



METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF CALDERDALE

## Woodhouse Primary School

Daisy Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 3SX

Tel : 01484 714750

Email: [admin@woodhouse.calderdale.sch.uk](mailto:admin@woodhouse.calderdale.sch.uk)



Headteacher: **Mrs Anne Crane**

Deputy Headteacher: **Mrs Smaldon**

Assistant Headteacher: **Mr Freeman**

### Attendance Handbook

At Woodhouse, we take attendance very seriously as we know the impact full attendance has on our pupils and their success at school. Identifying poor attendance early, and working in partnership with parents to improve attendance will help us to develop safe, healthy and successful children.

#### The importance of attendance and the impact of absence

##### **Missing school = missing learning = missing opportunities**

School attendance is crucial to maximising children's learning potential and never more so than at the moment as we continue our recovery post Covid. Every day of absence reduces face to face learning and ultimately impacts negatively on outcomes. Pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 (GCSEs) have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment. Please see the impact of pupil absence on face to face learning time:

Individual pupil's attendance is calculated in percentages and you will be informed of your child's attendance at least once per term. The information below describes the impact attendance has on pupil outcomes. Although 90% might seem like quite a high percentage, and if you achieved 90% in a test, you would be fairly pleased, in attendance terms it is seen as poor attendance. We are striving for above 97% for all pupils.

##### **Attendance above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year**

Potentially these pupils have a much better chance of attaining well academically and socially and this leads to better prospects for their future. Pupils also form good habits about attending school (and the workplace later in life) regularly.

##### **Attendance above 95%: Less than 10 days absence a year**

These pupils are missing almost two weeks of school per year – attending more regularly will ensure that they do not miss out on sequences of learning which are vital to continued progress.

##### **Attendance above 90%: 19 days absence a year**

Pupils in this group are missing a month of school each year; inevitably it is difficult for them keep up with work so it is very likely that they will fall behind their peers. The government classes children with attendance below 90% as persistent absentees and parents and carers of pupils in this group could face the possibility of legal action.

##### **Attendance above 85%: 29 days absence a year**

Pupils in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; it will be almost impossible for them to keep up with the work so it is inevitable that they will fall behind.



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### The role of parents/carers

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend school every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend, or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### Deciding if your child is too ill for school

It can be tricky deciding if your child is too ill to attend school. NHS advice is that children can attend school with a sore throat, minor cough or common cold. We would always contact parents if we felt a child was too ill to be at school. Further guidance on specific illnesses can be found using the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

### Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Session times are-

#### **Infants**

8.55am – 12.15pm

1.05pm – 3.10pm

#### **Juniors**

8.55am – 12.20pm

1.10pm – 3.15pm

The doors are opened from 8.40am to enable children to be ready for a prompt 8.55am start to the school day. Morning sessions are extremely important as this is when the basic skills of reading, writing and maths are revisited and practised. A late arrival is disruptive to the learning of other children as well as their own. Parents will also be contacted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team if their child is persistently late to school.

**Arriving 5 minutes late each day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.**

**Arriving 15 minutes late each day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.**



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### Notifying school of a pupil's absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence **by 9.30am** or as soon as practically possible **by telephone or email**.

Please give some indication as to the nature of the illness. We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

### Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. **Parents should notify the office of any planned appointments via email or telephone.**

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

### Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, first day calling procedures will be initiated, which include a visit to the child's home and alerting the police if no contact can be made.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- A member of the Senior Leadership team will contact parents if the reason for absence is unsatisfactory or unclear. This may result in the absence being unauthorised.

### Term-time absence

There is no entitlement to parents to take their children out of school during term time, for example for a family holiday. The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 6 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.



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### Legal sanctions

The school, local authority or police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

### Setting work for pupils who are absent

If a child is to be absent for a length of time, parents often ask if their child can be provided with school work to do at home. If a child is absent through illness, they are often too ill to value any work they are asked to complete, however, the individual requirements of each case will be considered by the class teacher in consultation with the Headteacher. If a child is to be absent due to a holiday, school will not provide work to be completed at home.

### Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will use the following escalation procedures where attendance is causing concern to prevent persistent or severe absence:

1. Where there are concerns about attendance, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will contact parents/carers to discuss any barriers to pupils' attendance and any support which can be provided by school. A phone call may be made sooner if there are other circumstances e.g. previously poor attendance, persistent absentees, reason for absence not clear/valid.
2. A 'Notice to improve' letter will be sent home to parents/carers of pupils whose attendance falls below 96% at the end of a half-term.
3. If attendance falls below 90%, parents will be notified by email (October half-term onwards).
4. If attendance does not show signs of improvement, parents will be contacted by a member of the Senior Leadership team and may be invited to an attendance panel.
5. If attendance remains of significant concern, a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer.



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