



West Lodge School

A co-educational prep school for 3-11 year olds

Attendance Policy

Aims

The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- To ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- To prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
- To recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
- To help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

Attendance Approach at West Lodge School

At West Lodge School, we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your son/daughter, and we look to you to support this objective.

The School will consistently promote the benefits of good

attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating these expectations to pupils and parents. Robust procedures for monitoring attendance and absence are in place to ensure early intervention if issues or concerns arise.

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring, championing and improving attendance in school. Support will be provided by the School Office in monitoring attendance on a daily, weekly and termly basis to seek explanations for absence or lateness. Although specifically the Head Teacher's responsibility all staff are responsible for monitoring and promoting good attendance, highlighting concerns to the Head Teacher.

Weekly, termly and annual monitoring of attendance patterns and trends will enable support to be provided in a targeted way to pupils and families.

A summary of attendance will be provided to governors as part of the Head Teacher's safeguarding report.

The School recognises that some pupils may find it harder than others to attend school, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships. Where necessary for pupils with disabilities reasonable adjustments will be made.

School Day Timings & Registration Procedures

All pupils are required to be in school by 8.40am, ready for registration at 8.45am. A breakfast club operates from 7.30am – 8.30am and children attending are supervised by school staff.

Children must attend on time to be given a mark for that session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Late arrival after registration without good reason is counted as an unauthorised absence.

Electronic registers using the School's MIS system are in place with registers taken by 8.55am and in the afternoons by 1.35pm.

The school day ends at either 12 noon or 3.15pm for Nursery

depending if they attend for the morning session or all day and 3.15pm for Year R. Year 1 finishes at 3.20pm and Year 2 at 3.25pm. Children in these years can be supervised, if required, until 5.30pm.

The school day ends at 3.30pm for Years 3 to 6. Optional extra-curricular clubs run from 3.30pm until 4.30pm or 5pm for some activities. Children in these years can also be supervised, if required, until 6.00pm.

Pupils in Years N to Year 6 are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to parents in advance.

Absence Requests

Requests for absence must be made in writing and should reach the school preferably 5 days in advance of the planned absence (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8.30am). Parents are asked to avoid withdrawing their children from school for holidays during term time and requests will only be authorised in absolutely exceptional circumstances. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than medical or dental appointments) should be sent to the Head Teacher ideally at least two weeks in advance.

Absence Due To Illness

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence. A letter or email should then be sent by a parent on the return of their child to school, giving a reason for the absence. We will always telephone home on the first day of any unexplained absence in order to make sure that your child is safe.

Notification of Term Dates

Term dates are always sent to parents more than a year in advance in order that you can arrange your holidays without disrupting your child's education. As stated above, term time holiday requests will not be authorised unless the circumstances are exceptional.

Legal Requirements

The law states that every child of compulsory school age should attend school every day that it is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being ill or being given permission for an absence in advance.

Addressing Poor Attendance & Monitoring

The local authority will be contacted to follow up any concerns the school may have regarding poor attendees or pupil welfare. Poor attendance, unless there are justifiable reasons, is also typically viewed as a safeguarding issue.

Attendance is formally monitored twice a year by the Head Teacher at the end of January and at the end of the school year but if there are concerns it is looked into at other terms. The School Office will review and monitor attendance on a weekly, half-termly and termly basis, highlighting concerns to the Head Teacher. Where attendance is below 95% the reasons for those will be explored and this will be brought to parent's attention by letter if this is not explained by a particular circumstance such as a period of illness which we have been made aware of. Should it be significantly below the expected level, parents will be invited to meet with the Head Teacher so that any issues can be addressed.

We believe the above strategy is effective in maintaining good pupil attendance which is monitored regularly.

In accordance with national requirements attendance records will be retained for seven years.

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

Reviewed Date: March 2024

Next Review Date: March 2025

Reviewer: Head Teacher