

Whitehill Junior School Attendance Policy



Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body every three years.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body 3rd November 2021.

It is due for review September 2024.

Signature

Date

Head Teacher

Signature

Date

Chair of Governors

Initial Statement

Whitehill School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils.

The expectations for school are that:

- The school will ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis
- The school will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality
- The school is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance
- The Governing Body will provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each full governing body meeting.

The expectations for parents are:

- Parents are expected to and have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents will inform school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school
- Parents will maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- Parents will ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details.

The expectations for pupils are:

- All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually
- Pupils must remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person
- Pupils are expected to be ready to learn.

Start and finish times

Children can come into the classroom from at 8.35am ready for the bell to be rung at 8.50am which is the official school start time. Pupils must not wait on the playgrounds. If a pupil is late they should report to the office by the front door. Registers are called at 8.55am and 1.05pm. School finishes at 3.15pm. For the safety of all children please do not allow them to play on the outdoor equipment unsupervised before and after school.

Registration

Registers are called at 8.55am and 1.05pm.

Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

Any pupil arriving after 8.55am should report to the School Office.

Any pupil reporting to the School Office, should be signed into school using the school's Sign In App by their Parent or member of School Office Staff.

Anyone signing in late is asked for a reason why they are late for school.

Absences

Every absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Notification will be accepted from parents / carers or close family adult friend.

Notification should be provided by telephone message or email to the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

Notification should be given to a member of the School Office Staff.

School may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.

Absences may only be authorised by the Headteacher.

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

When pupils leave or return to school during the school day, school office staff must be notified.

The parents of any pupils leaving school during the school day, are requested to inform the school in writing or by phone of the reason for this absence.

All pupils leaving the school during the school day, will leave only with their parents / carers and via the main entrance.

All pupils leaving the school are required to be signed out, and signed in on their return to school via the school's Sign In App.

Following up Absence

Whitehill School follows up all absences from school. Any unexplained absences are followed up on the day, usually by way of an automated text message, although in some circumstances a phone call may be deemed more appropriate.

Any pupil with regular or prolonged absence is followed up initially by the Attendance Co-ordinator, with the support of the Headteacher. This is usually by letter or telephone call, or a meeting in school with parents where necessary. If the situation does not improve, then this is discussed with the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Term Time Holidays

Whitehill School actively discourages parents from taking family holidays during Term Time.

Parents are informed of the school ethos regarding holidays during term time, through the New Parents Meeting and through information in the School Brochure.

The school uses the Hertfordshire County Council Absence during Term time Request Form.

Parents are requested to submit the Request Form, no less than three weeks prior to the absence.

All requests for absence during term time, are considered individually by the Headteacher and are only approved for exceptional circumstances.

Penalty Notices

At Whitehill School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day= 1 session) unauthorised absence in a term (including unauthorised holidays) the head teacher may ask the LEA to issue a Penalty Notice.

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid the LA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance.