



04.10.21

Dear Parents/ Carers,

School Attendance Matters

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, our school had been working very hard to improve our whole school attendance. Now, because of the pandemic, school attendance is more important than ever before. Over the past 18 months large numbers of our children have missed out on a significant amount of face to face in school education.

Regular attendance is essential, not only because it is a legal requirement, but also because good attendance enables children to keep up with their school work, make strong progress and attain highly. This in turn improves children's life chances and ensures they achieve their full potential. Regular attendance also encourages children to build friendships and develop social groups, working together as a whole team, sharing ideas and developing social skills. To achieve government expectations, children's attendance must be at least 96%. This allows for genuine illness. The table below illustrates this, and shows how attendance is impacted upon by school absence.

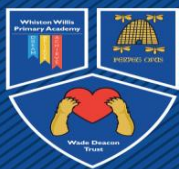
School attendance over one school year:

98% attendance	approximately 4 days absent from school
95% attendance	approximately 10 days absent from school
90% attendance	approximately 4 weeks absent from school
85% attendance	approximately 5 ½ weeks absent from school (equivalent of half a term)
80% attendance	approximately 7 ½ weeks absent from school

Our Attendance Policy outlines our procedures in full, however a summary of our attendance procedures can be found below (as outlined by the Governing Body of Whiston Willis Primary Academy):

- Should a child be ill and therefore unable to attend, parents/carers should contact school with a valid reason, by 8:30am on the first morning of absence
- If a child is ill and a telephone call is received from the parent/carer, it is entered in the 'Reasons for Absence' record and class teachers are informed.
- Parents are asked to inform us regularly of progress/updates.
- If there is no communication, school staff will contact family as first response and will try all available family contacts. This will be followed up with a home visit.
- For children/families whose absence gives cause for concern, a courtesy telephone call is made regularly during periods of absence.
- Should school be unable to make contact with the parent/carer, the matter may be handed over to the Authority Attendance Officer
- Parents/carers must ensure that contact details are updated regularly.
- The parents/carers of any child approaching 7 sessions of unauthorised absence may be issued a penalty notice warning letter.

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Should you require support with improving your child's attendance, or have any questions in relation to school attendance matters in general, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of our Pastoral Team.

We would like to thank you in advance for your support and co-operation with our Attendance Policy, especially following such an unprecedented 18 months.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs P. Steele & Mrs C. Martin – Learning Mentors (Pastoral Team).

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