

# **Wellington Primary School and Nursery**



## **Policy for Attendance**

**Date of review Sept 2018**

**Date of next review Sept 2019**

## **1.Rationale:**

Wellington Primary School promotes the view that regular attendance is important to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all of our children. We feel the whole school community takes responsibility for attendance. Obviously we are aware of Pre-school education being non statutory.

## **2.Aims:**

- To raise attendance
- Improve punctuality
- To raise level of achievement
- Maximise opportunities both in school and in later life.

## **3.Reasons for absence**

Parents and carers are asked to contact the school office by phone or in person if their child needs to be absent from school.

## **4. Authorised absences include:**

Sickness, hospital appointments, dentist, and funerals. Medical appointments should be arranged if possible outside the school day. Where this is not possible it is expected that pupils only miss part of the day.

## **5. Requesting Leave of Absence**

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

The school supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. However, there may be 'exceptional' circumstances when this is unavoidable. A list as to what does and does not constitute exceptional circumstances is shown in Appendix 1

Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence to support their exceptional circumstances.

There is no legal entitlement for leave in school time to go on holiday **and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.**

All holiday requests must be made in writing to the Governing Body.

No requests will be granted during the week in May in which S.A.T.'s take place for year 2 and year 6. Notification of the date will be given to parents as early as possible in the academic year.

Any holiday that has not been authorised will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

If a period of holiday leave is unauthorised parents / carers may be referred to the Education Welfare Service if the absence level is having a detrimental effect on the child's education. This may then result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

## **6.Response to absence**

If any child has not been registered or the school has not been notified about a child's absence, the office will contact the parent/ carer on the first morning. If the parent/ carer cannot be contacted within a

reasonable time after registration starts, then a home visit will be carried out. If still not contact is made to verify whereabouts of the child concerned, the local authority will be contacted for advice of next steps.

If the parent notifies the school of a child's reason for absence, but the child continues to be absent for more than a week then an update check will be made by the school in the form of a phone call. It is expected that the parent keeps the school informed of the ongoing absence.

If at the end of a term the child's attendance is less than 95% a letter will be sent out to draw parent's attention to the effect this will have on their child's education.

Where children are persistently absent e.g. less than 90% attendance the Head will invite parents/ carers into school to a formal meeting to find ways to support the family and child in improving attendance and there may be a referral to the Education Welfare Service. (Except in exceptional circumstances.)

## **7.Lateness**

EYFS starts at 8:45 and we encourage parents to be punctual. School starts at 8:55 a.m. Lateness is classed as any child coming into school after that time.

All children arriving late must report to the office. After 9:15 the lateness is classed as late after the registers closed.

Lateness is monitored half termly. Where children are persistently late the Head will be informed and formal discussions with the parents will take place.

## **8.Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Throughout the year parents will be kept informed of school expectations

## **9.Procedures:**

- Registers of all classes are kept and monitored.
- Log kept of all children who arrive late.
- Log kept of all children daily for whom no notification for absence has been received and of phone calls made to parents.

Lateness and attendance figures scrutinised on a half termly basis.

- Any child with an absence of less than 90% will have their records examined and may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

- Children with absence between 90% and 95% will have their reasons for absence monitored.

Attendance figures to be analysed half termly. These figures will be presented at Governors meetings. All practices will be reviewed annually.

## Appendix 1

### Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance

Headteachers may only grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. The following are examples of agreed exceptional circumstances to guide Headteachers when considering leave of absence requests.

Before deciding whether to authorise leave of absence Headteachers will consider

- The impact on the student's academic progress of any absence
- The pupils attendance over the academic year
- Whether the leave falls within any key stage national tests or exams.

#### ***Examples of exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time***

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling – Headteachers should use their discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence - up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative – only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional
- Teenage parents responsible for the care of their own child – at the Headteacher's discretion.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the LA – as appropriate.
- Time-off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs".
- Weddings of parents and siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that here is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave, for example where natural parents are separated, and in new relationships and it may cause a child further difficulties if he/she is excluded from a wedding. Each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

#### ***Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional***

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitment.