

Woodsetton School



# Attendance, Registration of Pupils & Absence policy

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2023

The next anticipated review date will be September 2024.

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## **Introduction**

We expect all children on roll to attend full-time, every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school. At Woodsetton 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.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- act early to address patterns of absence
- parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- all pupils to be punctual to their lessons

Under the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) Regulations 1995](#) and the [Department for Education Guidance on School Attendance 2022](#), 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.

## **Principles of Admission and Attendance Registration**

The admission register must include all pupils, regardless of their age, on this register along with the date of admission/readmission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

The admission and attendance register must be a live document and children must be registered from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. The governing body of a school can delegate the keeping of the register to the executive headteacher. The register must be kept and updated daily by appropriate school staff. The attendance register must be available for inspection on the school premises.

**Every amendment** made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

## **Responsibilities**

The school's attendance register will be kept by the executive headteacher Mr David Stanton. The attendance register itself will be kept and updated daily by Miss Georja Cox and monitored by Mrs Sarah Allen for Safeguarding purposes.

## Inspection of registers

The attendance register of every school must be available for inspection during school hours by:

- any of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in England appointed under section 1(2) of the Education Act 2005
- any additional inspector assisting the Chief Inspector in accordance with paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 1 to that Act
- in the case of a school maintained by a local education authority, any officer of the local education authority authorised for that purpose

## When the register will be taken

The school must take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session.

The school is not required to take additional attendance registers in individual lessons or before and after-school sessions.

## What format the register will be kept in

The school will keep the register on a computer system using Integris.

Back-up copies of the attendance register will be made at least once a month in an electronic or printed copy.

## How long the register will be kept for

All entries in the attendance register will be kept for at least 3 years from the date on which the entry was made. All back-up copies of the register will be kept for at least 3 years after the end of the relevant school year.

## Contents of Attendance Register

Each time the register is taken, the school will record whether each pupil is:

- Present
- Absent, and if the pupil is of compulsory school age, whether or not this absence was authorised
- Attending an approved educational activity, and if the pupil is of compulsory school age, the nature of this activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances, and the nature of those circumstances

The school will use the DfE's absence and attendance codes to record this information in a way that complies with the legislation and is in-keeping with the school census system.

## Attendance codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

## Absence codes

### Authorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances authorised by the school
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on a holiday due to exceptional circumstances following the completion, well in advance of a Holiday Request Form
I	Illness	School has been notified that pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment. Wherever possible, appointments should be made out of school hours.
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

### Unauthorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school. If a <b>Parent has not applied for a leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.</b>
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when reason emerges)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

### Administrative codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school <i>*Amendment for COVID-19 – see below</i>	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend. (This code is not counted as an absence in the school census) DFE 2022
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to local authority provided travel or a local / national emergency which has resulted in widespread disruption to travel. It can also be used if a pupil is in custody (detained for less than four months) unless attending educational activities as part of this when a B Code can then be used.
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to, for example, half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

**\*In line with our transition to living with COVID-19 and the latest public health advice, we are no longer recording pupils who are not attending school because of COVID-19 using Code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus). Where a pupil is not attending because they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a positive test we will record this using Code I (illness) unless another more appropriate code applies.**

**Schools no longer need to record pupils who do not attend for reasons related to COVID-19, using Code X**

### **Pupils who miss part of a session**

If a pupil leaves school after registration, the school will still record them as present at registration, as they will still count as present for statistical purposes.

There is no minimum time that a pupil has to be in school to be recorded as attending, so long as they're there during registration.

### **Who can take the register**

The school will decide which staff members can take the attendance register.

There is no requirement for the attendance register to be taken by a teacher, therefore other staff members such as teaching assistants and external cover staff may take the attendance register.

### **Definitions**

#### **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

#### **If a child is absent**

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

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 be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

#### **Requests for leave of absence**

##### **Leave of absence in term time**

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional reasons, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the head teacher (not the local authority) or his/her designate may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing. Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused

or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the local authority may be requested. When requesting a penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within a 12-month period.

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 where a parent may wish to request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a significant event. Visiting family members of routine or religious observance is not deemed a significant event. We expect parents to contact the school **at least a week in advance**. Consideration will be given, but leave is usually granted in exceptional circumstances. What is exceptional is at the executive Head teacher's discretion.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from school for up to ten days for an annual holiday. Since September 2013 there have been significant changes to attendance regulations for pupils at school. The Department for Education has instructed thus:

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'

**In this context 'exceptional circumstance' shall mean significant emotional, educational, cultural and/or spiritual value to the child or children, which outweigh(s) the loss of teaching time.** It will be important to review each case individually and parents and carers who wish to request annual leave for 'exceptional circumstances' will need to apply in writing to the Head teacher. For pupils who are 'Looked After' by a Local Authority the school, Social Worker and Supervising Social Worker must all support the absence.

Again, it should be noted that from September 2013 regulations allow local authorities to impose penalty fines for parents and carers who take their child out of school during term time in unauthorized circumstances.

### **Repeated unauthorised absences**

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 visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LEA, 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.

### **Rewards for good attendance**

All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special certificates and prizes for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year.

## **Attendance targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

## **Children who are absent from education (formally Child Missing Education (CME))**

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions school. It is reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person.

Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated. Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education. We must therefore notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided. Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

If a child is not in school for ten consecutive days and contact cannot be made with parents to verify the well-being and whereabouts of the child, or there is no proof as to the well-being or whereabouts of the

child, the school will deem this as CME and notify the EIS and Local Authority Safeguarding Team. This may lead to a police investigation as it will be viewed as a safeguarding matter. The Local Authority will take action as necessary to ensure the well-being of the child.

### **Home educated children**

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home. Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education, but this does not have to be at a school.

### **Full and Part-Time Attendance**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they can request an annual report from the head teacher. Attendance figures are in each term's governors' report written by the Head teacher. 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 them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be. The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years. The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the termly governors' report.

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, they will contact the school office immediately. For any pupil on a Child Protection Plan their social worker will be contacted when they are absent.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.