



Attendance Policy

Last Reviewed: September 2022
Next Review Date: September 2025



At Washingborough Academy we expect all children on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Mission Statement

Washingborough Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance¹. The School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems affecting attendance will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Regular school attendance is defined by the school as full time, for 100% of the sessions when the school is open, unless a pupil is medically unfit to be at school or the Headteacher has authorised an absence for exceptional purposes.

- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialize with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.



Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary



The Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.10am.

School Admin Staff

School admin staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence
- Ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day
- Tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school

Recording Attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present



Washingborough Academy – Attendance Policy

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am / 8.50am depending on their year group on each school day.

Penfold Nursery – (Morning session) – 08.40 – 11:40, (Afternoon session) 12.10 – 15.10

FS2 (Cherry and Apple – Reception Class) – Start 08.40 – Finish 15.10

KS1 (Willow, Silver Birch and Cedar – Year 1 and 2) – Start 08.50 – Finish 15.20

LKS2 (Mulberry, Sycamore and Hazel – Year 3 and 4) – Start 08.50 – Finish 15.20

UKS2 (Hemlock, Acer and Blackthorn – Year 5 and 6) – Start 08.40 – Finish 15.10

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am / 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.



Encouraging attendance through good practice

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers as the beginning of each session
- Newsletter updates
- Annual reports to parents
- Feedback at parents' evenings
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their child/ren may be experiencing difficulty in attending school
- The efficient use of computerized registration system

Unplanned 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 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office – 01522 801355.

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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

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.

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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence but no later than one week.



Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so they are able to keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside of school.

Reintegration

The return to school for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning. For example, it may be appropriate to establish a pastoral support plan.

Designated staff will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and for the management of that programme. All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible. Programmes may need to be tailored to meet the individuals need and may involve phased, part time reentry with support in class appropriate.

Liasing with external agencies

Working together – Washingborough Academy will work together in partnership with the full range of support services.

Poor attendance may be a symptom of a wide range of institutional, community, family or individual circumstance. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school or the county attendance team. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people. The county attendance team, may be able to help schools establish multi-agency meetings or may be able to advise on how schools can become involved in existing local arrangements.

Other agencies to be used where appropriate in individual cases:

- Early Help Worker
- Educational Psychologists
- Additional Needs
- Social Services
- Local Police



Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

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, the school may carry out a safe and well visit or contact the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- 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

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence – refer to appendix 6 and 7

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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as refer to appendix 6.

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 by completing the form – see appendix 7 as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least one week before the absence. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** – refer to appendix 6



Legal Sanctions - Refer to appendix 2,3,4 and 5

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

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns



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 attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Links with other policies

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed



Washingborough Academy – Attendance Policy

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Appendix 2

First Letter

DATE

PARENT/CARER
ADDRESS

Dear XXXXXXXX

**FULL NAME OF PUPIL – CLASS - YEAR GROUP – ATTENDANCE
FIGURE % Attendance**

I am writing to express my concern at XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX high levels of absence from school since the start of this academic year. XXX percentage attendance rate is currently less than 93%.

Our school acknowledges that each family's circumstances are different and works in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

If you, or XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX, have any concerns that are influencing her absence, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope that together we can move forward to improve her attendance.

Yours sincerely

XXX NAME OF CLASS TEACHER XXX

Class Teacher



Appendix 3
Second letter

DATE

PARENT/CARER
ADDRESS

Dear XXXXXXXX

**FULL NAME OF PUPIL – CLASS - YEAR GROUP – ATTENDANCE
FIGURE % Attendance**

I am writing to express my concern at XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX high levels of absence from school since the start of this academic year. XXX percentage attendance rate is currently less than 93% that was brought to your attention in our last letter dated XXXXXXXXXX; unfortunately, XXX attendance rate is still below the required number.

Our school acknowledges that each family's circumstances are different and works in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. However, our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential. As highlighted in our Attendance Policy (a copy can be found on our website), if improvements in attendance are not immediately forthcoming, we will make a formal referral to the county attendance team, and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be imposed.

I would therefore like to meet with you on XXXXXXXXXXXX at XXX to discuss how we can work together to improve XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX attendance. If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact me on 01522 801355 to arrange a more convenient time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

XXX NAME OF CLASS TEACHER XXX

Class Teacher



Appendix 4

Third letter

DATE

PARENT/CARER
ADDRESS

Dear XXXXXXXX

FULL NAME OF PUPIL – CLASS - YEAR GROUP – ATTENDANCE FIGURE % Attendance

I am writing to express my concern at XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX high levels of absence from school since the start of this academic year. XXX percentage attendance rate is currently less than 93% and unfortunately, this is the third letter that we have written to resolve this.

Our school acknowledges that each family's circumstances are different and works in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

Unfortunately, since your meeting on XXX DATE XXX with XXX NAME OF CLASS TEACHER XXX, XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX attendance has not significantly improved. We feel that it is therefore appropriate to invite you in to attend a second meeting, which will include myself and XXX CLASS TEACHER on XXX DATE XXX at XXXpm.

We would like to remind you of our Attendance Policy (a copy can be located on our website) and how the school will be making a referral to the county attendance team, with the potential of a Fixed Penalty Notice being served, if immediate improvement is not made.

We sincerely hope that together we can move forward to improve XXX NAME OF CHILD XXX attendance.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Appendix 5

Final letter

DATE

PARENT/CARER
ADDRESS

Dear XXXXXXXX

FULL NAME OF PUPIL – CLASS - YEAR GROUP – HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME - UNAUTHORISED

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive. Children returning for a term time holiday are also unprepared for the lessons that build on the teaching they have missed. When teachers have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work, other pupils in the class may miss out on help, and under-achieve as a result. This is a situation that we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education only allows a Headteacher discretion to consider an absence/holiday in term time in "special circumstances".

As you have taken your child out of school without authorisation between XXX DATE. We are writing to inform you that we will be informing Lincolnshire County Council Education Team to issue a Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child and are an alternative to prosecution.

The current penalty is:

- £60, if paid within 21 days
- £120, if paid between 21 and 28 days

After 28 days the Local Authority may prosecute you.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Appendix 6

Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance

Headteachers may only grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. The following are examples of agreed exceptional circumstances to guide headteacher when considering leave of absence requests.

Before deciding whether to authorise leave of absence the headteacher will consider

- The impact on the student's academic progress of any absence
- The pupil's attendance over the academic year
- Whether the leave falls within any key stage national tests or exams.

Examples of exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling – Headteachers should use their discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence - up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative – only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the LA.
- Time-off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs".
- This would include the Islamic Eid's, as well as religious observance days of the orthodox Christian, Jewish and other religions. Headteachers may specify that only one day will be authorised at a time (most of the families who request leave on religious grounds are Muslim and the request is for the two Eid's).



- Weddings of parents and siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however, we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave, for example where natural parents are separated, and in new relationships and it may cause a child further difficulty if he/she is excluded from a wedding. Each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, except where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Pilgrimages by parents (e.g. Hajj). These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time (at least 5 days). They are not regarded as exceptional as children themselves do not perform Hajj, but tend to travel with their parents when they go.
- Holidays or extended weekend breaks taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitment.
- To care for other family members / minding the house / looking after siblings
- Birthdays or Family anniversaries
- Shopping
- Headlice
- Death of a pet
- Travel problems

Appendix 7

Before requesting leave in term time, you need to think about:



- The lessons your child will miss
- The difficulty your child will have in catching up
- The effect it will have on your child's friendship groups
- The effect it will have on how well your child performs in school

For your information:

Amendments were made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which took effect from 1 September 2013. From this date **schools are not permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

All term time holiday/leave requests must be submitted to the Headteacher with the exceptional circumstances fully explained. In order to make the decision whether to authorise leave or not, parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence supporting their circumstances.

Parents/carers need to be aware that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child for unauthorised absence from school, for unauthorised leave taken in term time and/or for pupils stopped during a Truancy Patrol (£60 if paid within 21 days; £120 if paid within 28 days as at 1 September 2013) in line with the Education (Penalty Notice Regulations) England 2013. The Council's Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Service will issue Penalty Notices on behalf of the Police, the Local Authority and the School.

Please complete and return to the School Office at least one week before the proposed leave



Leave in Term Time Request Form

Name(s) of child(ren):

.....

Class(es):

Date of leave:

Dates of leave already requested this academic year:

.....

Please provide a DETAILED reason why the leave MUST be taken during term time (continue overleaf in necessary):

.....

.....

Signed:

Print Name (Parent/Carer):

Date:

Note: Leave is not authorised until signed confirmation has been received from the Headteacher

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY:

After careful consideration of your request:

- Leave not authorised - Penalty notice not to be issued on this occasion
- Leave not authorised - Consideration will be given to issuing Penalty notice if leave taken
- Leave authorised

Comment:

.....

Signed (Headteacher):

Date: