

Wigginton Primary School



Attendance Policy

Contents

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Training of staff
5. Absence procedures
6. Contact information
7. Attendance officer
8. Lateness
9. Term-time leave
10. Truancy
11. Missing children
12. Religious observances
13. Appointments
14. Young carers
15. Monitoring and review

Appendix

- a) Leave of absence requests letter , form and information for parents
- b) Letter for persistent absenteeism

This policy has been agreed by the *Governors* and is reviewed every 3 years.

Signed _____ (*Chair of Governors*)

Signed _____ (*Headteacher*)

Date: 11.2.21

Statement of intent

Wigginton Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Wigginton Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-
(a) to age, ability and aptitude and
(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have
Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."
- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Education Act 1996
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- 1.2. This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
DfE (2016) 'School attendance': Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (November 2016)

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Wigginton Primary School.
- 2.2. The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3. The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 2.4. The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- 2.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 2.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 2.7. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- 2.8. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.
- 2.9. Pupils should take increasing responsibility in accordance with their age for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

3. Definitions

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

"Absence" as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

An **"authorised absence"** as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

An **"unauthorised absence"** as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

"Persistent absenteeism" as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Absence procedures

- 5.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and each day thereafter and state the reason(s) for absence.
- 5.2. Alternatively, parents may visit school and report the absence to the **school office** where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- 5.3. In either case, a note will be made on the electronic register explaining the reason for absence.
- 5.4. A **phone call** will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the day that they do not attend school.
- 5.5. In the case of persistent absence, the parents will be sent a letter (APPENDIX B) informing them that this will be reviewed during the next term.
- 5.6. If a pupil's absence continues to be below **90 percent**, the headteacher will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents.

6. Contact information

- 6.1. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 6.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

7. Attendance Officer

- 7.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement.
- 7.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

8. Lateness

- 8.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance. However, there are occasionally exceptional circumstances that mean a child arrives late. Pupils arriving late must enter via the main entrance and report to the office to ensure that they are registered.
- 8.2. The school day starts at 0845.
- 8.3. Registers are marked by 0900. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 8.4. The register closes at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 8.5. After lunch, registers are marked by 1305 and pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 8.6. The register closes at 1310. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.
- 8.7. Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but this will count as an unauthorised absence.

9. Term-time leave

- 9.1. At Wigginton Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 9.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 9.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. Applications should be made at least 2 weeks before the proposed absence using the form at **APPENDIX A** and clearly state why the absence is exceptional. The letter is on the school website so all parents are aware of the policy.
- 9.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher.
- 9.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 9.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
 - Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- 9.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

10. Truancy

- 10.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 10.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- 10.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 0900 and 1300, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.

- 10.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.
- 10.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting.
- 10.6. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, who will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.
- 10.7. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
 - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
 - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
 - A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

11. Missing children

- 11.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the **headteacher** and are collected by a named adult.
- 11.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:
 - The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the **headteacher** immediately.
 - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
 - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the **headteacher**.
 - The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - a) All classrooms
 - b) All toilets
 - c) The library
 - d) The school grounds
 - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
 - If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
 - If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
 - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 11.3. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked after child, or has any special educational needs, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- 11.4. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 11.5. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 11.6. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 11.7. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 11.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

- 11.9. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

12. Religious observances

- 12.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 12.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

13. Appointments

- 13.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 13.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.
- 13.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- 13.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

14. Young carers

- 14.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 14.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 14.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

15. Monitoring and review

- 15.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 15.2. Wigginton Primary School's attendance target is 96 percent.
- 15.3. Details of our absence levels can be found on our website.
- 15.4. This policy is reviewed every three years by the headteacher and governors.

APPENDIX A

Headlands Primary School Ralph Butterfield Primary School Wigginton Primary School

Dear Parents/Carers

In September 2013, the Department for Education made changes which impact the way in which any requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time are dealt with. These changes apply nationally.

This guidance is intended to reduce the amount of time children lose to holidays in term time. Nationally 15% of all absence in primary schools is due to children being removed for holidays in term time.

The Department for Education has said that holidays should not be authorised on grounds of cost or availability of a particular holiday and this will not change. I would anticipate that there will be very few requests for leave of absence in term time that will be exceptional and therefore most requests for leave of absence will be declined and therefore marked as unauthorised. If any application for leave of absence through exceptional circumstances is made, attendance over the previous 12 months will be taken into account. Anyone with attendance below 95% (i.e. a pupil has had more than 2 weeks off school in the previous 12 months) will not be granted. Holiday prices and the fact that parents have booked a holiday before checking with school are not exceptional circumstances.

Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have authorised absence to go on holiday. If parents take their child on an unauthorised holiday, the procedure is that the Local Authority will be informed and they will then contact the parents. In certain circumstances parents can be issued by the Local Authority with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the headteacher. A Fixed Penalty Notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

If you wish to talk about this matter with me please contact the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R. Ellis
Headteacher
Headlands School

Mrs A. Mitchell
Headteacher
Raph Butterfield School

Mr P. Laycock
Headteacher
Wigginton Primary School

HAXBY AND WIGGINTON SCHOOLS

Leave of Absence request form

Please read the reverse before completing this form

WHEREVER POSSIBLE PLEASE ENSURE THIS FORM IS SENT TO SCHOOL AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE LEAVE OF ABSENCE APPLIED FOR IS DUE TO START

Name of Child.....

Class.....

Address.....

Reason for application and proposed dates of leave requested (leave of absence won't be granted unless for exceptional circumstances and pupil's attendance in last 12 months is very good):

(please state **first** and **last** dates you propose that your child will be absent):

Begins.....**and ends**.....

Signature of parent/carer (applications can only be made by parents/carers)

..... **Date**.....

Office use only

Date received by office:..... No. absences in last 12 months.....

No. of illness: _____ No of holiday: _____ No. of other: _____

Total (including above dates applied for).....

Outcome/absence code:

Headteacher's signature.....Date.....

Reply letter: authorise / reject Date reply sent to parent:

APPLYING FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SEPTEMBER 2013

The process for considering requests for leave of absence during term time from September 2013 will be:

1. We will look at the child's attendance figure for last 12 months. **If the child's attendance is under 95% then requests for leave of absence will not be considered.**
2. If a parent cites work won't let them have other time off in school holidays, then a letter on headed notepaper from the parents' employer stipulating that they cannot have time off during school holiday time needs to be attached to the leave of absence request form.

Examples of where we would consider the request because of an exceptional circumstances:

1. Attendance at a religious or civil ceremony or graduation involving a close relative/carer (Mother, Father, Grandfather, Grandmother, Sister, Brother, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin) and reasonable travel time.
2. Service families where a parent is on or returning from active duty.
3. The terminal illness/ bereavement of a close family member
4. A day for moving house;
5. A day for visiting another school if a child is moving schools
6. Family emergencies until arrangements for child to attend school can be made;
7. Representing city, county or country at a national or international level in sport, music or the arts where selected to do so by a recognised authority, including reasonable travel time.

We wouldn't authorise holiday for the following reasons:

1. Shopping trips;
2. Theatre visits;
3. Participating in or travel time to 'open entry' sport, music or arts events i.e. those not involving selection by an external body;
4. Days off to meet visiting relatives.
5. Cheaper holidays
6. Family celebrations
7. It's the child's birthday

What happened if a pupil goes on holiday when it has not been authorised

- Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have authorised absence to go on holiday.
- If parents take their child on an unauthorised holiday, the procedure is that the Local Authority will be informed and they will then contact the parents by letter.
- In certain circumstances, such as a repeated going on unauthorised holiday, parents can be issued by the Local Authority with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the head teacher. A Fixed Penalty Notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £60 or £120. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child, so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

APPENDIX B

Wigginton Road Primary School
Westfield Lane
Wigginton
York YO32 2FZ



Telephone: (01904) 552225

email: wigginton.primary@york.gov.uk

website: www.wiggintonprimary.co.uk

Mr Paul Laycock
Headteacher

Tuesday 6th January

Dear Mr and Mrs xxxx,

As part of our safeguarding practices and in our endeavour to ensure that every child makes the best possible progress, we monitor attendance on a half-termly basis.

Good attendance impacts on a child's long term academic achievement and it is important to establish good attendance habits early on. Anyone with attendance less than 90% is classed as a persistent absentee, and the school has an attendance target of 96%. As a matter of policy, we write out to parents/carers when their child's attendance falls below 90%. There may a very clear explanation for their attendance level but equally, poor attendance can highlight other issues that we may be able to support with.

xxx overall attendance up to the end of term was xx%. I am sure that you will make every effort to ensure that he is in school whenever possible and that his attendance figure has improved by the end of this term.

As always, should you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Laycock