

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2016

1. Introduction

Wix Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his or her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

Wix will work with pupils and their families to support parents in helping them to meet their legal duty; to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law which may result in prosecution.

To meet these objectives, Wix School has established an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

2. Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all focus on this we will:

- ✓ Promote school attendance throughout the school
- ✓ Report to parents/carers on their child's attendance in their school reports.
- ✓ Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- ✓ Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- ✓ Reward good or improving attendance through certificates, badges, medals and prizes.
- ✓ Highlight the importance of attendance through assemblies.

3. Understanding types of absences

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- parents/carers keeping children off school because it is inconvenient for them to get them to school
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive after the registers have closed
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem. We can use our Learning Mentor or outside agencies to help.

4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

Below 96% will be monitored by the Attendance Officer/Learning Mentor and letters may be sent out to parents.	Below 90% Serious Concern. Parents/Carers are invited to attend the School Attendance Panel with the Educational Welfare Officer present.
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We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly.

Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark of 90%, or is at risk of moving towards that mark, is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully; we also combine this with academic tracking as absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the Learning Mentor, Education Welfare Officer, SENDCO, the School Nurse or referrals to outside agencies.

We may also use individual targets and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

The Educational Welfare Officer will be made aware of all cases below 90%.

5. Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures so that they can be recorded as authorised:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence. The school has an answer phone service to leave a message if nobody is available to take the call.
- You can call into the school and report to reception.
- Email the school.
- Keep us informed about your child's condition/illness and expected day of return.

6. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

Parents are encouraged to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the staff to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He or she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Education Welfare Officer can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority and asking for the Education Welfare Officer with responsibility for Wix.

7. Lateness

It is essential that pupils form good habits of punctual attendance. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Children who often arrive late at school often also;

- Miss vital parts of the lesson, information and news.
- Disrupt the class when the lesson is underway.
- Find it acutely embarrassing entering a class, once the lesson has started which can encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The English Stream school day starts at 8.55am.

The school expects all children to be in the playground before this time, ready to line up when the bell is rung.

Registers are marked by 9:00am. Children will receive a late mark if they do not arrive on time.

At 9.15am the registers will be closed, so if your child arrives after that time he/she will receive a mark 'U' in the register. This indicates that the child is on site - it will not count as a present mark but it will count as unauthorised half day session.

This may mean that the parent/carers of a child who regularly receives a 'U' mark on the register could also face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children.

The Bilingual Stream school day starts at 8.45am.

The school has the same expectations of all the children in the bilingual classes as it does of the English Stream, but parent/carers of children in the Bilingual Stream should note to following timetable differences:

- Bilingual staff will be in the playground to collect children at 8.45am
- Registers are marked at 8.50am
- Registers are closed at 9.05am

Lateness at the end of the school day or after a school activity or after-school club:

A referral may be made to the Wandsworth Social Care Team in relation to those parents that are late for no good reason, or where there is a repeat occurrence.

Any concerns arising are dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures as set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Holidays in Term Time:

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays.

No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their child/children as a right.

Requests for leave during term time must be made to the Head Teacher in writing. The Local Authority advises head teachers to authorise absence for leave only in special or exceptional circumstances.

The Guide for Parents under the Education Act 1996 explains the procedures for the use of legal sanctions. Penalty notice issued under the local Code of Conduct (Sections 444A and 444B, Education Act 1996):

- £60 fine if paid within 28 days, rising to £120 if paid within 29-42 days.
- Non-payment will result in a prosecution for the original offence.

9. Missing children:

Children missing or at risk of going missing from education:

If your child does not attend school and the school suspects that the family have moved away, it will attempt to contact parents/carers on or before day 3 of absence, requesting a date of return. If this is unsuccessful, it will write to the last known address on or before days 5, to request that the child returns. If by day 10 there has been no contact, the school will refer the missing child to the Education Welfare Officer.

The school must inform the Local Authority if any pupil is going to be deleted from the school register by completing an 'Off-Role Notification Form'.

10. Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure a high level of attendance as possible.

11. Related policies:

This policy has clear links to other policies in our school, in particular our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Agreed by governors, November 2016

To be reviewed, November 2017

<p>EXCELLENT</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is above 98%. They are 'WISED UP' on attendance. As well as being an excellent attender your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for her ability and have real opportunity in further education or the world of work</p>
<p>GOOD</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is 96-97% They are 'GETTING WISE' Your child is likely to achieve their grades that will give them real opportunities to continue their studies or in the world of work.</p>
<p>SATISFACTORY</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is 95%.</p>
<p>UNSATISFACTORY</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is 94-90%. They are below the national government threshold of 95% Your child will miss up to 18 days each school year and this will make it difficult for her to achieve her best</p>
<p>CONCERN</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is between 85-90%. They 'NEED TO WISE UP'! Parents / Carers may face a fixed penalty fine as your child's attendance is below 90% and they are 'Persistent Absentees' Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for her to keep in touch with lessons or work.</p>
<p>SERIOUS CONCERN</p>	<p>Your child's attendance is below 85% You need to 'WISE UP and TAKE ACTION NOW as you will face a fixed penalty fine or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve! Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be almost impossible for her to keep in touch with lessons or work!</p>

