**Wribbenhall School**

**Attendance Policy**



Written: Summer Term 2018

Date of Next review: Autumn Term 2019

**To be read in conjunction with:**

Wribbenhall School Prospectus

**Approved by:**

Proprietor: Ellis Wells

12th July 2019

**Introduction**

Wribbenhall School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which gives each pupil the best opportunity to realise her or his potential. We provide a caring, welcoming environment, so that each member of the school community feels valued and secure. The strong pastoral ethos of the school, and our good links with our parents/carers, means that all staff work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

We recognise that attendance monitoring is an important aspect of safeguarding. The school seeks to develop and maintain good relationships with parents/carers, and to communicate regularly and effectively with them over issues of attendance and punctuality.

The school day is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **8.45** | **– 9.00 am** | | **Arrival/Registration/Morning Task** |
| **9.00** | **– 10.45 am** | | **Period 1** |
| **10.45** | | **– 11.00 am** | **Break** |
| **11.00** | | **– 12.30 am** | **Period 2** |
| **12.30** | | **– 1.30 pm** | **Lunch** |
| **1.30** | **– 1.40 pm** | | **Registration** |
| **1.40** | **– 2.15 pm** | | **Period 3** |
| **2.15** | **– 2.50 pm** | | **Period 4** |
| **2.50** | **– 3.00 pm** | | **End of Day Review and Departure** |

The school does not provide out of hours child care. The school day commences at 8:45 am when the doors are opened and ceases at 3:00 pm, and the responsibility outside these times remains with the parent, authorised person transporting the child or the local authority transporting the child, to and from the school. Additional charges will apply for each child who is not collected by 3 pm according to the below scale:

3:00 pm to 3:10 = no charge.

3:10 pm to 3:20 pm = £10:00 charge pp.

3:20 to 3:30 = £20:00 pp.

3:30 onwards = £40:00 plus $20:00 per five minutes after 3:30 pm pp.

**Aims**

1. To maintain and improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at school.
2. To maintain a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
3. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
4. To maintain and develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
5. To work effectively with external agencies when necessary.
6. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

**1. To maintain and improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at school**

* All members of staff should apply the attendance policy consistently, detailing absences on appropriate forms.
* The school and all members of staff should establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
* All attendance issues should be related directly to our ethos, our values and our curriculum.

**2. To maintain a framework which defines roles and responsibilities, and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks**

* We have clear unambiguous procedures for statutory registration. If parents/carers do not telephone the school, they are requested to email our admissions email account.
* Telephone contact with parents/carers is made after 9.30 am on the first day of absence by a member of staff.
* We respond promptly to lateness, in respect of both parents/carers and pupils.
* Wribbenhall School has procedures in place for tracking and responding to absence and lateness.
* The School refers pupils to external agencies when necessary.
* Attendance is reviewed regularly by the proprietor.

**3. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils**

* When parents/carers share concerns about a pupil’s attendance, attitude to school or punctuality, we act promptly to support parents/carers.
* We share concerns about pupils’ attendance or lateness with parents/carers at an early stage.
* We provide support for pupils who are apprehensive about coming to school e.g. by giving them a mentor to speak to, or by giving them strategies to follow if they are finding the pressures of a school day, or of academic work, too demanding.
* When parents/carers request absence for family holidays, the legal and academic guidelines and consequences are made clear to them (se “Holidays” below.

**4. To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school**

* We make clear to parents/carers that we expect phone calls on the first morning of absence. If parents/carers do not telephone, they must email the school to explain the absence.
* When parents/carers do not phone on the first day of absence, a member of staff phones home after 9.30 am.

**5. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Social Work Service, and other services and agencies**

* The proprietor is responsible for liaising with the Education Social Work Service and other agencies.
* The School will carry out initial enquiries or intervention prior to referral and give priority to meetings arranged with external agencies.
* When necessary the School will also organise multi-agency liaison meetings and develop an understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.
* The Proprietor is also responsible for checking that pupils who leave this school have been enrolled at another school, pre-18. When there is cause for doubt, the relevant Local Authority will be informed. Post 18, we liaise with educational institutions with regard to special educational needs, access arrangements and sending pupils’ files.
* If a pupil attending the school with an Education Health Care Plan/ is looked after/a child in need/on the Child Protection Register has an unexplained absence of more than three days, the Proprietor will inform the Local Authority.

**6. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence**

* We are sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of pupils returning after prolonged absence.
* The Proprietor may be involved in discussing with the pupil and their parents/carers a structured programme, with an agreed time scale, for the pupil’s return. A timescale will also be agreed for reviewing the reintegration plan.
* The pupil is given a mentor, (although pupils may choose their own mentor if they wish), to whom they may turn for counselling, support or feedback.
* The pupil’s peers or friendship group are encouraged to provide support on a pupil’s return.
* The pupil is given a “safe place” where she/he may go during the day if the pressure of being at school becomes too much to cope with.
* All teaching staff are kept informed through weekly staff briefings about the progress and needs of the pupil, including the possible need to go to their mentor, or their “safe place”.

**Understanding Types of Absence**

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

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 includes:

* parents/carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily
* truancy before or during the school day
* absences which have never been properly explained
* pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
* shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
* day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any pupil 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/carers and the pupil. If the pupil is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

**Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any pupil’s educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Occasionally, you may need to apply for permission to be absent. Such permission can generally be sought in advance by parents/carers applying in writing to the Proprietor. Authorisation is not automatically guaranteed. The following list gives some of the reasons where permission may be granted:

* medical appointment (when it cannot be arranged out of school time)
* appointment with CAMHS
* if you are officially the responsible carer for a family member and an emergency arises
* representing the school at an outside event
* bereavement.

For other activities such as participation in significant extra-curricular activities (other than those organised by school) or in a religious holiday/festival pertinent to your faith, a parent/carer should write directly to the Proprietor seeking leave of absence. Similarly, requests for leave of absence for occasions such as a family wedding or funeral should be made in writing to the Proprietor giving as much notice as possible.

**Holidays**

Holidays are not permitted in term-time – and this includes odd days at the beginning or end of term. Amendments made to the 2006 regulations in the *Education (Pupil*

*Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013* make it clear that school leaders may **not** grant pupils leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Previously school leaders had been allowed to grant pupils leave of absence (of up to ten days) for the purpose of a family holiday in special circumstances. The strengthening of these regulations will mean that such leave can only very rarely be authorised. Parents/carers should therefore avoid taking holidays in term-time altogether. When parents/carers request absence for family holidays, the legal and academic guidelines and consequences are made clear to them.

This includes odd days at the beginning or end of term e.g. to enable travelling. In exceptional circumstances, a request should be made in writing directly to the Proprietor explaining the situation, giving as much notice as possible (usually at least six weeks).

If permission is not granted and leave is taken anyway, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carer should note that in condoning unauthorised absence they may be breaking the law and could be fined. The school also has a duty to notify the Local Authority if pupils are in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan.

The school reserves the right to investigate the validity of any non-negotiated absence further with parents/carers.

**Some Vital Statistics on Attending Wribbenhall School**

Each year there are only 185 school days, which means that if your child misses 8 days they are out of school more than they are in school. This means there are 180 days for:

Shopping

Birthday treats and trips

Non-urgent medical and dental appointments.

Use these – not precious school time. None of the above are authorised reasons for being out of school and time off school will hinder your child’s learning and progress in school. They will appear on your child’s school report as unauthorised absences and can lead to legal action being taken against you as the parent/carer.

**Remember school time is precious – don’t waste it!**

95% Attendance = 9 school days missed per year

90% Attendance = half a day absent per week

85% Attendance = 5 lessons missed per week

80% Attendance = 1 school day absence per week = up to 20 sessions missed per month

Unnecessary days off school can soon mount up so that pupils have gaps in their knowledge which can be hard to fill. These gaps could cause additional anxiety for children.