



Attendance Policy



Policy Number:	
Approval date:	
Review date:	

Adopted by the Board of Trustees/Governing Body

Signed Chair of Governors	
Signed Chair of Trustees	
Signed CEO	

The review of this policy will be as and when required in response to national requirements and in light of continuous school based monitoring and evaluation data.

1. Aims

At Watling Meadows Primary School, we recognise that **regular attendance and punctuality are vital for children's learning, wellbeing, and long-term life chances**. We are committed to creating a calm, welcoming and supportive school where every child feels safe, valued, and eager to attend.

This policy aims to:

- Promote a **whole-school culture** that values and supports excellent attendance
- Set **high expectations** for attendance and punctuality for all pupils
- Reduce absence, including **persistent and severe absence**
- Ensure every pupil can access their **full-time entitlement to education**
- Identify and address attendance concerns **early**
- Work **in partnership with families** to remove barriers to attendance
- Fulfil our **statutory duties** in line with DfE and Warwickshire guidance [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk), [\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

Attendance, like safeguarding, is **everyone's responsibility**.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- *Working together to improve school attendance* (DfE statutory guidance, August 2024) [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Warwickshire County Council Attendance Service Guidance and Code of Conduct [\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting attendance as a priority within the school's ethos
- Holding leaders to account for attendance outcomes
- Reviewing attendance data regularly and challenging trends
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate attendance training
- Ensuring systems are fair, consistent, and inclusive

3.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy consistently
- Monitoring attendance data and reporting to governors
- Ensuring statutory duties are met
- Working with Warwickshire County Council where attendance concerns escalate
- Authorising leave of absence decisions
- Issuing or authorising penalty notices where appropriate, in line with local procedures

3.3 Designated Senior Leader for Attendance

The Designated Senior Leader (Senior Attendance Champion) is responsible for:

- Leading and embedding good attendance practice across the school
- Analysing attendance data and identifying emerging patterns
- Coordinating early intervention and support for pupils and families
- Liaising with external agencies and Warwickshire Attendance Service
- Ensuring a supportive, child-centred approach is maintained

3.4 School Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting high attendance through positive relationships
- Recording registers accurately and promptly
- Identifying and reporting attendance concerns early
- Supporting pupils to feel safe, welcome and ready to learn

3.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school **every day and on time**
- Notify the school on the **first day of absence** and provide reasons
- Avoid term-time absence wherever possible
- Engage with school support and attendance meetings
- Seek help early if difficulties with attendance arise

3.6 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Engage positively with learning
- Tell a trusted adult if something is making it difficult to attend

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

Watling Meadows Primary School will:

- Maintain an **electronic attendance register**
- Take registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session
- Use the **national attendance codes** in line with regulations [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)
- Retain attendance records for **six years**

School start time: **8.45am**

Registers close: **9:00am**

4.2 Unplanned Absence

Parents must contact the school by **9:00am** on the first day of absence.

Absence due to illness (including mental health) will be authorised unless there is a genuine concern, in which case the school may request evidence sensitively and proportionately.

4.3 Planned Absence

Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours where possible.

All other leave of absence requests must be made **in advance** and will only be authorised in **exceptional circumstances**, at the Headteacher's discretion, in line with regulations and Warwickshire guidance.

4.4 Lateness

- Late before registers close: recorded as **late**
- Late after registers close: recorded as **unauthorised absence**

Persistent lateness will be monitored and addressed with families.

4.5 Following Up Absence

The school will:

- Contact parents on the first day of unexplained absence
- Maintain daily contact where absence continues
- Escalate concerns in line with safeguarding procedures
- Refer to Warwickshire Attendance Service where appropriate [\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absences include:

- Illness or medical appointments
- Religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances (rare, unavoidable, and unlikely to recur)

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Term-time holidays without permission
- Absence without an acceptable reason

6. Promoting Good Attendance

Watling Meadows Primary School promotes positive attendance through:

- A welcoming and inclusive school environment
- Strong relationships with families
- Celebration of good attendance in assemblies and newsletters
- Clear communication of expectations
- Supporting emotional wellbeing and inclusion

Good attendance is recognised and encouraged, not solely enforced.

7. Supporting Pupils with Attendance Concerns

We follow a **support-first approach**, in line with DfE and Warwickshire guidance. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk), [\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

Support may include:

- Early conversations with families
- Attendance support plans
- Reasonable adjustments for SEND or health needs
- Multi-agency support
- Attendance contracts, notices to improve, or penalty notices where required

Legal sanctions are used **only when support has not been successful or engaged with**.

8. Pupils Absent or Returning to School

We provide tailored support for pupils who are absent due to:

- Physical or mental ill health
- SEND or emotional barriers (including EBSNA)
- Family or safeguarding circumstances

Reintegration following absence will be planned sensitively, with families and pupils.

9. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored:

- Daily and weekly by staff
- Half-termly and termly by senior leaders
- Regularly by governors

Persistent absence (10%+) and severe absence (50%+) are prioritised for intervention. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if guidance changes, and approved by the Governing Board.

11. Linked Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- EYFS Policy