

Wimbledon Chase Primary School



Attendance Policy

Vision Statement

WIMBLEDON CHASE PRIMARY SCHOOL IS AN INNOVATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

Policy statement

At Wimbledon Chase Primary School we strive to support each child to reach their full potential. We believe good school attendance is a vital part of this.

We aim to:

- Encourage parents to recognise their legal responsibility in ensuring regular attendance and understanding the connection between attendance and attainment
- Work in partnership with parents, and pupils to support good attendance
- Recognise that some pupils may experience difficulties that could be caused by a wide variety of factors and explore ways to support them
- Celebrate and promote good attendance throughout the school at all opportunities

It is the responsibility of parents (The Education Act 1996 and 2010 updates) to ensure that their children receive an efficient full-time education suitable for their age and aptitude, and see that they attend school regularly and punctually.

Policy Issued: February 2018

Review Date: February 2020

Policy Owner: Mr K Ellis, Deputy Headteacher

The term 'parent' used throughout this policy implies any person or body with parental responsibility such as foster parent, carer, guardian or local authority.

School Procedures

Absence

- Parents should inform the school on **each morning** their child is unable to attend school by telephone or by using the absence email absence@wimblechase.merton.sch.uk This notification should state the reason for absence and give some indication of a return date whenever possible.
- In addition, on returning from absence , **if the absence is for more than five school days**, the child should bring a written note from parents or guardian indicating the reason for absence..
- Parents should notify the school in advance, if they know their child will be absent.
- Unexplained absences will be unauthorised by the 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 will be recorded as 'no reason given' and a phone call made to the parents.
- Where a pupil's absence falls below 90% (Government Persistent Absentee threshold) the school may request medical evidence in order to authorise the absence. If this is not provided the absence may be recorded as unauthorised. The school will identify what may be considered appropriate medical evidence.
- The school will refer to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) or the School Nursing Service where there is a high level of absence without medical evidence.
- If a pupil has to go out of school during the day for treatment he/she should bring a note in advance to request this, and should always sign out in the School Office. On return to school during school hours pupils should sign back in. Children should not be allowed to leave school during the day without a specific note or telephone call from parents.

Punctuality

Arriving late for school is very disruptive for the teachers and other pupils. It also means the pupils themselves miss important input from teachers.

Morning registration is at 8.50am. Any pupil arriving after this is required to sign in at the school office. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as late. Pupils arriving after the close of registers will be marked using the U code. This denotes an unauthorised absence.

Parents of pupils who have two or more late marks in any week will be contacted by the Headteacher or another member of staff acting on their behalf. The school and the Education Welfare Officer monitor this and will contact families if this occurs frequently.

Late Collection

As a school we take responsibility to look after pupils until the end of the school day: 3.20pm for Reception, Years 1 and 2 and 3.30pm for Years 3,4,5 and 6. Please ensure that you contact the school office as soon as possible if you are going to be late collecting your child. However, unless your child is attending an after school club they should not be picked up late.

Where a pupil is not collected in a reasonable time we will follow the London Borough of Merton policy relating to children who are not collected from school.

Pupils collected from school after these times will need to be signed out at the school office.

Leave of Absence

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

The Governors of Wimbledon Chase Primary School believe that leave of absence should be avoided if at all possible as it can have a damaging effect on a pupil's education and overall achievement. Only in exceptional circumstances, where sufficient evidence is provided to substantiate the circumstances, will any absence from school be authorised. Permission should be sought from the Headteacher on the **Leave of Absence** form available on the school website or at the main office.

Merton may issue a Penalty Notice when unauthorised leave is taken and attendance falls below 85%. If this fine, £120, is not paid within 28 days then the parent/s may be prosecuted under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 where the penalty is currently a fine not exceeding £1000 and a criminal record.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The EWO's role is to work with pupils, parents and schools regarding attendance at school, in matters of welfare, concern, non- school attendance and lateness. The EWO attached to the school will make regular register inspections to identify any emerging attendance concerns. Where the attendance meets appropriate criteria parent/parents may be issued with a Penalty Notice Warning. If the attendance fails to meet the acceptable level within the monitoring period then a fine/s would usually be issued.

School Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that it provides a high standard of education and genuine equal opportunities to all pupils. It aims to work in partnership with parents to achieve this and as part of its duty it agrees to observe the following procedure regarding school attendance:

- To keep parents fully informed about school term and holiday dates, and any occasional days when it is not necessary for pupils to attend school via the school website and newsletters.
- To take the register twice daily at 8.50 am and 1.25 pm.
- To contact parents when a child is absent without notification.
- To contact parents whenever a child returns to school without a note or valid reason for absence.
- To notify parents if a child is repeatedly arriving late for school.
- To liaise with parents, the EWO and other outside agencies in matters relating to non-attendance and punctuality at school.
- To notify parents when attendance falls below 90% (the government Persistent Absentee threshold)
- To ensure that no child leaves the school premises during the day without the permission of parents.
- Class teachers should liaise with the Headteacher regarding any pupils whose absence or punctuality gives cause for concern.
- Members of staff will carry out checks at other times during the school day to ensure that no pupil is missing. It is especially important that when members of staff other than the class teacher take the class they should establish which pupils are legitimately absent from the lesson.
- To celebrate, pupils who have had no absences will be awarded an Attendance Certificate in assembly at the end of each term. Gold certificates will be awarded for full attendance at the end of the year.