



The Edge
Schools' Federation

Attendance policy

including

Pupil Absence in Term Time Policy

Adopted by Governing Body: December 2023

Date for review: December 2025

THE EDGE SCHOOLS' FEDERATION
Brockton CE Primary School, Church Preen Primary School,
Wistanstow CE Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

At The Edge Schools' Federation, all staff work collaboratively to encourage every pupil to strive for excellence. Every child is supported, challenged and valued. One way in which we do this is by encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the opportunity for all children to reach their potential by promoting good attendance and punctuality.

The Edge Schools' Federation encourages all parents / carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that ***“parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly”*** (DfE 1999).

Aims & Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all pupils, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy also applies to Early Years Foundation Stage children (Nursery and Reception) in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense responsibility for their own attainment and progress.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

Why is attendance and punctuality important?

Children who are persistently late or absent from school soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Punctuality

The teaching and learning day at all of our schools begins at 8:50am and ends at 3:20pm. It is the parent / carer's responsibility:

- To ensure that their children arrive to school on time.
- To ensure children who arrive after doors close at 8:50am report to the school office to sign in. Records are kept of pupils who are late with an L code in the register. Children who arrive after registers close at 9am will be marked as absent (unauthorised) and will need to register as a visitor to ensure that safety records (eg: in the event of an evacuation due to fire)
- To ensure children are collected promptly at the end of the school day and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal

arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this.

Absence

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:10am and to notify the school of an extended absence every day for up to 5 days. Longer absences in excess of 5 days will need to be confirmed in writing to the school office. Parents can report an absence by telephoning or emailing the school office:
Brockton 01746 785671 admin.brockton@taw.org.uk
Church Preen 01694 771359 Admin@ChurchPreenSchool.co.uk
Wistanstow 01588 673347 admin@wistanstowprimary.co.uk
- To provide medical evidence for the illness, if necessary, on the child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.
- Parents/carers of children for whom we have not been given a reason for absence will be contacted by the school office after 9:10am. In the event that contact cannot be made with parents / carers, external agencies may be notified if the school has concerns about the child's absence.

Extended illness / medical absences

If a child has prolonged absence due to illness or is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription, etc.

Absence during term time

Parents / carers who wish to take their child out of school during term time must complete a Request for Leave Form (Appendix A) in advance (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher, and they will use government guidelines in considering whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

Absences for reasons that qualify as 'exceptional circumstances' such as religious observance (up to 2 days per year) or close family bereavement *may* be authorised by the Headteacher *at their discretion*. These requests must be discussed with the school and a Request for Leave Form completed. Absences for close family members' weddings or funerals will be limited to one day's authorised absence, if granted. For an absence at short notice the school must be notified using the absence for illness procedure above.

Parents / carers are expected to take their children on holiday during school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education. Holidays in term time are not granted by the Headteacher unless there are considered to be 'exceptional circumstances'. If parents / carers decide to take a holiday without the Headteacher's authorisation, the child's absence will be marked on the school register as unauthorised. **Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued by the Education Welfare Service for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. This fine is payable at £60 per child, per parent.**

Unexplained Absence

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason for absence is given, the circumstances will be investigated, external agencies may be involved and parents / carers may be liable for prosecution and / or a fine from the Shropshire Council.

Role of the Education Welfare Officer

Regular monitoring of pupil attendance is carried out by the Shropshire Council Education Welfare Officer. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support which may be required to ensure that their child attends school.

The Education Welfare Officer will:

- investigate absence which exceeds 10%, and hold meetings with these parents as required.
- investigate lateness which exceeds 5%.
- investigate any unexplained absence which exceeds more than 5 consecutive days where safeguarding agencies and / or social services have not already been involved.
- ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.
- refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school and Education Welfare Officer.

Children Missing Education (CME)

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least 5 consecutive days, the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a 'substantial period of time', the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-or-exclusion/children-missing-education-cme/>

Persistent Latecomers

Children who repeatedly arrive after 8:50am will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer. Warning letters will be issued to the parents/carers of these children.

Parents / carers should note that children who arrive after registration closes at 9am will be marked as absent (unauthorised). Warning letters and / or fixed-penalty notices may be issued to parents / carers whose children have persistent unauthorised absences due to lateness.

APPENDIX A

Request for Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances

Headteachers can only authorise any absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

Full name of child(ren) _____ Address: _____

Reason for application and dates _____

Parent’s forename _____ Surname _____

Parent’s forename _____ Surname _____

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) _____ Date: _____

The headteacher may take into account:

- It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child’s school life.
- It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event.
- The event **cannot** be organised outside of the school term.
- Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school.

Office use only

Authorised Unauthorised

Signed(headteacher) Date:

WARNING

If this requested period of absence has not been authorised, details will be passed to Shropshire Council’s Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal Warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence:

- Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time
- The headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway; or
- A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation

