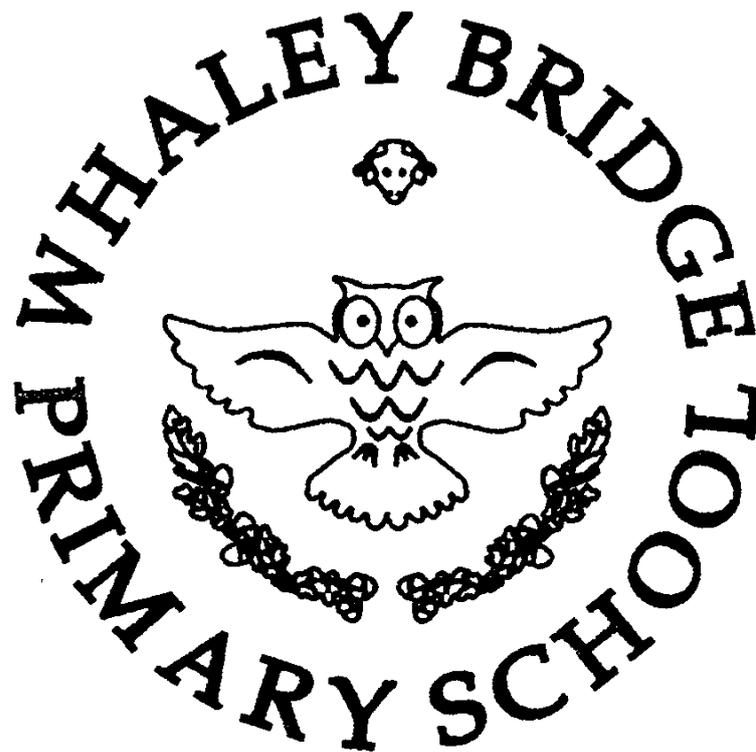


WHALEY BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2017-2018

ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIM

To provide a strategy between the school, Education Welfare Service (EWS), parents, pupils and other agencies so that together they can work in partnership to promote the best possible school attendance.

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills to equip them for life. Reference to good attendance / punctuality will be made in class when marking the register.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents and the EWS can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. Lateness will be actively discouraged. All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and other agencies where appropriate. Good attendance / punctuality will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Policy

The governors recognise that children are legally required to attend school full time from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. Registration is a legal requirement and in order to fulfil these requirements the governors expect the Headteacher to ensure that attendance registers are completed in accordance with DfES recommendations and that the school policy is implemented and reviewed regularly. The school, as part of its accountability, sets a high standard as its attendance target each year. The governors recognise the vital role that the class teachers have in promoting good attendance, together with their responsibility for:

- marking the register clearly
- making every effort to obtain a reason for absence
- identifying problem areas in a pupil's attendance and alerting the Headteacher
- liaising with parents, other staff and the EWS to promote school attendance
- giving positive support for punctuality

The school will encourage good attendance by:

- making it clear to pupils and parents at every opportunity that good attendance is vital
- marking the register promptly and informing the office of absenteeism if no reason is given
- giving support to pupils and opportunities to talk about difficulties they may be having
- reminding parents of their responsibility regarding attendance and punctuality and offering help to resolve difficulties
- Rewarding good attendance through celebration assembly.

When a pupil is absent from school, parents are requested to inform the school office before 9.00am as to the reason for the absence, the most direct way to do this is by text at any time of the day or night on 07786207779, if not a phone call on 01663732354 (please leave a message if no answer) or e-mail to info@whaleybridge.derbyshire.sch.uk.

Punctuality

- It is the responsibility of all parents/carers to ensure that their children are in school and on time and ready to learn.
- Every morning, children line up at 8:45am ready for the teacher to take the class into school at 8:50am. The school day starts at 8:55am.
- We keep a late register of all children who are late in school.
- If the lateness is persistent the school will contact the parent/carer to try and offer help and resolve the issue.
- If it continues, a letter from the Headteacher will be sent home, including the leaflet 'every school day counts'.
- Outside agencies will be involved to support parents to ensure their child is in school on time.

The following codes will be used to record late arrival in school:

L – Late arrival before the register has closed

U – Late arrival after the register has closed

The school day starts at 8.55am and the register closes at 9.15am each morning. The afternoon session starts at 1.15pm and the register closes at 1.30pm.

Term Time Holiday – Unauthorised Leave

The Governors do not condone holidays taken in term time.

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

From September 2017 the guidance notes have been changed to include; the Local Authority will consider the issue of penalty notices, as the request of the Headteacher, for a period of unauthorised leave regardless of a child's 'wider school attendance'.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. This needs to be handed in at least 2 weeks before the first day of absence. Forms can be found in the school entrance, and on the school website.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. Currently £60 per parent, per child. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

Parents are required to complete the 'application for leave' form, which can be found on the Parent Information tab of the school website. Hard copies are also available in the school entrance. If the Headteacher refuses to authorise the leave of absence and the parents make the decision to continue with their planned holiday, a penalty fine may be applied by the local authority. Failure to pay the fine would result in legal action being taken.

Other Absences

Where ever possible, appointment should be made out of school time or in the holidays. When this is not possible and a pupil is required to attend appointments during the school day, governors will expect a parent to inform the class teacher or the school office beforehand. A medical appointment card must be shown prior to or immediately after. The parent / carer or specified adult must

complete the signing in/out book in the school office. Under no circumstances should a member of staff release a pupil or allow him/her to leave the premises unsupervised.

When a pupil is absent with no reason,

1. Office staff will contact the parent/carer and in some cases other family members, to ascertain the reason for the absence.
2. If no contact can be made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
3. If the situation becomes regular or prolonged, the Headteacher will contact the parents informally to try to resolve the matter.
4. If this is not possible, the Headteacher will inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
5. The EWO and the school will investigate the situation decide if any action is to be taken.

Procedures for the identification and control of absence

- absence notes given to the class teacher and passed to office.
- verbal messages taken by office staff to be recorded on the schools computer system. Teachers informed as necessary.
- information regarding an absence may be accepted from another source if the teacher/office staff has good cause to accept its authority.
- attendance register should be marked clearly in accordance with the codes in the register. It is the office staff's responsibility to ensure that all absences are coded appropriately at the end of each day.
- If a child's attendance is below 90% at the end of a term, a letter from the Headteacher will be sent home to highlight the issue and that the school is here to support the family to improve the attendance. We work with many agencies who can support families with attendance.
- We also issue printed information to parents with details of the child/ren's attendance. These are government documents – 'Every School Day Counts' and 'Good Attendance Means'
- If the child's attendance does not improve, or there are serious concerns for the absences. The school will arrange a panel meeting with our EWO to try to resolve the issue. Or in some cases a referral to Starting Point will be made.