



# Attendance Guide

The information that you need to ensure that you can support your child in achieving good attendance and ensure they gain the greatest benefit from their education.

# What is good attendance?

At Welbourne Primary Academy we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best.

Although we aim for 100% attendance, each year we set a target for attendance & this is used to compare us to other schools nationally. Our current target is 96% attendance.

Attending school every day will help give your child the best possible start in life.

Going to school every day means:

- learning new skills
- making friends
- having lots of fun
- building lasting relationships
- taking part in exciting activities

You can help us to help your child by encouraging regular school attendance.

Regular attendance helps children to develop their confidence and to make and keep **lasting friendships**.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

# Holidays

## PLEASE THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE TAKING YOUR CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

In law you must ask for permission for your children to miss school.

Leave in term time will only be agreed where the **Head teacher feels there are exceptional circumstances**. Also, it is possible that leave will not be agreed when attendance already includes unauthorised absence and/or attendance is already causing concern.

You can request “leave in term time” for your child using a request form available at the School Office. A meeting will then be arranged for you to discuss this request with Miss Lawson, the attendance lead.

Parents who take a child of compulsory school age on holiday without permission from the school may be issued with a penalty notice.

# Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. It is also extremely disruptive for the rest of their class. Your child can miss work and vital information and news for the day. The school day starts at 8.50am. Your child should be in class by that time. Registers are marked by 9.00am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 9.20 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

# Illness

If your child is saying they do not feel well and you are unsure about whether it warrants a day off, please send them to school. If they are truly ill we will ring you.

Use common sense when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
- Would I take a day off work if I had this condition?

If your child is genuinely too ill to attend school the following procedure must be followed:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Leave a message on the absence line, with your child's name and explanation for absence. If we require further information, we will contact you;

**If the above procedure is not followed we will:**

- Telephone or email you on the first day of absence
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with us;
- Take legal action if there are persistent absences, which may be in the form of Penalty Notices issued to each parent/carer for each child.

## Medical Appointments

If your child **has** to have a medical or dental appointment in **school time** please do your best to have it after 2PM and then your child can have their registration mark for the afternoon before you pick them up. If it needs to be a morning appointment please try and bring them to school first to get their mark and then return them to school afterwards.

### AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED?

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. You will be asked to provide evidence of appointments or illnesses to enable us to classify the absence as authorised.

The Department for Education guidance states “if the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intentions. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards etc. rather than a doctor’s note.

Please can you share any evidence you may have at the school office as this will enable us to code your child’s absence correctly.

# School Policy and Procedure

Pupil attendance will be closely monitored. The class teacher, Deputy Head and School administrator will check pupil attendance percentages regularly to see if action is required.

First Response calls will be made daily if a child does not attend school.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility.

Classes are encouraged to compete for the best attendance in a weekly attendance race. The winning class is rewarded with extra play- time and attendance bands.

Individual attendance is rewarded at the end of each term whereby children that have achieved 100% attendance for that term will receive a bronze, silver or gold attendance band.

Each year, children that have achieved over 96% will take part in a 'celebration' afternoon.

If overall attendance drops below 96%, an attendance letter will be sent home to inform you that action needs to be taken. If attendance continues to fall, you will be invited to attend a meeting with Miss Lawson (attendance lead) to identify ways in which we can work together to make improvements.

If attendance drops to 90% pupils are identified as 'Persistent Absentees'. A formal letter will be issued to parents/carers about their child's attendance record.

Persistent absentee cases will be closely monitored to see if further action is required. This could lead to sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.