



Wedmore First School Academy

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5th November 2018

Letter on Attendance and Punctuality

Dear Parents/Carers

In line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, we will monitor and report on the impact of our Attendance Policy every half term. Reporting will include statistical data on whole school attendance.

Summary of attendance for the whole school

For the Academic Year 2017/18 the school attendance was 95.8%

For the period 5 September 2018 to 26 October 2018 the school attendance was 96.36%

Promoting Good Attendance

As part of our commitment to maximising the potential of every child and in line with our policy the school will continue to actively promote good and excellent attendance.

We will inform you if your child is not meeting our attendance target of 96% plus. However, in the specific case of the first half term of the academic year, it is unlikely that contact will be made, as proportionally even the smallest amount of time out of school may cause attendance to fall below 96%. Please be advised that we will report to you via letter, even if absence is medical or health related. This is part of our procedure and does not necessarily mean the school has any concerns.

Your child's annual attendance figure will be recorded in their end of year school report.

In the meanwhile, I thought it would be helpful to remind you of some of the key elements of our policy and procedures and to help address any misconception around attendance and punctuality.

From September 2013, the DfE clarified the following regarding term time leave:

- There is no '10 day' holiday entitlement in term time;
- Holidays in term time will not be authorised;
- Pupils will only be granted term time leave for 'exceptional circumstances';
- Exceptional circumstances will be agreed at the discretion of the headteacher (advice from the DfE is recorded in our policy);
- It is up to the headteacher to decide how many days leave will be granted.

In addition, the importance attached to regular attendance will be communicated to the children annually and at the end of each term. A certificate will be presented to each child who has achieved attendance of 96% or above for that term. Those children will also be praised individually in the school celebration assembly. We believe that making children aware of the value of good attendance, at this stage of their education, will help them in developing a longer term respect for its worth. Please understand that we will be sensitive in regard to unavoidable absence and that we will ensure that the children recognise the difference.



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Lateness

In order to clarify our expectations of attendance, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind/inform you of our policy and procedures in regard to lateness.

Our school day starts at 9.00 am and we expect your child to be in their classroom at that time.

Registers are marked as soon as children get to their classroom and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by 9.05 am. Of course we understand that on the odd occasion something unforeseen may happen which will mean you are running late. However persistent lateness will involve a letter being sent to you; to remind you of our procedures and to ensure an improvement is seen in future. If no improvement is seen, further action will be taken.

At 9.30 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with DfE regulations on school attendance, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This could possibly lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice, if the problem persists. If a child is late due to Local Authority transport then this will not be marked down as an unauthorised absence.

<p>Above 97%: Less than 11 sessions of absence over the year Excellent attendance! These pupils will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future.</p>
<p>95-97%: 11-19 sessions of absence over the year These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Getting it right now will make the transition to Middle School easier.</p>
<p>93-95%: 20-26 sessions of absence over the year These pupils may make the expected progress but the missing sessions will have a negative impact on their education.</p>
<p>89-92%: 27-41 sessions of absence over the year Pupils in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.</p>
<p>85-88%: 42-56 sessions of absence over the year Pupils in this group are missing six weeks of school per year. The government classifies pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees" and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of pupils in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.</p>

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. If you have any concerns or queries regarding this letter, please contact the school office. We are always here to help.

We look forward to your support with our policy on Attendance (published on our website and a copy is available at the school office).

Yours sincerely



Ms D Mawdsley
Headteacher