



Westbourne School

Educating girls and boys for life

Westbourne Junior School Attendance Policy

Rationale

Westbourne School offers a caring and nurturing environment, where children can flourish and be their best selves. Attending school and being present in lessons is fundamental if a child is to achieve their full academic potential. Also, those who are regularly present in school will be able to develop meaningful and successful relationships with others. Of course, 100% attendance is not always possible for some. Some young people have regular and numerous medical appointments which cannot always take place out of school hours, others have differing needs which may at times impact on attendance. However, it is important that we make clear our expectations and procedures, so all pupils are able to attend school as well as they possibly can, and so they can understand why this is such an important aspect of school life. A policy helps school to ensure that all children are being as well-supported as possible, by providing robust and clear procedures related to attendance.

Aims

1. To support and uphold the schools key values of *excellence*, *inclusion*, *respect* and *resilience*;
2. To provide clarity of attendance-related expectations and procedures;
3. To help children and families who need additional support with attendance-related issues;
4. To ensure pupils are rewarded for good attendance/punctuality.

Expectations

We expect:

- all pupils to attend school every day, for the whole day;
- all pupils to arrive at school and to all lessons on time, every day;
- parents to make routine medical/dental/other appointments for their children out of school hours **where possible**;
- pupils and parents to communicate with us where there are issues which might be affecting a child's attendance/punctuality;
- pupils and parents to cooperate with school (and outside agencies such as CAMHS/MAST, as appropriate) if issues arise, with a shared goal of improved attendance/punctuality.

A brief note on compliance

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Junior School Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whole School SEND Policy
- Junior School Parent Handbook
- Junior School Behaviour Policy

This policy also follows guidance from the DfE, specifically the following:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[School Attendance, 2020](#)

[Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year](#)

[Children Missing in Education \(CME\), 2016](#)

[Local Guidance on CME](#)

Key people and how to contact us

The Role of the Form Tutor

The form tutor is a key person in each pupil's school life. They have daily contact with their pupils, and are able to monitor attendance and punctuality. The form tutor is in the best position to intervene quickly should issues around attendance/punctuality arise. Form tutors are easy to contact via email (initial of first name, followed by surname @westbourneschool.co.uk, for example atedcastle@westbourneschool.co.uk for Mr A Tedcastle) or by phoning the school office on 0114 266 0374.

Junior School Secretary

The secretary can be contacted by email on jkersley@westbourneschool.co.uk, or on enquiries@westbourneschool.co.uk or by phoning the school office on 0114 266 0374. Parents/carers should contact the secretary to declare the absence of a pupil. The Senior School secretary will contact parents/carers if a pupil has not arrived at school by 9.30am and their form tutor has not been made aware of the reason.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral team work closely with form tutors and the school secretary to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality and to offer more specialist support and guidance should issues arise. They can be contacted by phoning the school office or via the following email links:

Mr Clark, Head of Junior School jclark@westbourneschool.co.uk

Mr Tedcastle, Deputy Head of Junior School atedcastle@westbourneschool.co.uk

SENCo: Mrs Lillywhite, Reception to Year 6 lillywhite@westbourneschool.co.uk

The School Day

Doors will be open for pupils to enter the school building from 8.15am when pupils are expected to head to their form rooms for registration. Registration begins at 8.30. A bell will ring at 1.25 to signal the end of lunchtime, and pupils are expected to arrive at Lesson 5 by 1.30.

KS1 Lessons:

8.40am – 11.50am

11.50am – 1.15pm (Lunch time)

1.15pm – 3.30pm

KS2 Lessons:

Lesson 1 - 8.40-9.30

Lesson 2 - 9.30-10.20

Breaktime - 10.20-10.40

Lesson 3 - 10.40-11.30

Lesson 4 - 11.30-12.20 (although staggered lunchtimes begins from 11.45pm)

Lunchtime - 12.20-1.25

Lesson 5 - 1.30-2.15

Lesson 6 - 2.15-3.00

Lesson 7 - 3.00-3.45

How we monitor attendance and punctuality

Pupils' attendance is formally recorded at morning registration and at the beginning of Lesson 5. However, teachers also keep attendance registers for the lessons they teach. Attendance is recorded and stored on our Engage administration system.

At the end of each term, the attendance records for all pupils are printed off and carefully examined by the pastoral team, to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns. At this point, we also identify pupils who have excellent attendance/punctuality, and offer them rewards from postcards of recognition to formal school prizes.

A record is kept of all pupils with attendance below 95%, so we can see if it is a problem which continues term-to-term or year-to-year. Parents of any pupil whose attendance is below 90% by the end of each half of term will be contacted by the pupil's form tutor, to open up a discussion about the matter.

How we support those with attendance and/or punctuality issues

Failure to comply with Westbourne's expectations regarding attendance and punctuality will be communicated to parents. School recognises that support and dialogue are intrinsic for dealing with any issues.

Where a pattern of poor attendance or punctuality becomes evident, the Head will write to parents outlining their child's attendance. Parents will then be invited in for a meeting to discuss the issues and possible reasons.

If there is little or no improvement, despite being on report, a relevant member of the pastoral team (in liaison with the Form Tutor), will invite the family in for a meeting to discuss the issues. Depending on the reasons for the ongoing poor attendance/punctuality, school may at this point complete an [Early Help](#) Assessment, which may lead to school seeking support for the pupil/family from external agencies, such as MAST.

Where it is evident that poor attendance/punctuality is the result of deliberate truancy, this will be sanctioned seriously, and in the most serious cases, parents/carers may be asked to find an alternative school for their child.

How you can help at home (advice for parents/carers)

Parents play the most crucial role in shaping their children so they are prepared for the future. Stressing the importance and necessity of being punctual is vital if children are to grow up to be successful in a workplace. Likewise, good attendance at school must be encouraged and supported at home as it will set children up for the best possible future.

Ensuring you are aware of our policies related to attendance and behaviour will mean you are able to support the school in the values we stand for, and the messages we give to our pupils. Where schools and families work together, with the same goals, children will feel safe, secure and aware of what is expected of them.

Helping your child to develop good sleeping habits will make it easier for them to get up and ready for school each day. Having some quiet time before bed, so they can unwind and relax is often a good idea. Some children have specific sleep difficulties. If you are worried about your child's sleeping, please do speak to somebody. Your local GP will be able to offer support and specialist help if necessary, and you can discuss it with the school SENCo too. [Sleep Service - Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust](#) is a really useful site to visit if you are particularly concerned about your child's sleeping, as it outlines the local services and support available to children and their families around the issue of sleep.

Encourage your child to be 10 minutes early to school, so they have time to socialise with friends, and to put their bags and coats away easily, without feeling they are in a rush. If they start the school day in the right frame of mind, they will learn better.

Helping your children to learn how to travel independently will have a huge impact on their self-confidence and autonomy, and will also mean they can be self-reliant and fully accountable for their own punctuality and attendance. This will help to build their resilience.

Good communication with school is crucial. School is required to contact the local authority if a child is absent from school without permission for 10 school days or more. A child who is missing from education is a safeguarding concern, and school has a duty to pass on concerns to the relevant services. Similarly, if a child is absent from school for

an extended period due to a legitimate reason (e.g. long-term illness), school will still make occasional contact with home. This may be to enquire about the child's wellbeing or sometimes to provide guidance on schoolwork etc. In these circumstances we ask that families respond to school's request as promptly as possible as we still have a duty of care to all our pupils, even when they are not in school. **Please see Appendix A for a flowchart detailing our approach to responding to pupil absence which is unexplained.**

All staff at Westbourne School are committed to supporting our pupils and families, so if there are any issues which are impacting on the attendance or punctuality of your child(ren) we urge you to get in touch to speak with us so we can work together to find a solution.

Signed: J.Clark

Date: September 2021

Review Date: September 2022

Appendix A Responding to pupil absence which is unexplained

Parents are expected to inform the School Secretary, at the latest, on the morning of their child's absence from school. If school has not been contacted by 9:30am on the first day of absence, the School Secretary will phone parent(s) to follow up the absence. If parent(s) are uncontactable at this point, school will follow the procedure outlined below:

Day One

The School Secretary will continue to phone and email parent(s) throughout the day to try to gather a reason for the child's absence. The Designated Safeguarding Lead in school will be informed in case there are any relevant child protection matters which mean the matter should be escalated at this stage to other services (e.g. Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, or the Police).

Day Two

The School Secretary will follow the same procedure as on Day One, but if there is still no response from the child's parent(s) by mid-day, they will contact the emergency contacts for that particular child. If the emergency contacts are unable to provide school with any information regarding the child's whereabouts the Designated Safeguarding Lead will again be informed and will make a decision as to next steps, which may include undertaking a home visit on this day.

Day Three

If the child is still absent from school with no reason, and parent(s) remain uncontactable, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will telephone Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, outlining the steps taken so far, and taking guidance regarding next steps.

If a child is absent from school for ten school days or more without permission, school will inform the Children Missing from Education Team at the Local Authority.

APPENDIX B
Attendance in academic year 2020-21 - guidance from the DfE regarding attendance expectations and the recording of attendance

For the full government guidance, please visit this link [Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year](#)

The DfE have confirmed that the usual rules on attendance continue to apply from September 2021 onwards, including:

- parents' duty to ensure their child(ren) attends regularly at school;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct (please note that even though Westbourne is an Independent School, the Local Authority can still issue parents a [Fixed Penalty Notice](#) and proceed to prosecute for non-attendance);
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education.

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If they remain unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), they should be recorded as code I (illness) on the school's attendance register. If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance.

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend. If shielding is advised nationally or locally again, then pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable **may** be advised not to attend school.

Pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this as an unauthorised absence.

APPENDIX C
Local Procedural Guidance regarding Children Missing from Education (CME)

Sheffield's Children Missing from Education Team is based at:
Level 5 West Wing
Moorfor
S1 4PL
Tel: 0114 273 6462 Fax: 0114 273 5470
Email: ed-missingchildren@sheffield.gov.uk

Sheffield's CME Team

Mid-year starters and leavers:

All schools must inform the local authority of children who start or leave the school mid-year. This must be done via Anycomms + (secure email). Schools must send a Children Missing Education Team (CMET) Referral Form if they intend to remove a pupil from their admission register and obtain writer confirmation from CMET before this is done. Pupils can only be removed if they meet one of the 15 prescribed grounds by the DfE, which include:

- registered at another school;
- subject to a school attendance order that has been changed or revoked;
- taken out of school for home education;
- moved too far away to travel to school;
- had more than 20 days unauthorised absence or not returned following agreed leave of absence, and neither the school, nor the Local Authority can locate them;
- health problems that prevent their attendance before ceasing to be of compulsory school age or they have died;
- had a custodial sentence of over 4 months;
- permanently excluded.

Schools **must** inform the local authority of any pupil who:

- fails to attend school regularly;
- has been absent without permission for 10 school days or more.