



**TITLE: Attendance Policy**

**MODEL POLICY STATEMENT**

This is a Willowbrook School policy

<b>Policy Owner:</b>		<b>Review period:</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Last Review:</b>	<b>3 March 2021</b>	<b>Approving Committee:</b>	<b>Learning</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>March 2022</b>	<b>Latest FGB adoption:</b>	

**Public Sector Equality Duty**

This policy is written with due regard for the public sector equality duty that is placed on all schools. Willowbrook School will make reasonable adjustments for members of the school community with SEND and protected characteristics and guard against discriminatory practices and victimisation to ensure no-one is treated unfairly.

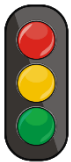


## **Willowbrook School Attendance Policy**

**Adopted by Willowbrook Learning Committee – 3rd March 2021**

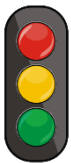
Our school is committed to providing a full, happy and successful educational experience for all of our children. We believe that if children are to benefit from the teaching we have and have a successful school career, good attendance is crucial.

### **Why regular attendance is so important:**



#### **Learning**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.



#### **Safeguarding**

Your child may be at risk of harm if he / she does not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities of your child encompasses the promotion of good, regular attendance.



#### **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

Make attendance a priority to discuss with children.

Report to you at parents' evenings on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.

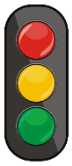
Celebrate good attendance and class attendance rates through assemblies weekly.



#### **The Law Relating to Attendance**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 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'

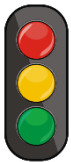


### **The law relating to safeguarding**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Since March 2001 there has been an aggravated offence, where a parent of a child of compulsory school age, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause their child to attend. This could result in going to court or even going to prison.



### **Understanding types of absence:**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. However, at Willowbrook School, we are trying to build resilience into our pupils and would appreciate parents only keeping off pupils who are very ill.

**Unauthorised absences are those which we do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. Examples of unauthorised absence include:**

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular absence are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up the absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

**To ensure all pupils have good attendance everyone has a role to play.**

### **Pupils**

- Take responsibility to be organised, go to bed at an appropriate time, pack school bags the night before, be helpful to your parents and give yourself plenty of time for the journey to school.
- Make sure you get to school and all lessons on time.
- Let your teacher know if there is anything you are concerned or worried about.

### **Parent/carers**

- Contact the school as soon as possible preferably **before 8.30am by ringing 01392466208** and follow the instructions for reporting an absence. Please state clearly your child's name, class, the reason for the absence and if possible the expected return date. Please ring **each day** your child is absent.
- If unsure about keeping your child off school, **please send them in**. If they start to feel ill during the day our student support staff/first aiders will contact you if your child needs to go home.
- **Send a note** in with your child on the first day they return explaining why they were absent even if you have rung in.
- If your child has an urgent medical/dental appointment during the school day please telephone the school at least 24 hours in advance, if possible and for safeguarding reasons a **responsible adult** who is a named contact, will be expected to meet the pupil in reception to go to the appointment.

### **Admin team**

- Will note all parental absence messages by **9am** each day and then text/phone parents/carers of any absent pupils from whom we have not had a message – before **10.30am** where possible.
- Analyse pupil data to identify individuals, groups of learners and patterns of poor attendance and share with the EWO to address these issues.
- Identify pupils who have attendance concerns and follow the graduated system of school response including parental phone calls, letters, development of a support/reintegration plan, referral to EWO and if required, prosecution.
- Prepare the appropriate paperwork required in applying for a prosecution.
- Develop strategies and monitoring alongside EWO to target pupils with less than **92%** attendance.




### **Classroom teachers**

- Ensure registers are taken immediately and accurately morning and afternoon and **immediately inform the office** if a pupil who was marked present in the morning is absent in the afternoon.

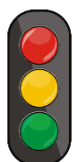
**If attendance is 80%, this means your child will have missed:**

1. 1 day EVERY week
2. 6 days EVERY half term
3. 12 days EVERY term
4. 36 days EVERY year
5. 180 days in five years...

**...that is nearly ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!**

	100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
	95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance: will impact on learning. Risk of prosecution
	90% Attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
	85% Attendance	5½ weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. Negative impact on learning. Will be prosecuted.

**Persistent Absenteeism (PA):**



A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

**Punctuality Procedures**

- All pupils must be at their classrooms by **8.50am**.
- Any time after 9am will be recorded as a "late" mark.

- If pupils arrive after the close of registration at **9.15am**, this is then classed as an **unauthorised absence**.

### Escalation in absence monitoring

Child has 10 absences, either authorised or unauthorised (each half day is an absence).	A letter is sent to parents alerting them to the level of absence
Child has a further 6 absences either authorised or unauthorised.	A second letter is sent to parents alerting them of the growing level of absence.
Any further absence	A letter is sent to parents asking for medical evidence for absence and informing them that future absence will not be authorised without it. Education Welfare Officer will be notified of attendance concerns.
Absence continues	Meeting arranged with Education Welfare Officer
Absence continues to grow	Legal meeting will be held. Possible prosecution.

### Absence during term time

- Parents are informed in newsletters and other communication that they do not have an automatic right to term-time absence. Absences can only be authorised in exceptional or unavoidable circumstances.
- Parents are required to complete the school's absence request form S2 (available from the office or online), to request any absence for their child.
- This must be applied for in advance and if it is not authorised and you still take your child out of school, you may be liable for a penalty notice. Penalty notices are issued for each child and are payable by each parent or carer. If penalty notices are not paid, the cost escalates and may result in court action being taken.

# Willowbrook School & Nursery

**Headteacher: Mrs M Marlow**



**Summer Lane  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX4 8NN**

**Phone 01392 466208**

e-mail: [admin@willowbrook.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@willowbrook.devon.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.willowbrook.devon.sch.uk](http://www.willowbrook.devon.sch.uk)

Date

Dear Parents of \*\*\*\*\*

On reviewing your child's attendance, it has come to our attention that \*\*\*\*\* has now missed \*\* school sessions this term. In order to ensure that your child is able to make use of all the opportunities available to them, here at Willowbrook School, we would encourage a higher rate of attendance.

Absence can disrupt the learning patterns for children and will lead to the misunderstanding of concepts across all areas of the curriculum leading to poor achievements. Poor attendance can also affect behaviour.

If you are experiencing problems, which relate to attendance, please make the school aware so that we may offer you support or refer you to Early Help for additional support.

Yours Sincerely

M Marlow  
Headteacher

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Date

Dear Parents of \*\*\*\*\*

### Attendance Warning Letter

Please find enclosed a copy of \*\*\*\*\* current attendance record for your information.

We are now seriously concerned about your child's poor attendance which is having a significant effect upon his education. \*\*\*\*\* already has \*\* absences this term. If \*\*\*\*\* has any unauthorised absences in the future and his attendance drops further, he will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer as part of a legal meeting.

It is most important that \*\*\*\*\* attend school every day. If there is anything, we can do to support your child attending school, please do not hesitate to contact us so that we can make a plan or refer you to Early Help for support.

Yours Sincerely

M Marlow  
Headteacher

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Dear Parents of \*\*\*\*\*

### Attendance Concern

This letter is to inform you that school is now becoming really concerned regarding the number of absences your child has had from school. As a school, we aim to have all our students attending 100% of the time.

Currently \*\*\*\*\* attendance is recorded as \*\* % with \*\* sessions of absence. This attendance percentage will be having an effect on your child's overall education.

**Therefore as of today, absences will only be authorised by the school, if we are sufficiently satisfied that the reasons for the absence were completely unavoidable. You are invited to**

Adopted by Willowbrook FGB on 3rd March 2021



**provide the school with additional information or documentation to enable us to make an informed decision regarding authorisation for each absence should you so wish.**

If you believe that your child has an ongoing medical condition, which keeps affecting their ability to attend school fully, then we would ask that you talk to us about this and we will consider developing an Individual Health Care Plan with you and any appropriate health care professionals, to support your child with their education.

If you, the parent, consider that there are other issues, which affect your child's ability to attend school regularly, then it may be possible for the school to access some additional support under Early Help. If you would like us to explore this with you then please get in touch.

Please contact me on the above contact details if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

M Marlow  
Headteacher