



# Wincham Community Primary School

## **Attendance & Truancy Policy**

### **Our School Mission Statement**

Learning together for the future in a safe,  
happy and supportive community.

## **POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY**

### **Statement of intent**

Wincham Community Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Wincham Community Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1995, which states that: “The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

### **Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1995
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1953

This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2016) ‘School attendance’
- DfE (2015) ‘Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England’

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behavioural Policy

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- The governing board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of Wincham Community Primary School.
- The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The governing board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of the school.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Attendance and Truancy Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.
- Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

**“Absence”** as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

An **“authorised absence”** as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

An **“unauthorised absence”** as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

**“Persistent absenteeism”** as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

## Registration

Wincham uses a computerised registration system and the Register is completed in the morning at 9am and in the afternoon at 1pm for KS2 and 1.30 pm for F/KS1. A pupil will receive a late mark if they fail to attend up to 15 minutes after these times. All pupils who are late must report to the office and sign in the ‘Late Book’.

A member of the Admin Team is responsible for collating Attendance Records in school and notifies the Head Teacher if there is any reason for concern. At the end of the year, each child’s attendance is analysed and a copy is given to parents with their child’s School Report.

The Headteacher’s report to Governors’ records the school termly attendance figures for authorised and unauthorised absence. Each week class attendance is reported as an average in the newsletter.

## Concerns

The Registers are examined regularly. If there is a frequent pattern of absence from school a member of the School Admin Team will telephone the parents to ascertain the reason for persistent absence. If there are concerns about a child’s non-attendance or unpunctuality, the class teacher consults the Head Teacher immediately. Details of attendance or late percentage are extracted from

the computer database. The Head Teacher shows this to the parent(s) during an informal discussion. If absences or unpunctuality persist, the Head Teacher contacts the Education Welfare Officer. If the situation needs discussing before a home visit, the Head Teacher should telephone or fill in EWS 1 form, which indicates the patterns.

Support is available from the Education Welfare Service from Cheshire West & Chester.

### **Absence Through Illness**

Wincham continues to provide as much education as the child's medical condition allows to keep up the momentum of their learning. Parents may be asked for Medical Evidence if their children are absent for more than 3 days through illness. This may be in the form of an appointment card, prescription or Doctors note.

The school monitors attendance of those pupils who are absent from school because of short-term or chronic illness, and close links are maintained with parents.

Educational support, including the provision of work and materials is provided for those pupils who are absent from school, with medical conditions for more than 5 days. The teaching staff liaise with Medical Advisers and/or Home Tuition Providers, so that, during prolonged absence, pupils receive suitable work for their age and ability group.

The reintegration of children into school after a long absence through ill health is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including the class teacher, Teaching Assistants and Home or Hospital Tutor meet to discuss the return to school. Friends and other pupils are encouraged to help the child settle back in school. Extra support is provided (subject to available resources) after an analysis of the child's needs.

### **Truancy**

All staff at Wincham believe in the importance of continuity in every child's learning. Staff are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although truancy is very rare at Wincham if staff are suspicious that a child might be playing truant, action is taken immediately.

If truancy is suspected, the Head Teacher and the Educational Welfare Officer are notified. Parents are contacted, either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents to bring their child to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved. If the Head Teacher is unable to talk to the parent(s), he or she talks to the child to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If problems are identified, these are discussed and resolved with the class teacher/member of staff/other pupils.

At Wincham we endeavour to discover, through discussion with the individual pupils, classes and the School Council, what the children like and dislike about school. The staff consider the children's opinions and, if possible, adjustments are made to teaching and learning procedures and the school environment.

### **Missing children**

Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.

The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.

A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.

The following areas will be systematically searched:

- All classrooms
- All toilets
- Community Centre
- All shared areas of the building
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds

Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any special educational needs and disabilities, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

### **Religious observances**

- The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.
- Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

### **Appointments**

- As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.
- If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

### **Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities**

Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1953, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require

them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).

Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the pupil's home LA.

The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.

The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:

- The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer; and
- The conditions of the licence will be observed.

The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.

The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.

The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six-month period.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.

Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day.

The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 95 percent.

Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.

The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.

The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.

Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days.

A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.

The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:

- Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place;
- Where performances or activities are taking place; or
- Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.

The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time.

If the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the licence.

The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

## **Young carers**

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.

The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

## **Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality**

### **Assemblies**

Individual Assemblies on everyday matters relate to attendance, such as, time-keeping, excuses, illness.

### **Class Organisation/Lessons**

- ◆ Lessons on telling the time.
- ◆ Children Well Being Questionnaire
- ◆ School Council discussions on feelings, likes and dislikes about school.
- ◆ Peer group support – contacting friends who are absent.
- ◆ Positive support for those pupils who have been absent for a significant period – planned reintegration.

## Appendix 1

### **SIMs Attendance - Admin Team**

- 9.00am - Teachers enter class attendance into SIMs.
- 9.15am - Registers Close.  
(Any late arrivals after registers close at 9.15 are entered in SIMs by Admin Staff as L- Late).
- 9.30am - Two reports are run in the Office each day to account for all absences. The 'Unexplained Absence Report' highlights any pupils not in school unexpectedly. The 'Session Absence Report' then identifies all pupils who have are absent for the day, including those which have been previously approved.
- 1) The 'Unexplained Absence Report' is checked by Admin Staff first, and parents chased up by text or phone. SIMs is then updated with a code if an explanation is received.
- 2) Admin Staff then print off the 'Session Absence Report' which includes all daily absences, including those which are unexpected. This is filed in the 'Daily Attendance File' with copies of Class Lists. *In case of a fire, this would be taken out to tally pupils against.*
- 10.30pm - Any Unexplained absences not reported will be notified to the Headteacher or Senco with the pupil's Data Collection Sheet. They will make the decision to notify the EWO/ Police or do a home visit.

### **Fire Alarms**

Teachers – Must take laminated Class Lists to Assembly Points and use to register pupils. *(If this is not possible, Admin Staff will have a copy of all Class Lists in the 'Daily Attendance File'.)*

Admin Staff – Must take:-

- ✓ Visitors Book
- ✓ Daily Attendance Folder (see above)
- ✓ Leaving / Late Books/ Staff Register

## Appendix 2

### SIMs Attendance Registers – Teaching Staff

1. Attendance should be entered on SIMS each morning by 9.15am.
2. For any children absent without explanation, please enter as code 'N', and then change the code once an explanation for the absence is received. If updates are required after 9.15am Admin Staff can do this.
3. If any child arrives late (but before 9.15am) please change the code to L and note how many minutes late (right click).
4. If the child arrives after registers have closed then the School Office will mark them late on SIMs.
5. The School Office will check the attendance on SIMs every morning and any children with an unexplained absence will be investigated and the parents will be contacted for an explanation by Admin/ Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. If a reason is received by the Office, the code will be entered with comments onto SIMs.
6. Admin Staff will print out a 'Session Absence Report' which lists all children absent.
7. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, the School Office will print out a copy of the SIMs register, if time allows, and bring it to the Assembly area with the late / leaving school books, Visitors / Staff Signing-in books and Daily Attendance files.
8. Each class has a laminated copy of a daily register. Mark off any absent children with a whiteboard marker and in the event of a fire alarm take the sheet with you when you leave the classroom and use it to register the children in the assembly area. Spare Class Lists are available in the Daily Attendance File.