

Wentworth Primary School

Attendance Policy

Date of Policy: April 2019

Date of next review: April 2021



Achieving Happily

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Wentworth Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. We expect pupils to attend school every day when the school is open as it is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

The school has a very good level of attendance. Kent County Council have confirmed that our attendance rate is within the top (best) quintile of Ofsted attendance performance measurement. This has been achieved through the careful monitoring of attendance and communicating effectively with parents, the importance of regular attendance.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental for a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use termly and annual awards to promote good attendance.

The Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents, have a duty to promote full attendance at Wentworth Primary School.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them.

Parents are expected to sign 'The Wentworth Deal', (Appendix 1), before their child starts school, stating that parents agree to ensure that their child attends school every day appropriately dressed, on time and ready to learn.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent by **9.30am**. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

School Responsibility

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each morning and at the beginning of the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher notifies the Headteacher of children whose attendance is causing concern.

Registration Times

School opens at 8.55am with doors closing at 9.00am for registration

Afternoon Registration for Foundation/KS1 is 1.00pm

Afternoon Registration for KS2 is 1.10pm

Lateness

Pupils arriving after registration time must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded on the Entry Screen.

The pupil will be marked as late before 9.05am (Code 'L').

Pupils arriving after 9.05am will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness will be discussed with parents and where necessary will be followed up by formal letters. It can provide grounds for prosecution or Penalty Notice.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided by 9.30am, parents are then contacted on the first day of absence
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence with a ten school day reply deadline before the absence is unauthorised
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)

School system for monitoring attendance

- Above 95% attendance – class teacher to monitor and notify the Headteacher of any concerns

Persistent Absenteeism

- Below 95% attendance – monitored through attendance meetings, discussions with parents, school intervention letters, and involvement of the Family Liaison Officer and School Liaison Officer if necessary, where the absences have not been authorised and referral criteria is met.

Absences from School

If a child is absent from school, due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent), parents/carers must notify the school by telephone on the first day of absence by 9.30am.

If a child is going to be absent for medical or dental appointments etc... - parents/carers should inform the school in advance in writing or by telephoning the School Office.

Where there has been no communication from parents, the school will request reasons for absence via letter. Parents will have a 10 school day reply deadline to provide a valid reason before the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence. Where there is doubt, the Headteacher, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation, a letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (leave) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will **not** be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Treats
- Parent being ill

Where there is no improvement to a pupil's attendance and/or there is at least 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence in a term (Autumn/Spring/Summer) the school will consider the following:

School Liaison Officer

This may include:

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Sign posting to supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services and Early Help.

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance

- Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct.
- A warning letter will be sent by the Attendance Service setting out the requirement that there should be 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Requests for Leave of Absence/Holiday

Under education law parents may request leave of absence from school. However schools can only consider this in exceptional circumstances. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional circumstances are rare, significant, unavoidable and short and by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Even if there are exceptional circumstances, leave of absence will not be authorised if:

- The child is in need of timetabled support
- Absence is during the month of September and May (SATs)
- The absence is during examination periods

It is important to stress that parents have no statutory right to remove a child from school during term time.

Where parents continue with their planned holiday despite it being unauthorised we follow the advice stated in the KCC Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from 1st January 2016 and revised in April 2017, Section 4.2; unauthorised term time leave (including leave for family holiday): Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave of 10 or more morning and afternoon sessions during any 100 possible school sessions or 50 school days, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances) may receive a penalty notice.

Wentworth Primary School are committed to increase and thereby improve academic achievement levels of our children, hence the strict procedure we follow when assessing applications for leave. This adheres to the directive given to schools by the Department of Education.

Unauthorised Leave of Absence

- Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Kent County Council's Inclusion and Attendance Service Code of Conduct
- A request to issue a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of 10 or more school sessions (5 days) during any 100 possible school sessions or 50 school days will be sent to the Attendance Service
- The Attendance Service will issue Penalty Notice(s) (one per parent per child)
- If Penalty Notice(s) is/are not paid within 28 days of issue, the Attendance Service may instigate court proceedings

Children Missing Education

No child will be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Kent County Council's Inclusion and Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority Guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school have failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form has been requested by another school

Late Collection from School

Children should be collected on time at the end of the school day at 3.15pm for all pupils. Teachers will remain at their exit point with the children until 3.25pm. At this time they will be brought to the school office and registered as being late to be collected. We realise that occasionally children can be collected late for a variety of reasons. Please let us know in advance by telephone if you think you will be late to collect your child or you have made arrangements with an alternative adult to collect your child.

If your child has not been collected by 3.45pm **and we have not heard from you**, we may phone Children's Services to seek advice.

If a pattern of late collection starts to develop you will be given a warning letter. Any further late collections following the issue of a warning letter will result in your child taken to our after school club, for which you will be required to pay for a full session on collection of your child.

P. Langridge
Headteacher

R. Rich
Attendance Secretary

P. Hill
Family Liaison Officer

The Wentworth Deal
Our Charter for Pupils
'Achieving Happily'

There are a number of key skills and attributes we feel you need to develop during your time at Wentworth.
We want you to be;

- Happy, confident, independent and healthy.
- Successful, responsible, honest and reliable.
- Positive in your attitude.
- Tolerant, open-minded and prepared to take risks.
- Communicative, organised and creative.

To learn effectively, you need to be a good listener, have a thirst for knowledge, be reflective of your own learning, be prepared to persevere and to accept both success and failure. This will ensure you are a well-rounded, thoughtful, resourceful and responsive individual.

To be good citizens we want you to be respectful, kind, caring, considerate, friendly, sociable and well-mannered with an optimistic outlook.

If we can share these ideals and work as a team, you will be ready for the next stage of your life.

To help you develop these skills and attributes the staff of Wentworth Primary School will whenever possible;

- Keep you safe.
- Seek to know each of you well enough to understand your learning needs.
- Have high expectations of you in your work and behaviour, providing you with clear consistent rules and boundaries supported by rewards and sanctions.
- Provide you with purposeful, engaging and interesting lessons and diverse opportunities that make your learning and school life fun.
- Encourage you to have a say and be listened to.
- Treat you fairly with justice, respect and consideration.
- Value you as individuals and celebrate your achievements.
- Give you our support and encouragement, including feedback that will help you improve even further.

What do we expect from you, the pupils?

For you;

- To attend every day, appropriately dressed, on time and ready to learn.
- To do your best and take a pride in all you do.
- To be aware of, understand and respect school rules and to be well mannered.
- To be organised, enquiring and responsive.
- To develop independence.
- To listen and to engage in learning (including homework).
- To be honest and to respect people and the environment.

How can the parents of our children support us?

By;

- Working with us as partners, recognising we have the interests of the children at heart.
- Recognising our decisions are in the best interests of the child and the school community as a whole.
- Having trust and developing positive communication.
- Ensuring children are rested and fed, attend school and are punctual.
- Informing staff of important health/social issues and to attend meetings and specialist appointments
- Encouraging Independence.
- Providing the correct resources, supporting homework and promoting home learning.

How can we support the parents of our children?

By;

- Ensuring our communications to you are clear and concise.
- Keeping you informed and running workshops to support your understanding of the learning process.
- Being open, honest and friendly.
- Speaking to you in a sensitive manner, demonstrating understanding.
- Demonstrating our knowledge of your child as an individual.
- Celebrating your child's achievements with you through direct contact with home.
- Ensuring our website is up to date and informative.

How can our Governing Body support us?

By;

- Providing a strategic (not operational) overview.
- Showing trust and support.
- Having positive involvement and a high profile.
- Communicating clearly with us.
- Linking with subjects and/or classes.
- Having an agreed programme of visits and discussions with staff.
- Having a good knowledge of the staff and the organisation of the school.
- Having a good understanding of the progress and attainment the children make.
- By supporting the school to develop further.

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'The Wentworth Deal'

I confirm I have read and understood the contents of The Wentworth Deal.

Signed

Parent/carers name

Date

I confirm I have read and understood the contents of The Wentworth Deal.

Child's name

Class

Signed

Date