



Warton Nethersole's CE Primary School

Phone: 01827 894182 Email: admin@warton.heartwoodmat.co.uk

Date Ratified by Govs: 02.12.2021 Date for Revision: December 2022

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Vision and Values



All of our policies are written and implemented with our Christian vision and values at the heart of all decisions made. Our vision and values have been created by the staff, governors and children with the aim of supporting and developing everyone on their personal and collective journeys at Warton Nethersole's CofE Primary School. We place high importance on our vision and our values being reflected clearly in every policy and more importantly in the application of each policy and procedure in daily school life.

We welcome children of all faiths, backgrounds and beliefs into our inclusive community. We seek inspiration from the life and teaching of Jesus Christ to help our children achieve their full potential. We uphold the distinctive Christian ethos and values of the BDMAT when making all decisions and implementing policy and practice. We aim to provide a caring and stimulating environment which promotes a love of learning whilst seeking to inspire every pupil to become a well-motivated, independent and resourceful learner.



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Introduction:

Warton Nethersole CofE Primary School is committed to providing a high quality and inclusive full-time education which maximises opportunities for all pupils in order for them to realise their true potential and establish a positive working ethos early in life. We believe that regular and punctual attendance is crucial to these ambitions. We will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure- in line with our Christian vision and values.

As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any barriers to attendance will be identified and addressed as quickly as possible as there is strong evidence to suggest that poor habits established in the early years of education follow on into secondary school and even employment.

We recognise the importance of a parent's influence on pupils and the need to establish strong home-school links that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance. If and when barriers to attendance are identified we will work in partnership with parents, pupils, and where necessary, the Local Authority to resolve these problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. To this aim we have adopted a clear focused approach, with effective and efficient communication aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance as soon as possible.

Aims/Objectives:

We will always encourage pupils to strive for 100% attendance, however, we do understand that this is not always possible and have therefore set a school attendance target of 96% for the academic year 2021/22. To support this we will aim to:

- Improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Promote effective partnerships with the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) and with other services and agencies.
- Recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data



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Statutory Duty of Schools:

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session as outlined in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Parental Responsibility And/ Or Day-To-Day Carer:

Parents/guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise under section 7 of the Education Act 1996:-

'Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.'

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—
(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
(b) to any special educational needs he may have,
either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

Estranged parents with whom the child has had regular contact may be prosecuted as well as the day-to-day carer. Each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The term 'parent' also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children Act 1989 or who have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1996.

Legal Framework:

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude; to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.



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Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Prosecution

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Penalty Notice

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers for designated Local Education Officers, Headteachers and the police to issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. The Education (Penalty Notices)(England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27 February 2004. Penalty notices must be issued in a manner which conforms to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all relevant Equal Opportunities Legislation. To this aim the Local Authority has a Code of Conduct in relation to issuing Penalty Notices.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure a pupil's attendance at school.

How to Report An Absence:

If a child is absent for any reason, the school should be informed by the parent/carer (not family friends or siblings) on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return and reason for absence.

This should then be followed up in the form of a phone call or email to the school office upon their return to school outlining the reasons for absence and duration of absence. Any absences for which the school have received no explanation for the school to have reason to doubt the offered explanation will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Wherever possible parents are expected to make routine appointments such as dental or medical, outside of school time and/or in school holidays.



Categories of Absence:

There are two categories of absence:

- (i) Authorised (approved)
- (ii) Unauthorised (not approved)

Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher (or designated member of staff).

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if the child has been unwell and the parents telephones the school to explain the absence and follows up in writing.

Only the school can authorise an absence, parents **do not** have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, an absence can be unauthorised even if the child is absent with the support of a parent i.e. Leave of Absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

A child arriving after the close of registers without good reason and truancy will also be classified as an unauthorised absence.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Improved school attendance can only be achieved if viewed as a whole school approach which works in conjunction with families and the wider community. The school will endeavour to promote good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of every member of staff and not just teachers. The school will use a range of strategies and procedures to address attendance or punctuality issues and will promptly investigate any absenteeism, liaising closely with parents.

We will:

- Provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment



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- Provide an empathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns

Governors

We expect that Governors will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff
- Annually review the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Identify a Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance.
- Require the Headteacher/Attendance Lead to report on attendance and punctuality at termly Governing body meetings
- Ensure that the school comply with The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006, DfE coding guidance and other related legislation
- Attend and assist staff in meetings with parents where appropriate
- Consider, on an annual basis, if the school would benefit from a subscription to the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service

The Leadership Team

The Leadership team will nominate appropriate members of the school staff with individual responsibilities:

Attendance Lead- Head Teacher

- Ensure that all staff receive as part of their induction and ongoing CPD training in supporting families identified as an attendance concern
- Ensure that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006, DfE coding guidance and other related legislation is complied with
- Report schools' attendance data to the Governing body for each governors meeting (half termly)
- Ensure that attendance data is collated, analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence (half-termly)
- Interpret the data to devise solutions to attendance concerns, meet and work with families to improve attendance
- Ensure accurate records are maintained in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Engage with a multi-agency response to support families and pupils to improve attendance
- Implement systems to report and monitor attendance of pupils of at alternative education provision
- Instigate where appropriate the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process



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Class teachers

- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents and actively promote the importance and value of good attendance
- Ensure that as a whole school approach to reinforce good attendance; good teaching and learning experiences
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality
- Reward and recognise good attendance and punctuality
- Use staged sanctions to establish guidelines and boundaries to sustain excellent attendance and punctuality concerns
- Ensure accurate records are kept in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings.

Administration staff

- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence on the first day of absence
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents
- Regularly analyse attendance data
- Utilise the Arbor system to ensure that accurate records are kept in relation to reasons for absences

Parents

To support their child in attending school we ask that all parents/carers:

- Ensure their child's regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Talk to their child about school and take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress, instilling the value of education and regular school attendance
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and fully prepared for the school day
- Contact school by 9.30am each day their child is absent from school
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Attend meetings as requested to discuss attainment and attendance where appropriate
- Contact the school to discuss any planned absences (i.e. funerals) prior to the absence
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences, where possible make appointments for doctors, dentists etc outside of school hours
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Ensure that their child is collected promptly at the end of the school day (or insert any after school clubs here if relevant)
- Avoid arranging family holidays during term time



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- Complete a Request for Absence form when there is a planned absence

Pupil

We expect that a pupil will:

- Attend school regularly and arrive punctually
- Arrive well prepared for the day ahead
- Speak to an adult if they are experiencing difficulties

Punctuality:

When pupils arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom where everyone else is settled.

Furthermore, when one pupil arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and the teacher, therefore everyone's education is compromised.

Should you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance and timekeeping we would advise in the first instance to make an appointment to discuss this with your child's class teacher or designed member of senior staff.

	AM Session	PM Session
Registration	8.55am	1.15pm
Close of Register (unauthorised late)	9.20am	1.30pm

The school day officially starts at 8.55am, when the register is taken. If a child is not present at this time they will be marked as **late** when they do arrive. If a child arrives in school after 9.20am then they are marked as late after registration has closed and therefore sustain an unauthorised absence mark which will count as absent for that school session.

All pupils arriving late to school must be signed in at the school office by parent/carer and reasons for lateness are required for the school records.

Punctuality Sanctions

Punctuality is vitally important and is a life skill that reaches into employment in later life. Pupils who are persistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, we will contact parents to discuss any barriers and how these can be overcome to ensure that all



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children have access to a full school day. 10 minutes of lateness a day is equal to 31 hours of education being lost per academic year.

Monitoring Procedures:

Pupils who are in school every day find learning more satisfying and manage the demands of the school day in a more positive way. The school monitor the attendance of all pupils weekly and use a staged approach to address any issues.

- Stage 1 – Initial Concern (below school target of 96%) – Pupil's attendance level has fallen below the school target. Letter sent to parents/carers voicing concerns and offering the parent/carer the opportunity to contact the school to discuss concerns
- Stage 2 – Informal School Target (92%) – Pupil's attendance level not improving after initial concern letter. Pupil will be set an individual attendance target. Parent/carer offered an opportunity to contact the school to discuss concerns
- Stage 3 – School Target (90%) – Pupils attendance level still not improving. Parents/carers invited into school for a meeting to discuss concerns. Individual attendance target set; any absence during this period will be unauthorised unless covered by medical evidence. Targets will still be set should a parent/carer decline the offer of a meeting
- Stage 4 – Referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) if attendance target is not achieved and satisfactory reasons cannot be given / falls below 85%.
- Stage 5 – Penalty Notice/Legal Action – Failure to achieve the WAS target may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £120 per parent. Non-payment of this fine may lead to legal action and a maximum 3 month jail sentence

Any improvement in attendance will be recognised both individually to the pupil and also acknowledged to parents.

Persistent absences:

We use the term Persistent Absence when a pupil's overall absence equates to 10% or more of their possible sessions, whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

There are of course, good reasons (especially illness), which make attendance at school sometimes difficult. Nevertheless lessons missed cannot be repeated and 'catching up' on work is never as good as the original learning experience. Pupils with persistent absence are often unlikely to attain their full potential at school and are at



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risk of failing to stay in education after leaving. Statistical evidence shows that persistently absent pupils are also significantly more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour, youth crime and are more at risk of other negative outcomes (including teenage pregnancy and drug/alcohol abuse). It follows that if schools and local authorities focus on this high-risk group they will be in a strong position to make progress in the range of outcomes for children and young people for which they are accountable.

Leave of Absence Regulations:

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits. The Leave of Absence form can be found in Appendix A.



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Nursery / Early Years Provision:

Whilst Nursery, Pre-School and Reception children are not of statutory age the school's high expectations of attendance and punctuality still apply. Legal sanctions cannot be applied to children not of statutory age; however, all other practices and procedures will be applied in order to ensure an early commitment from parents/carers towards their child's education and attainment.

The Improving Attendance at School – Charlie Taylor report 2012 supports the importance of early years attendance monitoring. Therefore the school will record the attendance of nursery age pupils in line with the DfE Attendance coding guidance.

Deletions from the Register:

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil

Warton Nethersole CofE Primary School will follow Warwickshire County Councils Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

Performance

It is important to set realistic targets. The school will look at the interventions as part of the evaluation process in order to maintain their effectiveness.



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When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absence has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within the school

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting attendance is the responsibility of the whole school and the attendance policy is supported by our anti-bullying policy, exclusions policy and safeguarding policy.

THE WARWICKSHIRE ATTENDANCE SERVICE

The school is responsible for liaising closely with the Local Authority's Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) and follow their standard approaches in managing attendance issues. When appropriate the Warwickshire Attendance Service will escalate the situation and instigate legal procedures.

Prosecutions for non - school attendance must be conducted in line with the Warwickshire Non School Attendance and Fixed Penalty Code of Conduct and the Code for Crown Prosecutors and must pass the evidential and public interest tests.



Leave of Absence Application

Please note leave of absences will not be granted during term time unless the absence is considered exceptional circumstances as outlined in The Education Regulations 2013. If you are requesting leave of absence for your child please make sure you provide us with a full explanation. Leave of absence requests must be made in advance of the absence otherwise it will be recorded as unauthorised.

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child (ren) Class.....

Dates of Proposed Absence From To.....

Total Days requested on this Occasion

Reason for absence request:

.....

Signature of Parent/Carer Date.....

For School Use Only:

Date received by school Expected Date of Return to School

Authorised? Y/N

Signature of Head Teacher Date.....