

The Welbeck Federation of Schools



Attendance Policy

September 2024

Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Late for school and Unauthorised late.

Netherfield Infant and Nursery School

Start of the day 8.45 register close 9.05
8.55 - 9.05 (L) late
after 9.05 (U) unauthorised late

Eastlands Junior school

Start of the school day 8.50 register close 9.10
8.50 -9.10 (L)
after 9.10 (U) unauthorised late

- 2.2 Authorised absence

If your child is ill or unable to attend school for some reason, you should contact the school office by phone to notify them on,

Netherfield Infant school and Nursery

01623 842683

Eastland Junior School

01623 842257

Depending on the reasons for absence, the Executive Head Teacher will decide whether the absence can be authorised or not. Where the child already

has poor attendance, medical evidence may be required and subsequently illness may only be authorised for a maximum of two days.

2.3 Unauthorised absence

Absence from school is likely to be recorded as unauthorised absence when:

- There is no parental explanation
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation for an absence.
- The child already has poor attendance (90% or below).
- The child is absent due to holidays.

In any of these situations, you could face prosecution.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will leave the register blank. The staff will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian and ensure the correct mark is recorded.
- 3.2 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.3 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then immediately be in contact with the parent or guardian in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. in exceptional circumstances. We expect parents and carers to contact the school at least a week in advance, and it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether this request will be authorised or not.
- 4.2 **Holidays cannot be authorised.**
A penalty notice will be issued to parents taking pupils out for a holiday in term time. Education penalty notices have now been capped nationally to two fines within any 3-year period. In the event of a third absence that meets the threshold for a penalty notice, any other action, such as a parenting order or prosecution could be issued. This could lead to prosecution or a fine of up to £2,500.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to support the child with their education.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the family support services and Health Related Education Team.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to meet with the attendance lead and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve the school will be referred through Early Help services via an EHAF form.
- 6.2 Thresholds for school attendance referrals is 90% or below for primary schools, an identified pattern of absence e.g. every Friday or a sudden change in attendance without explanation. Ten sessions unauthorised in ten week period will result in a penalty notice and consequent fine. An unpaid fine may result in a referral to the magistrates' court.
- 6.3 Requirements of school prior to a referral. As a minimum in the six weeks prior to making a referral to Targeted Support for an attendance issue school will have:
 - Identified an issue with attendance and decided upon the need for intervention to improve attendance (First letter when children reach 90% or below). The child's attendance will be monitored and after a two-week period with no improvement, a second letter will be sent out.
 - The child and their parents/carers will be spoken to about the poor attendance, sharing and explaining the attendance record.
 - Parents/carers will be written to as a follow on from the conversations above outlining the attendance issue.
 - After a further two weeks of monitoring, parents and carers will be invited into school to discuss the attendance issue and further action will be agreed i.e. a referral being made.

School will record all their interventions with families regarding school attendance. Notes will be timely (made within 3 days of the intervention) dated and signed as they may be used in legal proceedings as evidence. Referral will made in line with NCC Targeted Support Service.

6.4 Children absent from Education.

The attendance lead manages and maintains appropriate safeguarding arrangements when children are absent from education, in accordance with KCSIE 2024, Children absent from education paragraph 175 and the attendance Working together document. This includes information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points.

6.5 Responsibility for attendance

Overall responsibility for Attendance

Mrs J Rischer (EHT) / Mrs S Graham (EHT/HoS)

Attendance Lead Miss B Butler (AHT)

Attendance Governor Mrs S Thomas

- 6.6 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Weekly attendance awards/mentions are presented each Friday to the class which achieves the best attendance. Attendance certificates are given to those children who have 100% for each standalone half term. Certificates are also given for improved attendance. There are special awards for any child who has 100% attendance for a whole year.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The DFE sets attendance targets each year. Targets are currently set at 97%.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Executive Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the Headteacher's report to governors.

- 9.4 The school office, with support from the class teachers, will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, the office will contact parents/carers immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually, or earlier if considered necessary