

# WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

2018- 2021



**Date Approved:** Autumn 2018

**Date for Review:** Autumn 2021

**Responsibility:** Full Governing Body & Head Teacher

**Approved By:**

## WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

#### Values

At Wexham Court we recognise that attendance and punctuality are key school improvement issues and they have a direct relationship with the attainments of individual and group of students. We run a progressive curriculum which relies on children pulling through the learning from the previous day and it is for this reason that our school actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all our children. The Governors and school believes, that to achieve this target we need work as a three way partnership with parents, the school and the children working together and communicating.

#### Aims:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education and due to this we firmly believe that children should be in school every day. We aim:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To monitor attendance and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
- To acknowledge and celebrate a successful record of attendance.
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school from all staff
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parent and pupils
- To ensure that all stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To work effectively with other services and agencies to support these objectives

#### **1. Procedures**

Class registers are recorded using sims. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. (See appendix 1 for the school timings). Once the register has been submitted by the teacher, sims is closed down. Any child who arrives after this time is classed as late and has to go to the school office so they can be marked as present in the register. Afternoon registers are also submitted in the same way.

We understand that if your child is unwell they will not be able to attend school. If your child is absent as a result of illness, you should phone the school on 01753 524989 on the first day of the absence, and leave a message on the pupil absence line. When your child is well enough to return to school you must also provide a written explanation for the absence, which will be kept on file in the school office.

Absences due to illness, religious observation and certain medical appointments, for which we receive an explanation, are given an authorisation code in the registers. Although we strongly advise any medical and dental appointments to be made outside of school hours, we also assume that on the odd occasion when this is not possible, the child is only taken out of school for the appointment and then returned to continue their lessons as soon as possible. Absences, for which we receive no explanation, remain as unauthorised absences in the registers. It is the school's policy to phone/text parents to discuss any unexplained absences.

Should a parent wish to take their children out of school for any reason during term time, the request must be placed in writing by our 'Request for absence in term time application form'. You can obtain a copy from either the school office or download it from the school website. Some requests for very exceptional reasons may be authorised, but all parents making the request will be interviewed by the Head teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership team.

Parents occasionally request the Head Teacher to authorise absences for family holidays. In line with the Local and National Government guidance, the Governing body and Head teacher at Wexham Court Primary School have instructed that no holiday absence be authorised. School is closed for sufficient weeks each year for families to make arrangements to take holidays that do not impact on their child's education.

Any absences either side of the school holidays will result in a thorough investigation and medical evidence may be required. Any unauthorised absences may also result in a fixed Penalty Notice being issued, whereby each parent is fined £120.00 per child, but if paid within 21 days is reduced to £60.00 per child per parent, which takes effect on the fifth day of absence.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

## **2. Monitoring**

All absences are monitored. High levels of unauthorised absences, regular days off or long periods of absences will be investigated by the school's Attendance Officer. Parents may be requested to come to an Attendance Panel to discuss how together we can improve the child's absence record.

The school defines anything below 97% as a concern and therefore a member of SLT may approach parents to discuss the child's attendance.

Our internal monitoring may also identify one or more specific groups of pupils at the school who have a level of absence higher than the national average for that group, which will result in the school taking appropriate action. Our internal monitoring focuses on, amongst others, the following groups:

- Looked after children
- Free school meal eligibility
- Gender
- Year groups
- First language
- Ethnicity
- SEN

## **3. Persistent Absence definition**

A pupil will be considered to be persistently absent if he/she is away for over 10% of school sessions in an academic year. When our internal monitoring identifies any pupils who breach the annual threshold defining persistence absence, then their parents will be asked to attend a meeting with a member of SLT, in order that the attendance can be improved. If the schools feels it necessary or where there are other areas of concern, we may contact external agencies, such as the Early Help services. The Governing body may also be advised to set a target to reduce the percentage of persistent absence at the school the following academic year. We firmly believe that persistent absence has a negative effect on a child's educational welfare and impacts adversely on their later life.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 Parents:**

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their child receives their entitlement to their education. This is done by parents:

- Ensuring that their child comes to school on time, every day.
- Calling the school on the first day's absence to explain absence.
- Providing a written explanation for the absence.
- Promoting a good attitude towards school and attendance.
- Working in partnership with the school to improve their child's attendance, when necessary.

### **4.2 Class teacher:**

- To ensure the daily registers are taken, effectively and efficiently twice a day.
- To discuss individual attendance and punctuality targets at parents evening.
- To ensure any communication from parents is passed to the school attendance officer promptly.
- To ensure quality first teaching every day, with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that children are challenged and inspired.
- To regular remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To establish good and effective communication links with parent/carers.
- To promptly inform the SLT of pupils who persist with poor attendance.

### **4.3 Attendance officer:**

- To carry out and record the outcome of the first days calls.
- To check the school answer phone and take message from parents.
- To monitor and record weekly/half-termly class attendance and inform phase leader of this data.

- To promptly inform the Head teacher, if there are any concerns.
- To carry out monthly individual attendance for each pupil and give information to the Head teacher
- To implement to daily checking of Sims.
- To undertake monthly meetings with the Head Teacher to discuss any concerns, which may result in sending out letters.
- To report to the Local Authority as requested.
- To record holiday requests.

#### **4.4 Head Teacher:**

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave.
- To consider the use of penalty notices.
- To lead on responsibility for attendance and punctuality.
- To oversee the analysis of the weekly, monthly, termly, yearly data and respond to findings.
- To liaise with external agencies such as EWO where necessary.
- To work with teachers to ensure that all relevant information is shared and that they are promoting good attendance.
- To revise and amend the policy as required.
- To meet with School Attendance Officer to discuss concerns.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- To meet with parents of persistent absences.

#### **4.5 Strategies for promoting /rewarding excellent attendance**

- Star of the week for attendance in assembly
- Weekly school newsletter
- Breakfast club
- The school learning environment
- Staff promoting good attendance
- End of term attendance certificates
- End of year attendance rewards
- Developing healthy competition between classes/ Year groups
- Parent/ teacher consultations

## Appendix – Start/Finish Times

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Listed below are the official start and finish times for both Lower and Upper Primary, Nursery and Reception classes.

### **NURSERY:**

**Morning session:** 8.45am to 11.45am (the gate will close 15 minutes after the start time and 15 minutes before the finish time)

**Afternoon session:** 12.30pm to 3.30pm (the gate will close 15 minutes after the start time and 15 minutes before the finish time)

### **RECEPTION:**

The doors open at 9am for the children to begin school and finish at 3.00pm

### **LOWER PRIMARY:**

9.00am to 3.20pm: the first bell will ring at 8.55am for the children to line up, the Teachers meet the children. Doors will close at 9.00am

### **UPPER PRIMARY:**

8.45am – 3.10pm: the bell will ring at 8.40am for the children to line up the, Teachers meet the children. Doors will close at 9.00am

This is a true version signed by

Miss N Mehat Headteacher

Signed:

Date:

Review date: