



Whitstable Junior School

REGISTER OF PUPILS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Governors' Committee Responsible: Curriculum Committee

Policy Originator: Headteacher

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Signed: _____ **Chair of Governors**

Signed: _____ **Headteacher**

Legislation:

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006: (SI2006/1751) as amended The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

1. PRINCIPLES

Whitstable Junior School must keep an attendance register it must be available for inspection on the school premises.

2. CONTENTS OF ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Regulation 6 (As per The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

1. The following particulars must be recorded in the attendance register at the commencement of each morning session and once during each afternoon session:

a. in the case of every pupil whose name is entered in and not deleted from the admission register whether the pupil is;

i. present

ii. absent

iii. attending an approved educational activity within paragraph (4) or

iv. unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances within paragraph (5)

b. in the case of any such pupil of compulsory school age who is absent, a statement whether or not his absence is authorised in accordance with paragraph (2)

c. in the case of any such pupil of compulsory school age who is attending an approved educational activity the nature of that activity and

d. in the case of any pupil unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances, the nature of those circumstances.

2. Absence shall be treated as authorised for the purposes of this regulation if;

a. he/she has been granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006; or

b. he/she is unable to attend;

i. by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause;

ii. on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs; or

3. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time when the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised and any subsequent correction to the register recording that absence as authorised shall be made in accordance with regulation 13 and as soon as practicable after the reason for the absence is established by the person with responsibility for completing the register.

4. An approved educational activity is either;

a. an activity which takes place outside the school premises and which is;

i. approved by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school;

ii. of an educational nature, including work experience under section 560 of the Education Act 1996 and a sporting activity; and

iii. supervised by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor or the head teacher of the school; or

b. attendance at another school at which the pupil is a registered pupil.

5. The exceptional circumstances in which a pupil may be marked as unable to attend are where;

- a. the school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable cause at a time when pupils are due to attend; or
- b. in the case of a pupil for whom transport to school is provided by the school or a local education authority, and whose home is not within walking distance of the school, that transport is not available.

6. The name of a pupil may only be deleted from the attendance register when that pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register for that school in accordance with Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

7. For the purpose of this regulation "walking distance" has the meaning given to that expression in section 444(5) of the Education Act 1996

3) Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (for example leave for holidays) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an ASI referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings **need to** be attached to the completed ASI referral form with any other relevant information.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding (not renewal of vows or anniversaries).
- Funeral of a person close to the family.

- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.