



Westwood First School,
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Headteacher: Mrs V. Woollacott

17th October 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Attendance and Punctuality

As you are aware, it has been a difficult few years due to Covid restrictions. This has had a huge impact on children's education and mental health. With this in mind, and whilst we recognise that there are times when children are too ill to attend school, we need to ensure that every child's attendance is as good as possible.

Going to school regularly and arriving on time is important for your child's future as it will enable them to achieve to the best of their ability and gain the GCSE grades they require for their future chosen career path. As well as this, going to school helps to develop social skills, life skills, cultural awareness, and friendships.

Impact on learning

Research shows that children who have lower levels of attendance achieve lower standards in reading, writing and maths at the end of Year 6 and in their GCSEs. For example, children whose attendance was 95.3%, across Years 3,4,5 and 6, did not achieve the expected standard at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and maths in 2019. At GCSE level, 17 days absent from school in a year could mean a drop in a GCSE grade within all subjects.

When children are regularly late, the time they missed really adds up and impacts on their learning. For example, over a school year if a child is 5 minutes late every day, it equates to 3 days absence. 15 minutes late every day = 10 days absent; 30 minutes late every day = 19 days absent.

Arriving late means that children miss out on key teaching and learning and many find it uncomfortable when they have to walk into the classroom and everyone else is already working.

Registration

Children can come into school from 8.45am. The morning register is taken at 8.55am. Children arriving after the register has been taken but before 9.05am are recorded as late – L.

Registration closes at 9.05am. Children arriving at school after this time are "late - after registration closes" and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness – U.

If a child is persistently late for school, then a penalty notice may be issued. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.

We understand that there may occasionally be times when absence or lateness are unavoidable but please try to make sure that your child is in school and on time every day, to help their learning and also to set up good habits for the future.



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Absence due to illness

We know that there will be times when your child is too ill to attend school and we ask you to please call us by 9.30am on the first day of absence so that we know your child is safe and to avoid us needing to contact the Education Welfare Officer.

If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea, they can return to school 48 hours after the sickness/diarrhoea has stopped.

Children should not attend if they have a high temperature. If your child has Covid 19, they should not attend for at least 3 days after the test day. If they then still have a high temperature or are still testing positive, please don't send them back until they are well. This is to avoid spreading illnesses to other children and staff, and to avoid any potential disruption to learning due to staff absence.

Requests for leave of absence

Amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 mean that leave of absence during term time, including holiday requests, can only be granted if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this. Requests need to be made in advance and in writing using the leave of absence request form which can be found in the entrance area, next to the office.

If a request for leave has not been received and we have reason to believe a pupil is on holiday, a letter will be sent to parents requesting medical evidence. If no medical evidence can be provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised, and a penalty notice request sent to the Local Authority.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

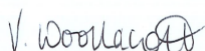
- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holiday periods. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher. (e.g., family holiday)
- Persistent late arrival to school, i.e., after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holiday periods. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.

Attendance Policy

Our Attendance Policy has been reviewed and updated. A copy is available on our school website wfs.ttl.org.uk under About Us/Policies/Safeguarding Policies or via the following link:

<http://wfs.ttl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2022/10/WFS-Attendance-Policy-Oct-22.pdf>

Yours sincerely



Mrs V Woollacott
Headteacher