

WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Attendance Policy

October 2025

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## **Attendance Policy: October 2025**

This document is a statement of the philosophy and strategies for attendance at Westfield Primary School. It was reviewed through consultation with school staff and approved by the Local Advisory Committee.

### **1. Objectives**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To promote good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.
- To reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- To ensure every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- To build strong relationships with families to ensure children have the support in place to attend school.
- To act promptly to address patterns of absence and work with external agencies, to overcome them.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, children and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of children and address them.
- To promote and support punctuality in attending school.

### **2. Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of Westfield Primary School are committed, in partnership with the parents, children, Local Advisory Committee and the Local Education Authority (LEA), to building a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud. We expect that children attend 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

Regular attendance is key to achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters: staying healthy, enjoying and achieving, keeping safe, contributing to the community, and social and economic well-being.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

### **3. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on and aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance including those set out in Working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) published with effect from 19 August 2024,

It refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996.
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002.
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- The Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

It also covers responsibilities referred to in:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

### **4. Parent Responsibility and The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
  - (b) To any special needs he/she may have
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (Ss 434 and 458) and The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

## **5. Recording attendance**

### **5.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all children onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (See Appendix) whether every child is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made .
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

We will also record:

- For children of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a child is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a child is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## **5.2 Unplanned absence**

The child's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 10am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office or complete an entry on Studybugs.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **5.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the child should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The child's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence by completing a leave of absence application form.

## 6. Categorisation of Absence

Any child who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

### 6.1. **Unauthorised absence**

This is for those children where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

### 6.2. **Authorised absence**

This is for those children who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

### 6.3. **Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note: Children recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

## 7. Registration & Lateness

The school day begins at 8.35am with the opening of the school gates. Morning registration will take place by 8.50am and the registers will remain open in the office until 9.05am. Any child who arrives after the gates are shut at 8.50am and class teachers have taken registers and before the close of registers at 9.05am will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late. Any child arriving after 9.05 am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for

attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration for years R - 2 will be taken at 1.00pm.

The afternoon registration for years 3 and 4 will be taken at 1.15pm.

The afternoon registration for year 5 will be taken at 12.45pm.

The afternoon registration for year 6 will be taken at 1.30pm.

Children arriving after the start of school but before 9.05am will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Morning and afternoon registration will count as 2 separate sessions i.e. 2 sessions missed = 1 day of absence.

#### **8. Children leaving during the school day**

Children are not permitted to leave the school site during the day without prior permission from the school and then must be accompanied off site with a parent/carer.

Children must be signed out by a parent or carer when leaving the school and signed back in on return.

Parents must let the school know in advance of any appointments.

#### **9. Responding to Non-Attendance.**

**When any child expected to attend school does not attend school without reason we will respond in the manner outlined below:**

**At any stage referred to below we may carry out a welfare check and/or call the police as a result of safeguarding concerns. Also, to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken, where necessary procedures in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy may be initiated and followed at any point of absence if there is cause for concern in relation to the absence of any child.**

##### **9.1 Unexplained absences**

- **On the first day of absence:** if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 10.00am, the school will endeavour to contact the school's main contacts that day by telephone, email or text and

request the reason for the absence. If the school office has not heard from the parent/carer by 1pm. They will attempt to contact them again. Once all attempts to contact the family have been exhausted then a home visit welfare check **may be** attempted by 2 DSLs (text/email to state that this will happen if the school still do not hear from them).

- **On the second day of absence:** if there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer plus any additional contacts the school has been given that day by telephone, email or text. If a home visit has not been made on day 1 then this will be carried out.
- **On the third day of absence:** Repeat steps from day 1 and 2. If there is no response, the school will contact the police and the child will be classed as 'missing'.
- **Fourth and fifth days of absence:** if there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer plus any additional contacts the school has been given that day by telephone, email or text.
- **Sixth day of absence:** The school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and any other relevant contacts and on the sixth day of unexplained absence the school will usually make a further welfare check (with written prior notification to parents/carers) and/or request the Police or children's services to conduct a welfare check. Advice may be sought from the Surrey Attendance Service. Procedures in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will then be followed.
- **Seventh to ninth days of absence:** Repeat steps from previous days.
- **Tenth day of absence:** -Where the school are unable to contact the parent/carer, and the absence remains unexplained for 10 days, the school will formally notify the Surrey Attendance Service and the child may be removed from the school roll and 'reasonable enquiries' will be conducted. The school will refer the child to Surrey County Council Pupil Tracking Officer and/or report to Safeguarding Children Unit / Surrey Police.
- **Twenty days of absence** - If a child is missing from school for twenty school days, they may be taken off the school roll and it will be necessary to reapply for a school place through Surrey County Council.
- The Attendance Officer will identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon

as the reason for absence is ascertained - this will be no later than 5 working days after the session for which the child was absent.

- Where appropriate, we will offer support to the child and/or their parents to improve attendance.
- We will identify whether the child needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate.

## 9.2 Attendance between 91% and 94% and Late arrivals

The Attendance Officer will analyse data on a monthly basis and send out letters to the parents/carers of children who have been late four or more times over the past month; to the parents/carers of children whose attendance is between 91% and 94%; and to parents/carers of children whose attendance is 90% or less. The letters will both inform and offer support to parent/carers.

Children who arrive late after registers have closed will be coded as unauthorised absence.

## 9.3. Persistent and severe absence

a) **Persistent absence** is where a child misses 10% or more of school. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 school days; equivalent to 1 day or more each fortnight across a full school year). **Severe absence** is where a child misses 50% or more of school. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

c) The Attendance Champion and the Attendance Officer will meet each half term and analyse the previous half term's attendance data. Children whose attendance is 90% or less or/and have had ten unauthorised absences in ten school weeks will be identified during this meeting.

c) The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of children who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - discuss attendance and engagement at school.
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Support families with attendance issues via the Inclusion team.
- Where appropriate, provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these children. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Notify parents/carers by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and invite them to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate
- Implement sanctions, where necessary,

#### **9.4 Severe absence**

Particular focus will be given by all staff to children who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent children may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

The school will monitor and target these children and work with these families. The school may also look at the needs of the children for example if they have an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

**Attendance - what does my child's attendance mean?**

# EVERY DAY COUNTS!

A quick fact:  
Over the year missing a few days here and there can quickly turn into **weeks of lost learning**.

What attendance percentages really mean:

<b>100% attendance</b>	<b>0 school days missed</b>	<b>No learning time missed</b>
<b>98% attendance</b>	<b>4 school days missed</b>	<b>Less than 1 week missed</b>
<b>96% attendance</b>	<b>7 school days missed</b>	<b>About 1 ½ weeks missed</b>
<b>95% attendance</b>	<b>9 school days missed</b>	<b>Nearly 2 weeks of learning missed</b>
<b>94% attendance</b>	<b>11 school days missed</b>	<b>Just over 2 weeks of learning missed</b>
<b>90% attendance</b>	<b>18 school days missed</b>	<b>Almost 4 weeks missed (about half a term)</b>
<b>85% attendance</b>	<b>28 school days missed</b>	<b>Nearly 6 weeks missed (almost a full half term)</b>

One day here and there adds up!

- Missing 1 day every 2 weeks = 90% attendance
- That's 18 days missed in one year
- Over primary school, this adds up to well over half a school year of learning missed! (More than 2 full terms).

**Why good attendance matters**

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Feel confident
- Keep up with reading, writing and maths
- Build friendships
- Reach their full potential

**We're here to help.** We understand children can be unwell and families may face challenges. If attendance is difficult, **please talk to us** - we're happy to support you and your child.

## **10. Children Missing Education (CME)**

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL") will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority or the police particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day, in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' (September 2025).

Staff are alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Surrey Attendance Service.

If a child has been absent from school for 2 weeks with no reason given, or if they have moved and no new school has contacted us, a referral will be made to the CME team.

## **11. Pupils Missing Out on Education (PMOOE)**

We report to the Surrey Attendance Service any child who is on a part-time or flexi-time timetable.

## **12. Approval for term-time absence**

**12.1** The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a child during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which child's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the child is attending educational provision.
- If the child is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a child to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the child is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the child not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and to ensure child/ren do not miss out on their education during term. We ask parents to take due consideration of these prior to booking a holiday. We expect that children attend 100% of the time as per Surrey CC's guidelines, unless the absence is authorised by the Head teacher.

## **12.2 Grant for Exceptional Leave of Absence**

Parents are not entitled to leave of absence for their child/ren as a right and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, e.g. for compassionate reasons, and once the **Head Teacher has considered:**

- the child's record of attendance.
- *if leave of Absence is granted it shall not exceed five school days in any one year, as agreed by the school's governing body.*

- the time of the leave, ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important examinations/assessments/school events.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Leave of absence, for exceptional circumstances, will not be granted if additional leave is taken either side of this time without previous approval. Proof of flights or other documentation supporting the request must be produced if asked for.**

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. It is widely known that the link between a child's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.

As we offer one 2-week half term during the school year outside of the normal school holidays, this will assist children who prefer travelling in quieter periods due to a specific diagnosis; and reduces financial costs.

Where a parent wishes to **request a leave of absence**, a formal request must be made as far in advance as possible, in writing by completing a leave of absence application form, to the Head Teacher who will consider the application on behalf of the Local Advisory Committee.

If a leave of absence is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence**.

*Absences during mock SATS and SATS examinations will not be authorised.*

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

## **13. Sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions - including, but not limited to, those listed below - to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### **13.1 Penalty Notices:**

The Surrey Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and this requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that child.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the child must not be present in a public place on that day).

### **13.2 Circumstances when Penalty Notices may be issued**

For children identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a child has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks (which may span different terms or school years). The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or the Surrey

Attendance Service will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Unauthorized absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

### **13.3 Amount Payable for Penalty Notice Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024**

If a parent/carer has not previously incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the amount payable on the issue of a penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the Surrey Attendance Service considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If a parent/carer has incurred a penalty notice relating to the same child/children since 19 August 2024, a rolling 3-year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey Attendance Service considering legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If 2 penalty notices relating to the same child/children have been incurred in the rolling 3-year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then the parent/carer will NOT receive a third penalty notice - Surrey Attendance Service will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

#### **13.4. Notice to improve**

**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time parents will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

The Notice will include:

- Details of the child's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of 25 days (5 school weeks) for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

In the case of unauthorised leave of absence for holiday during term time, a specific Penalty Notice warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents/carers have previously been warned through school newsletters; parent mail; or booklets, policies etc. available on the school website, that such absences would not be authorised, and that they would be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if they persisted with any such unauthorised leave of absence.

# SCHOOL PENALTY NOTICE FINES FROM AUGUST 2024



The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024

1

## FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

## SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

3

## THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

## 10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10 WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

### 14. Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer

The Surrey Attendance Service monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The Surrey Attendance Service, Attendance Advice Officer will work with school staff and parents/carers to promote good attendance.

The Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer may contact parents if children are consistently late or there are concerns about attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could, following prosecution, result in a community order, a fine not exceeding £2500 per parent/carer and/or imprisonment for up to three months.

### **15. Monthly Attendance Letters**

Monthly letters are automatically produced and sent to all parents whose children are late 4 times or more in a month. Monthly letters will also be sent to all parents whose children have an attendance of 90% or less and for those with attendance between 91% and 94%.

### **16. Rewards**

An attendance trophy is awarded to the class with improvement in attendance as a whole class or due to individuals on a weekly basis.

A raffle ticket is given to each child on arrival to school on time every day and entered into a draw at the end of the term. The more a child is in on time and daily, the greater chance they have in the raffles! Attendance certificates are given out termly for amazing attendance.

### **17. Roles and responsibilities, our expectations**

#### **17.1 We expect that all children will attend school:**

- 100% of the time.
- Punctually.
- Prepared for the day.

#### **17.2 We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have parental responsibility for or day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that the child/ren in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/ren are unable to attend school.

- **contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, before 10am, and on each subsequent day of absence,** and advise when they are expected to return.
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem that may keep the child away from school occurs.
- provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Inclusion Leader, Ms Julia Findlay, who can be contacted via the school office or using the email:  
[inclusionleader@westfield.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:inclusionleader@westfield.surrey.sch.uk).

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of our school community must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the children at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

### **17.3 Head Teacher will:**

- Adopt the whole policy.
- Implement this policy at school.
- Monitor school-level absence data and report it to the Local Advisory Committee.
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children.
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Make referrals to Surrey Attendance Service to issue fixed-penalty notices or for legal intervention/prosecution where necessary.
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence.
- Appoint Key staff to:  
liaise and follow-up with Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer
  - and provide appropriate access to attendance data.
  - consult and liaise closely with Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate children are identified and referred without delay.

- work in close collaboration with Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis.
- set whole school attendance targets.
- monitor and evaluate attendance with Surrey Attendance Service Attendance Advice Officer.
- Have a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes.
- Have an oversight of data analysis.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to children and families.
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

**17.4 The designated Senior Attendance Champion' with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is the Inclusion Leader who can be contacted via the school office.**

**The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:**

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with children, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with children and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to children and families
- Work with the parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for children with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where children with SEND face in-school barriers

- Communicate with the local authority when a child with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the child's needs
- Communicate the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to children and parents through all available channels

#### **17.5 Office Staff/Attendance Officer will:**

- oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually.
- record all reasons for absences in the register.
- liaise with the Surrey Attendance Service as required to reinforce good practice.
- share the class teacher's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Senior Attendance Champion
- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system and check Studybugs for absences
- transfer calls from parents to the Headteacher or DSL in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- monitor and analyse attendance data.
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff.
- Provide information and updates on attendance (through newsletters, website etc.)

The attendance officer can be contacted via the school office.

#### **17.6 We expect that school staff will:**

- complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- monitor every child's attendance.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Leader.
- be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Inclusion Leader.
- encourage good attendance.
- provide a caring and welcoming atmosphere for children so that every child feels like they belong, provide a safe learning environment, provide a sympathetic response to any child concerns.
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of children who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school and LA expectations with regard to regular school attendance.

- Meet the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by ensuring that whenever possible, children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them.

### **17.7 The Local Advisory Committee will be responsible for:**

Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, children and parents.

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific children, where appropriate.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for children who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all children, but adapts processes and support to children's individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual children or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting children's needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific children, where appropriate

- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

## 18. Encouraging and promoting attendance

**Westfield Primary School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:**

- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If children arrive at the school office after the morning bell, a late 'mark' will be recorded. If a child arrives late (after 9.05am) it will be recorded as late 'absence' and counted as an unauthorised absence, without a verbal or written explanation from the parent/ carer. Late children are recorded in the office Inventory system or 'late book' in case of a fire drill. *If you are phoning to inform the school that your child is going to be late, someone is collecting your child or he/she has been absent, you may be asked to identify yourself with a **unique password**.*
- by publishing attendance statistics and celebrating good attendance in newsletters.
- by celebrating good and improved attendance through weekly class trophy presentation for the best attending class, termly attendance certificates for those with 100% attendance, termly "Lucky Dip" for those with 100% attendance.
- by ensuring the children and their parents/carers understand the value of good attendance (e.g. individual class targets and celebrating when improvement is seen, sharing attendance video with children, sharing attendance data with parents)
- by monitoring, children informing parents/carers, in writing, of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary.

## 19. Changing Schools

It is important that, if families decide to send the child/ren in their care to a different school, that they inform Westfield Primary School office staff as soon as possible. A child will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received in writing and investigated:

- The date the child will be leaving this school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The child's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Surrey Attendance Service.

## **20. Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual child level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.
- Child-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases.
- The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare/bench mark attendance data to local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the Local Advisory Committee.

## **21. Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify children or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance,
- Identify children whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Use this analysis to provide targeted support to these children and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

## **22. Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual children, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.

- Provide targeted support to the children it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families.
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers using Scholar pack, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with children and families and to the Local Advisory committee and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a child's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific children, where appropriate.

### **23. Supporting pupils with medical conditions, SEND or emotionally based non-school attendance ("EBSNA")**

Some children face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include children who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. We are also aware that some children may have lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence. Their right to an education is the same as any other child and therefore the attendance ambition for these children should be the same as they are for any other child. In working with their parents to improve attendance, we will be mindful of the barriers these children face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This may include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for children with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a child has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the council or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for children with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the child's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, we will work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of

additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.

- Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers these children face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.
- Ensuring data is regularly monitored for these groups including at governing body meetings and in Targeted Support Meetings with the Surrey Attendance Service. council so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.


Where a child has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the child's needs, we will inform the local authority.

Children with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by Surrey County council.

In all cases, we will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising children and parents. We will talk to child and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance. This will enable us to develop individual approaches that meet an individual child's specific needs.

#### **24. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

a) We work hard with our parent / carer community to put in place strategies and support in place to ensure good attendance, including the following:

- ✓ If the school have not been informed of a child's absence via  parents will receive a phone call before 10am.
- ✓ Classroom staff may have an informal conversation on the child's return, for instance to welcome back to class.
- ✓ The school may carry out home door stop visits, make a C-SPA referral and/ or Police Welfare checks if parent uncontactable
- ✓ Attendance letters are generated automatically and sent monthly for:

- a. Persistent Absentees - PAs- (90% and below) regardless of reasons behind absenteeism,
- b. 91-94% attendance warning letter
- c. If there are more than 4 "lates" in a month.
- ✓ The school liaises with other services for support such as Traveller Services/ Refuge / Social Care/ Family Support to provide Early Help.
- ✓ We track where children go who leave us (We know where children go onto before taking them off roll.)
- ✓ we offer support to parents to discuss any concerns, supporting them through signposting and referrals. Members of the Inclusion Team are on both gates in the morning for parents to arrange a convenient time to talk.
- ✓ Parenting courses are offered to support specific "blockers" for children's attendance e.g. managing your child's anxiety; 4-week parenting course, ASD/ ADHD courses & Emotional Coaching for parents; cooking on- a budget (parent/ parent and child).
- ✓ Bespoke activities for reluctant children are provided with the Inclusion Team / an allocated LSA on entry to school/ Nurture Lead early arrival group for anxious children.
- ✓ Alternative access arrangements
- ✓ Breakfast provided for those who need it
- ✓ Inclusion Leader can offer specific family support
- ✓ Alarm clocks have been provided for families.
- ✓ Our monthly newsletter highlights online safety considerations for parents and parenting courses (school based and local community)
- ✓ Signage around school
- ✓ Attendance raffle - for children to put into a raffle every day they are in school before registration.
- ✓ 100% attendance certificate termly
- ✓ Weekly celebration in assembly of class attendance
- ✓ Attendance trophy
- ✓ Children with SEMH anxieties receive targeted support at lunch/ break times/ transition times e.g. use of Dragons Lair, Tranquillity Cove and Zen Den and drop in art group at lunch time.
- ✓ Class teacher email for children who find attending difficult after prolonged absence, prior to their return, e.g. a school holiday

b) We have thorough systems in place to ensure high attendance is encouraged and we have procedures and policies in place to manage the absence of children. Off-rolling of children does not take place at our school. Any child that leaves the school outside the normal times is reviewed by the inclusion team and with the local authority, if required.

## **25. Elective Home Education ("EHE")**

Surrey County council provides information for families regarding their right to de-register their child. Details can be found here:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/educating-your-child-at-home>

If there are safeguarding concerns at the point of de-registration these may be referred to CSPA by the school and included on the notification form for EHE.

## **26. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. The policy will be approved by the Local Advisory Committee.

## Appendix

### Pupil Attendance Codes

All pupils must be given a registration mark each day. There are two sessions that require a registration mark. Registration will be taken by class teachers during morning and afternoon registration.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
/	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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity

	activity	that is not a sporting activity or work experience
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent - leave of absence</b>		
<b>C1</b>	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent - other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for

		occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent - unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		

<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

**If you would like an application for leave of absence, please contact the office or download the form from the website.**