience
- X Non-compulsory school age absence
- Y Enforced closure
- Z Pupil not on roll
- # School closed to pupils