



**Weobley
Primary
School**

Attendance Policy

Implementation Date: November 2016

Review Date: November 2017 (or in line with national changes)

Signatures

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
Head of School:	Mr S Warrell		November 2016
Chair of Governors:	Mrs J Hall		November 2016

Introduction

Our school strives to provide a welcoming and caring environment, where each member of the school community feels valued and secure.

We are proud of our attendance record, which is generally very good, and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

Good attendance at school is important for your child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. We realise that 100% attendance is not always possible due to illness or other circumstances and for this reason, our target is 98%.

To meet these objectives Weobley Primary School has an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support with regard to attendance of pupils.

Our Aims

1. To improve the overall attendance percentage of pupils at our school
2. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
3. To continue to develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
4. To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data
5. To maintain an effective partnership with the Educational Welfare service and other agencies.
6. To recognise the individual needs of each pupil and family with regard to attendance.

It is essential that the school is informed of the reasons for your child's absence so that it can be recorded accurately.

Under current government legislation, unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy and all absence figures have to be reported to the LA (Local Authority) and the DfE and are recorded on a child's annual report. It is also important that your child arrives on time for school, as the start of the day establishes the learning activities for the day.

Lateness is also recorded in the register. Pupils are due in school by 9am. Arrival after 9am will result in a 'late' mark being recorded in the register. The register

officially closes at 9.20am so all late arrivals after this date will be recorded as 'Unauthorised'

Safeguarding

The school takes the safety of your child very seriously and if a child does not come in to school, we need to have a valid reason for their absence. We need to be sure that a child has not left home in the morning and failed to arrive at school. This is why we attempt to contact you if we have not been informed by phone, text, letter or email that your child has a valid reason to be absent. It is the parents responsibility to inform the school of any absence on the morning of the absence by 9am. If no valid reason is provided then this will be coded as an Unauthorised absence.

Collection at the end of the school day is just as important as the beginning of the day. It is the parents/carers responsibility to collect children on time. If there are any concerns regarding late collection regularly school will take the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Absence due to ill health

When your child is unwell please call the school on the first morning of absence as early as possible and by 9.30am at latest. We will require a letter, explaining the reason why the child is not at school, on the child's return. You may be asked to provide medical evidence to support your child's absence.

If a phone call or message is not received, the school will attempt to contact the parent on the first day of absence by phone and / or text message.

If your child has been sick or has had a temperature it is important that they stay at home for 24 hours.

If we are unable to contact you and have no letter explaining your child's absence, it will be recorded as UNAUTHORISED.

GP consent may be requested if a pupil has high levels of authorised absence through sickness and a parent will be invited to an informal meeting and may be requested to complete a GP consent form that will enable an appointed person from school to enquire if the pupil has attended the surgery but not to share any confidential information.

For out of school dental and medical treatment

Please let the school office know in writing, in advance of the date and time of the appointment and when your child will be collected from and/or returned to school. We would encourage parents that, where possible, appointments are made out of school hours or during school holidays.

Absence during term –time / Holiday requests

'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 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'

'Exceptional' in this context is being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another, and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, the normality will be that requests will be refused.

A request form and a letter explaining the need for an agreed absence in Term time must be obtained from the school office and returned to the Headteacher, at least one month prior to the date of departure. You may be asked to come in and speak with the Headteacher to discuss your request if felt necessary. Only in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances will the absence be authorised.

Permission for special occasions such as weddings must be requested in advance, in writing to the Headteacher.

Shopping trips, birthday trips, days out and holidays at home will **not** be authorised.

If a child is removed from school for an unauthorised holiday the School will refer the matter to Herefordshire Council who will consider a Penalty Notice or other legal proceedings under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, which carries a fine. Non-payment of this fine can result in prosecution. This is due to the parent failing to secure their child's school attendance (Please see Code of Conduct)

Unplanned Absences

When a child is absent from school and no request for absence has been received or if no reason has been given for the absence, the absence will be recorded by the school as 'unauthorised'. Absences can only be authorised when the Absence Request procedure has been followed. It cannot be granted retrospectively, even if the reasons for absence are valid.

Parental Responsibility

It is the legal responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives promptly.

Irregular attendance or late arrival can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning and confidence. Late arrival means that a child misses the start of the day when the morning's lesson is introduced and explained. Friendships and social groupings can also be affected. Arriving late after the register closes without a valid reason will result in an Unauthorised absence being recorded.

SCHOOL SESSION TIMES

Key Stage 2 9.00 am - 12 noon

1.00 pm - 3.20 pm

Key Stage 1 9.00 am - 12 noon

1.0 pm - 3.20 pm

Registration takes place as soon as the children go into class at 9.00 am. Any child arriving at school more than 20 minutes after registration will be recorded as LATE. Arriving late after the register closes without a valid reason will result in an Unauthorised absence being recorded.

Monitoring Attendance and support for families

The school monitors the attendance data regularly and, where a child's attendance drops below 90% or if there are 10 or more unauthorised absences, this will be discussed at the monthly meetings with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Reasons for a child's absence or persistent lateness will be investigated. Our Education Welfare officer may support the school by challenging parents and requesting improved punctuality and an informal meeting with parents will be arranged to see if the school can support the family. This can be done by setting up a CAF (Common Assessment Framework).

The CAF is a way of working out what extra support your child may need. It involves holding meetings with the school and, if necessary, with other agencies to make sure that help is provided as quickly and effectively as possible. With your agreement, the appropriate agencies are invited to meet with you, the parent, and have a conversation to identify your child's needs and strengths and a plan of action is put in place which can help to improve attendance where there is a medical or logistical difficulty as well as any other areas such as learning, behaviour or family support issues.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave the school and no information has been received by the school and parents/carers are unable to be contacted, we have a duty to safeguarding and must contact the Local Authority. Your child will be considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Social Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us details of your child's new school and location, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Key Dates

It is important that children in Year 6 are not absent during the SATS testing week in May.