

White Laith Primary School
Attendance Policy

Agreed by Governors: To be agreed November 2016.
Review Date: October 2018

The Attendance Policy is part of our approach to safeguarding children

At White Laith we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Good attendance is essential if children are to participate fully in all school activities. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at White Laith. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

We also exercise this responsibility by educating our children so that they grow in their understanding of their rights and responsibilities to themselves and others, in safety consciousness, and, in their maturity and abilities to keep themselves and others safe.

We perceive this to be part of our role in promoting British values.

Regular attendance at school is a key indicator of performance. Where a child misses even one lesson in a sequence, it can affect their learning. Likewise, punctuality is also critical, to ensure children are properly prepared for learning.

Aims:

- For all children to have 0% unauthorised absence. Any absence from school should be authorised.
- Attendance levels to be at least the national average but aiming to be better than the national average. The aspiration is to have 100% attendance whenever possible.
- To maximise the attendance of every child
- To ensure children and parents/carers recognise the importance of good attendance and act accordingly.
- For all children to arrive at school on time every day.

What we ask children and parents/carers to do:

- We want all children to aim for full attendance
- Parents should ensure their children attend school unless there is an authorised reason.
- Parents should ensure children arrive at school on time.
- We expect parents to inform school if their child is absent (We can only accept explanations from parents, carers and other adult family members)

What the School will do:

- We will encourage punctuality and good attendance through incentives and rewards.
- We will do all we can to make school a safe, settled, secure place to be, and a place where children enjoy themselves
- We will record attendance accurately
- We will contact parents when a child is absent and no reason has been given
- We will offer a sympathetic response to difficulties
- We will offer help where necessary from within school and the Leeds City Council Children Services
- We will regularly remind parents of the importance of attendance

Responding to non attendance:

When a child is absent and no reason is given, the following shall apply:

- School will make a friendly contact with parents on the first day of absence by telephone or text. This contact will usually be made by 9.30am.
- If there is no response, a second contact will be attempted. If there is no response to this second contact we may visit the home or take other action to investigate the reason for the absence.
- If contact cannot be made or if there is any concern regarding absence, the School Business Manager may ask the Cluster On Street Team to visit the child's home and either bring the child to school or confirm illness.
- Depending on the response, the absence will be categorised as either authorised or unauthorised

Regular reviews of children with less than 92% attendance will be carried out.

If we are concerned about levels of attendance of a particular child:

- We will contact the home to express concern and offer support
- We may visit the home

If we continue to be concerned:

- We will write to the parent/carer to explain our concerns
- The Family Outreach Worker / Attendance Officer will contact the parents of children where attendance is a concern. A meeting will be held with the parents to understand the nature or reason for their child's absence and agree measures in order to improve attendance moving forward. Any concerns will be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher.

If we are still concerned:

- We will engage the support of the Cluster Attendance Improvement Officer.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality:

We will regularly analyse attendance and punctuality patterns so we can target areas of concern and improve attendance levels.

School attendance must at least reach the national average initially. When attendance levels are above the national average, variations in performance will continue to be addressed.

Governors also set targets for attendance and punctuality to trigger investigation and action.

We will analyse the attendance and punctuality of:

- Individuals
- Classes
- Year groups
- Gender groups
- Vulnerable groups

This will allow us to identify specific groups for whom special attention is needed and to target resources.

The headteacher will report to governors termly on attendance patterns and progress.

Rewards:

Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded . Rewards may include: class certificates, individual certificates, stickers and prizes

Attendance will be reviewed each half-term as part of our Assertive Mentoring system and children will be rewarded with Green grades if attendance is above 95%

Maintaining a high profile:

- A display board will be maintained with information about attendance and support for parents.
- References will be made to progress in newsletters.

Sickness:

- We expect that children become ill from time to time and illness is classed as authorised absence. We are also aware that from time to time a 'sickness bug' can quickly spread across classes.
- Patterns of illness will be monitored in line with usual termly monitoring. Where any child exhibits high levels of illness (equivalent to 10 sessions or 5 days a year) we request that medical evidence can be provided in the form of an, appointment card or prescribed medication for any medical absence to be approved
- If there are already concerns about levels of absence (<92% / 10 sessions missed) and appropriate evidence is not provided sickness absence will not be authorised.

Leave of absence:

- Parents/Carers do not have a legal right or entitlement to take their children out of school during term time. No person can demand leave of absence for this purpose.
- The Head Teacher cannot authorise any leave of absence for holiday during term time.
- In exceptional circumstances leave of absence may be granted by the Head Teacher during term time e.g. family funeral or holiday pattern dictated by the employer. Supporting evidence for such events would be required in order for absence to be authorised.

- Parents must fill in a leave of absence form, requesting leave of absence, at least two weeks before the absence. This can be requested from the school office.

Punctuality:

When a child arrives between 9.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. they will be recorded as *late*. This is recorded as 'L' on the official register print out.

When a child arrives after 9.30 a.m. they will be recorded as *absent late*. This will be recorded as 'u' on the official register print out and is counted as an absence.

The head teacher will report punctuality levels to governors each term.

Roles and responsibilities:

Class Teacher:

The class teacher will complete the Optical Mark Reader attendance form each day between 8.50 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. and between 1.10 p.m. and 1.15 p.m.

Notes about children will be placed in the register. If a parent verbally informs the teacher that a child will be absent on a particular day, the teacher will make a note for the register.

If a child is late, the teacher will ensure s/he has been to the office to enter his/her name in the late book.

Family Outreach Worker / Attendance Officer

The Family Outreach Worker will contact the parents of children where attendance is a concern. A meeting will be held with the parents to understand the nature or reason for their child's absence and agree measures in order to improve attendance moving forward.

Any concerns will be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher.

Liaison with Secondary School:

At transition time we will make direct contact and provide information to the receiving high school where we have concerns about the attendance of a child.

Office Staff:

The School Business Manager will contact the parent on day one to confirm the reason for absence.

If contact cannot be made or if there is any concern regarding absence, the School Business Manager may ask the Cluster On Street Team to visit the child's home and either bring the child to school or confirm illness.

Office staff will administer the SIMs attendance database. They will ensure teachers are informed when children are absent. They will ensure children who are late are entered in the late book and that where children leave before the end of a session (e.g. for medicals or illness), it is recorded.

Headteacher:

The HT will monitor attendance and authorise attendance where appropriate. The headteacher will report to governors at each full governing body meeting.

Governors:

Governors will monitor attendance each term. They will set specific targets as necessary. They will evaluate the actions taken by the school to improve attendance.