



**WOOD END
INFANT SCHOOL**

Statutory Policy

Attendance Policy

Policy to be signed off by the Full Governing Board	
Policy last ratified and adopted by Full Governing Body	03/06/2019
Policy / Document due for review	06/2020

Matthew Jeatt Chair of Governors 03/06/2019

Attendance Policy

As a school we aim to maintain:

- An attendance rate of a minimum of 96%
- Parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- Good time keeping
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child¹

Good attendance is important because:

Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement.

If children attend regularly then they:

- Settle into school more easily.
- Find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Find learning more satisfying.
- Gain confidence

Parents can help their children by:

- Ensuring they attend school regularly. Absence should only happen when a child is significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend school, or if there is an unforeseen emergency causing unavoidable absence.
- Arranging all medical and dental appointments (wherever possible) out of school hours or during school holidays. If this is not possible, bringing the child to school prior to, or after the appointment.
- Reporting the absence on the first day giving the reason. This can be done on the dedicated absence line 0208 422 5182 or via email: admin@woodendfirst.ealing.school.uk.
- Keeping the school updated if a child has any extended period of absence.
- Informing the school of any planned medical procedures as soon as possible.
- Making sure that all contact numbers are up to date.

We shall:

- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality in school assemblies.
- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as necessary.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in our newsletters, via the school website and the Home-School agreement.
- Regularly monitor every child's attendance and meet with parents where necessary.

¹ Article 3 – Every child's best interests must be at the heart of everything that affects them.

Article 6 – Every child has the right to life and to achieve their full potential.

Article 28 – Every child has the right to learn and go to school.

Article 29 – Every child has the right to be the best that they can be.

- Report attendance levels to the school’s Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Carry out home visits to ascertain reasons for absence
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Publish every child’s attendance rate on their annual school report.
- Make a referral to the School’s Local Authority allocated Educational Welfare Officer, if we continue to have concerns about a child’s attendance. The Educational Welfare Officer visits the school regularly to review and support attendance issues.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences” for example if a child is ill. Where there are concerns about a child’s attendance, we shall ask for evidence of illness in the form of a GP appointment card, or a copy of any prescribed medication.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

• Waiting for a delivery	• Going for a family day out
• Sleeping in after a late night	• Going shopping or for a hair cut
• Celebrating a child’s birthday	• Holiday during term time

Where there is no explanation for an absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory, absence will be recorded as ‘unauthorised’.

If there are ongoing concerns regarding a child’s attendance and/or punctuality, you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to discuss the situation. You will be asked to enter into a Parenting Contract which is legally binding.²

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action.

Persistent Absence

Once a child’s attendance falls to 90% he/she is automatically defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as a Persistent Absentee irrespective of the reason for absence.

Such attendance is well below our expectations and as such, the school will work in partnership with the Local Authority and parents to improve matters. In such cases, parents will be asked to enter into a Parenting Contract.

Persistent absence is a serious problem for children. Much of the work that they miss when they are absence from school is never made up. Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement.

² Article 4 – The government must make sure that all these rights are available to all children.

Punctuality

For children in reception, year 1 and year 2 school starts at **8.55 a.m.**, children must be on the school site ready to enter the cloakroom by this time. The cloakroom doors to years 1 and 2 will be closed at 9 a.m., the Reception gate will be closed at 9.05 a.m. Children who attend morning sessions at the Nursery should be at school at 8.45 a.m. Children who attend Nursery in the afternoon should be at school at 12.45 p.m.

It is important to be on time, the first part of the school day is used to discuss activities and organise schoolwork for the rest the day. If your child misses this short but vital session, their learning for the whole day will be affected.

Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for the child who is late. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.

Arrival after the close of registration may be marked with an unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance. All lateness is recorded daily.

Monitoring of late arrival in school:

The Attendance Officer collates a record of late children every day. This information will be passed to their class teacher and is discussed at pastoral meetings.

- When a pupils is late 3 times in a half term a letter will be sent home.
- When a pupil is late 4 times in a half term a meeting with the Attendance Officer will be made to explore the circumstances leading to the late arrival in school.
- When a pupil is late 4 times in a half term a meeting with the Head teacher will take place. When a pupil is late 6 times or more in a half term the school will refer them to the Educational Social Worker (ESW) at Ealing.

Please collect children promptly at the end of the school day. Children in reception, year 1 or year 2 who have not been collected within 20 minutes of the end of the school day (within 15 minutes for nursery children) will be placed in the after school club and parents will be charged for the session. Where late collection is persistent, this may be shared with other agencies. If a child has not been collected after a significant amount of time, then Children's Services/the Police will be contacted. Please see the school's Child Protection Policy for full details.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of term time leave/family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off during term time. Leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body.

Only in an exceptional circumstance will term time leave be authorised, this is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence during term-time, need to complete a form which is available from the school office. Permission must be sought at least 2 weeks in advance and before booking tickets or making travel arrangements.

It is recognised that some religious events occur during term time. As an inclusive school the decision has been made to allow each child 2 day's leave for the purpose of religious observance. The days of observance that this applies to are those detailed on www.egfl.org.uk/religion. An application for leave must be made in advance in order for the leave to be authorised.³

³ Article 14 – Every child has the right to follow their own religion while respecting other peoples'

If term time leave is granted and the agreed return date has been delayed, evidence will be required to support the reasons for the late return.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission granted by the school, the absence will be unauthorised and the parent may be liable for a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action from the Local Authority. In certain instances the child may be removed from the school roll.

If a child is not present at the beginning of a school term and we have not received any information regarding their absence, we cannot guarantee that a place will remain available on their return to school

Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child, creating gaps in their learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress, can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 2 to go to Junior School) parents are asked to complete a leavers/exit form which is available from the school office. If a form is not completed then your child will be declared as a 'Child Missing Education'.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and we do not have information about where they have gone, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try and locate your child. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.⁴

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the DfE and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents are prosecuted or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if these absences continue.

At Wood End Infants we value parents support in helping the school to maintain the high standards to which we always aspire.

Rewards for good attendance

Children are rewarded for good attendance in the following way:

- Weekly attendance prizes in assembly
 - All classes that achieve 97% attendance or higher will receive a trophy.
 - A reward for any class with 100% attendance in a week.
- Sending postcards home to celebrate improved attendance and/or punctuality.
- Every child who achieves 100% attendance with 100% punctuality for the school year is awarded a prize at the end of the academic year.

⁴ Article 19 – Every child has the right not to be harmed by anyone or anything.

- 100% attendance includes a discretionary 2 days leave for religious observance.
- Prizes of a lesser value will be awarded to children who only miss 1 session (either a morning or afternoon session) throughout the school year, or to those who achieve 100% attendance with less than 5 lates. Children who join the school after the October half-term and achieve 100% attendance and 100% punctuality will also receive a prize.
- The range of prizes will be chosen by the School Council every year.