



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date Adopted	Date to be Reviewed	Source of Policy	Audience
Autumn Term 2017 (19/9/2017)	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education Welfare Service Example Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Staff• Governors• Parents and Carers

1. Purpose

1.1 At The Weald (CofE) Primary School we aim to ensure that all children receive a full-time education, which maximises opportunities for each child to realise his or her true potential.

1.2 We will provide a welcoming, loving environment where we will support all children to thrive. All The Weald staff will work with children and families to ensure each child attends school regularly and punctually. We aim for attendance to be at least in line with the national average or better. Punctuality is also a priority for The Weald and we will work to ensure that the percentage of children arriving on time and ready to learn each day is at least in line with the national average.

1.3 To meet these objectives, The Weald Primary School will establish effective systems to:

- Communicate with children, their parents and carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.
- Praise, incentivise and reward the efforts that children and their parents and carers make to improve their attendance and timekeeping.
- Work with those parents and carers whose children have low attendance and punctuality to identify strategies to improve.

2. Statutory Duties

Duties for Parents and Carers:

2.1 The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their children receive full time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. Parents and carers have the responsibility for making sure their children attend school and on time.

Duties for Schools:

2.2 The Weald Primary School is responsible for recording child attendance twice a day, once at the start of the morning sessions and once during the afternoon sessions.

3. Aims

- To promote excellent attendance and punctuality through creative and supportive means.
- To ensure the overall percentage of children's attendance is at least in line with the national average.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with The Weald Primary School including children, parents and carers, teachers, support staff and governors.
- To clearly define a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and ensures consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and children.
- To regularly and routinely gather and analyse attendance related data.
- To ensure positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions that promote and improve attendance rates.
- To work in an effective partnership with the Attendance and Engagement Service and with other services and agencies and the Local Authority as appropriate.

4. Roles and responsibilities regarding attendance

4.1 Children

4.1.1 Children should arrive at The Weald Primary School ready to learn on time. Children can arrive between 8.45 and 8.55 when the bell goes for the start of the day.

4.2 Parents

4.2.1 It is a legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school. The Weald School expects parents/carers to ensure their child attends every day, on time and ready to learn.

4.2.2 Parents/carers are expected to know what absences are acceptable, (see Appendix 1). Any absence will only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. Parents should be aware of the possible legal consequences of non-attendance, (see Appendix 2).

4.2.3 Parents/carers should be aware that poor punctuality may result in an unauthorised absence being recorded which could lead to intervention by the School and Attendance and Engagement Service.

4.2.4 Parents/carers are asked to inform The Weald Primary School of any barriers to their child attending school.

4.2.5 The Weald Primary School asks that all parents/carers inform the Headteacher (i.e., the school office) on their child's first day of absence. If contact is not before the child returns to school, a note should be provided. Medical evidence may be requested by the school if non-attendance is due to illness.

4.3 Staff Roles and Responsibilities

4.3.1 The Weald Primary School expects all staff to support the regular attendance of their pupils by supporting families to address any barriers that may prevent their good attendance.

4.4 Role of the Class teacher

4.4.1 It is the responsibility of all class teachers at The Weald Primary School to formally take their class register accurately and within five minutes of the start of the morning session at 8.55am and the afternoon session at 12.55pm for KS1 and 1.15pm for KS2. Children's absence letters must be passed, promptly, to the school office.

4.4.2 Teachers are expected to act on attendance data provided by the Attendance Officer to monitor the attendance of their pupils and promptly report any concerns to the Headteacher and parents.

4.4.3 The Weald Primary Schools expects all class teachers to encourage punctuality through the appropriate positive meeting and greeting of children. All lateness to sessions must be recorded in the register and challenged appropriately. Class teachers should support children who are returning to The Weald following an absence by ensuring that adequate resources are provided for their positive re-integration.

4.4.4 Class teachers are expected to monitor their class attendance and identify patterns and promptly report any concerns to the Headteacher.

4.5 Role of the Senior Leadership Team

4.5.1 Attendance will be an item on the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting agendas at least half termly and the link between attendance and attainment should be promoted. Assessment data will be analysed according to pupils above and below 90% attendance (the current DfE descriptor for persistent absence).

4.5.2 It is the responsibility of the SLT to have an overview of attendance within their related groups and act upon any concerns raised by class teachers. SLT will receive, fortnightly from the school Attendance Officer or LA Attendance Officer, analysed data identifying attendance concerns.

4.6 Role of the Attendance Officer

4.6.1 It is the responsibility of the School's Attendance Officer to maintain the day to day running of attendance procedures. When there is no explanation for absence they should make contact with parents/carers to confirm the nature of the absence.

4.6.2 The Attendance Officer should analyse attendance data to identify any patterns of concern and liaise with the relevant parties, e.g. family, Class Teacher, or Headteacher. The Attendance Officer will support the school in raising the profile of attendance through the use of notice boards and in other aspects of family support and learning development.

4.6.3 The Headteacher is the named Attendance Office for The Weald Primary School until the appointment of the Family Primary Liaison.

4.7 Role of the Headteacher (Primary Development and Inclusion)

4.7.1 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to oversee the school's attendance strategy, policy and practice. In collaboration with the SLT, the Headteacher will monitor, evaluate and review the policy and its impact annually.

4.7.2 Working with the Family Primary Liaison, the Headteacher will record all attendance related action in the school's termly report for SLT review. She or he will also produce a termly report to Governors on matters of attendance.

4.7.3 The Headteacher will meet with parents and carers, class teachers, the Family Primary Liaison and EWO to address persistent attendance issues, and monitor the progress made towards the meeting of agreed attendance targets.

4.8 Role of the Governing Body

4.8.1 Governors will monitor and evaluate attendance and ensure the policy is carried out.

4.9 Good Shepherd Trust

4.10 Role of the Education Welfare Officer (from Surrey) will be key to the monitoring of attendance at The Weald (CofE) Primary School in partnership with the Headteacher and Good Shepherd Trust.

5. Punctuality

5.1 Every child is expected to be at school by the time the bell goes at 8.45am. Registration is at 8.55am and registers close at this time. Class teachers are expected to be in their teaching spaces for 8.00 am. Children are encouraged to be on the playground from 8.30am onwards.

5.2 A record of latecomers and reason for lateness will be kept and discussed weekly by the Headteacher; Pupil Records Assistant and Home School Links Worker.

5.3 The Pupil Records Officer/Admin Team will record lateness in Pupil Asset. A letter will be sent home to inform parents if a child is late more than once per term.

6. Encouraging Excellent Attendance

6.1 The Weald Primary School proactively encourages children to come to school through specific initiatives, such as our breakfast club, ensuring that our educational offer is engaging to motivate children to want to attend.

6.2 Our guiding principles for the curriculum include ensuring children have a role in planning what they want to learn with topics to be based on children's interests and units of work will incorporate 'hands-on' learning. This focus on developing a love of learning will be an aim of the school, for the staff as much as the children.

6.3 Individual and class achievement will be celebrated using a variety of activities and strategies, which we will continually be developing. In addition to verbal praise, an example of celebrating individual achievement includes writing with the child a note home praising persistence in a lesson, improved times table, or even demonstrating great behaviour for learning in a time interval.

7. Definitions

7.1 Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1.1 It is the Headteacher's decision whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

7.1.2 A telephone call on the first day of absence followed by a letter on return from parents/carers does not in itself authorise an absence; only The Weald Primary School's acceptance of the explanation authorises the absence. The following examples should clarify:

7.2 Authorised Absence

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointment (half day maximum)
- Days of religious observance such as main religious days of Eid (agreed with the Headteacher beforehand)
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement
- Going to other schools for visits, interviews or examination

7.3 Unauthorised Absence

- Looking after brothers, sisters and others
- Shopping
- Celebrating a birthday

- Sleeping in
- One child is ill, so all are kept off
- Minor ailments such as tummy ache or headache
- Because it is the end of the week or the term

7.4 Children arriving after the close of registration without a valid reason risk that session being recorded as an unauthorised absence.

7.5 Holidays in term time will not be authorised. As of September 2013, government regulations state that Headteachers/Deputy Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time. If children are taken out of school without permission, their absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be liable for prosecution.

8. Persistent Absence

8.1 Pupils are categorised as being a 'Persistent Absence' pupil if they accumulate 15% or more absences

8.2 For children whose attendance falls into the 'persistent absence' category, parents/carers will be contacted by the Headteacher and/or they will be invited to school. During this meeting an action plan will be compiled with input from the parent/carer, school and pupil.

8.3 Targets will be agreed and reviewed until that child is no longer in the persistent absence category.

8.4 There would be a focus on links between attendance and attainment.

8.5 A parenting contract will be offered if it is deemed appropriate

8.6 If appropriate the targets will include fast track to prosecution which will involve the Education Welfare officer

8.7 If the parent fails to attend the meeting or there is no significant improvement in attendance the issues will be brought to the attention Education Welfare Officer by the completion of the referral form as outlined above.

9. Exceptional Circumstances Including Holidays

9.1 The Weald CofE Primary School, in line with the Local Authority and the Education Regulations Act 2013, will not normally authorise holidays taken in term time because of the detrimental effect this absence would have upon the child's learning (see also Exceptional Leave Application Form Appendix A).

10 Legal Sanctions and Penalty Notices

10.1 Legal proceedings will be considered after the school and EWO have tried to engage with, and offer support to, a family of a child who has attendance issues.

10.2 If the poor/non-attendance of a child is not resolved, The Weald Primary School, in consultation with the LA court office and Attendance Officer may decide to take legal action against the parents or responsible adult of the child.

10.3 The Weald CofE Primary School will consider applying for penalty notice warnings in the following circumstances:

- Unauthorised absence of ten sessions or more (There are two sessions in a day)

- Unauthorised holidays in term time
- Persistent late arrival (after the register has closed and an unauthorised absence is created).

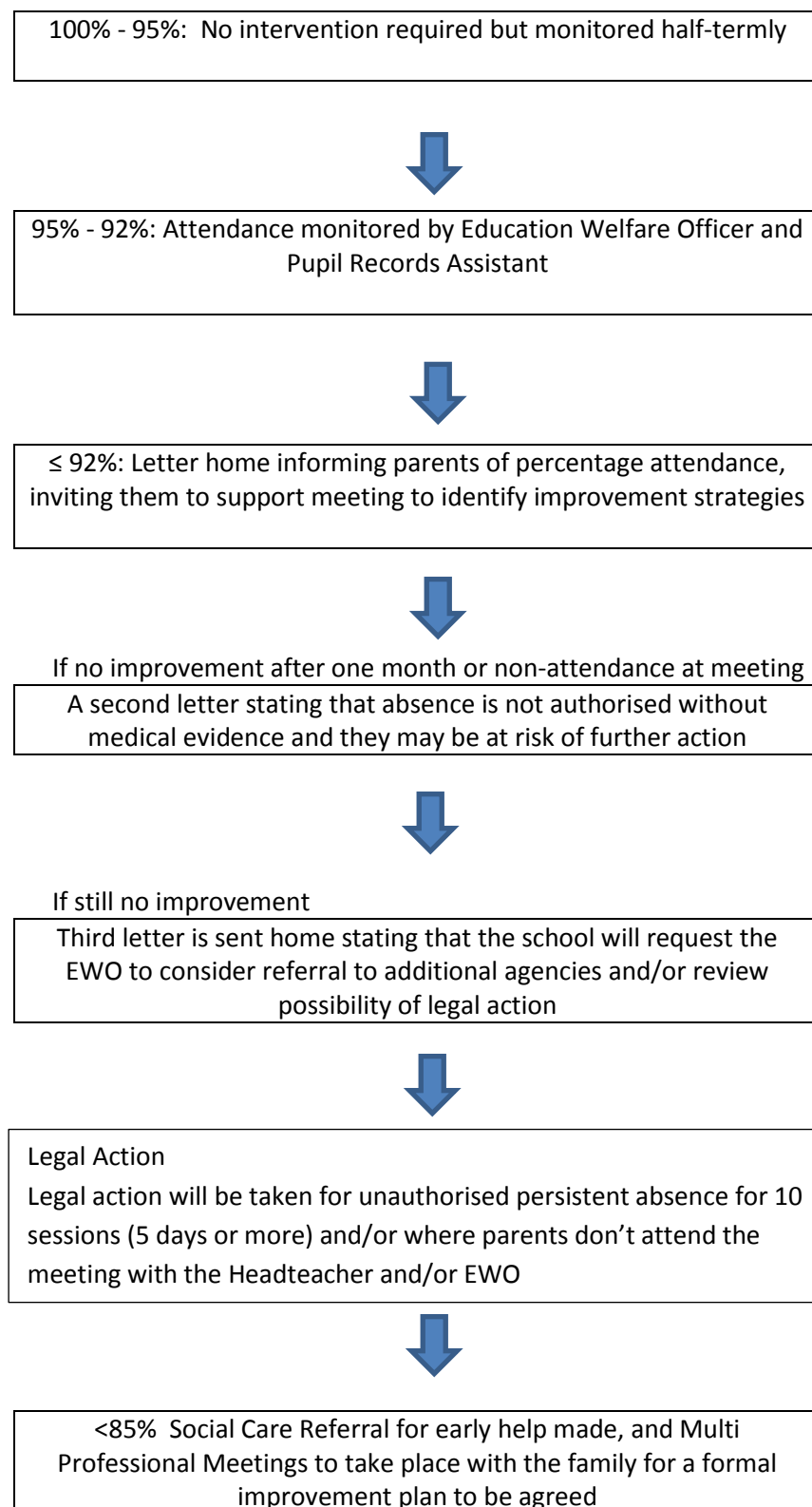
10.4 The Local Authority can instigate prosecution under the Education Act 1996 section 441 or 441(a) when;-

- Parent/Carers persistently fail to respond to any correspondence in relation to their child's absence
- Evidence indicates that support has been offered but parents/carers have failed to engage
- Targets have been agreed with the parent/carers through the Fast track procedure but improvements have not been made
- There is sufficient evidence that parent/carers have failed in their responsibility to ensure that their child receives appropriate full time education.

10.4 Disposal for prosecutions for non-school attendance can range from a fine to a custodial sentence.

10.5 If found guilty by a Magistrate a parent/responsible adult could be fined up to £1,000, or a Parenting Order could be issued, which lasts for up to a year.

Escalation of Interventions



This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.