



## ***Introduction***

All parents/carers who have children of compulsory school age are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive an efficient education, “suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs which they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise” (Section 7 Education Act 1996).

Parents have legal duty to ensure that their children attend school and arrive on time. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to the continuity of learning and academic progress. There is a strong link between persistent absenteeism and low attainment. Good attendance and punctuality are essential life skills to develop from an early age for life beyond compulsory schooling.

## ***Aims and Objectives***

- To promote regular school attendance in order for every child to reach their full educational potential.
- To provide an effective monitoring system to safeguard children’s welfare.
- To promote an effective dialogue between school, parent/carers and outside agencies.
- To set in place systems for registration and attendance in order to protect children both inside school and out.
- To provide guidelines on sensitive approaches to deal with the needs of individual pupils; to agree procedures for a child’s return to school, including re-integrating long-term absentees.
- To work with parent/carers and also to be a supporter of family life.

## ***Punctuality***

Late arrival can be very distressing for pupils and disruptive for the rest of the class. Children should arrive in good time for the start of the school day. The school day starts at 8.50am and the afternoon session starts at 1.15pm. Children should be ready on the playground to line up and enter school at this time.

For the safety of pupils within school, the external doors of the school will be closed and locked once the pupil lines have entered. Pupils arriving after the doors have been closed will need to enter school via the main entrance.

A record of late arrivals will be kept in reception and recorded in the register as follows:

- Children who arrive during the registration period will be marked “***Late***”.
- Children arriving **after** the registration period has closed (10 minutes after the start of the session) will be marked “***Unauthorised absent***”. Accumulated unauthorised notices will be referred to the Education Welfare Office and may result in Penalty Notices being issued.

## ***Absences***

Absences from school may be authorised in certain circumstances. These may only be authorised by the headteacher (or the most senior member of staff in his or her absence).

Parents should notify the school of absences before the start of the school day, either by telephone, email, note or in person.

In cases where a pupil has not arrived at school and there has been no notification from the parents, the school will take reasonable steps to contact parents to confirm that the child is safe.

Where, after the school has taken reasonable steps to contact parents, no reason for the absence has been given, a form will be sent to parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. If there is no response, the Education Welfare Officer will be asked to make a home visit.

### ***Medical Appointments***

Wherever possible, medical appointments should be made outside of the school day. In all cases of a pupil being unable to attend, parents should notify the school as soon as possible.

### ***Illness***

Where a pupil is too ill to attend school then the parent should ring to inform the school at the start of the school day.

Where the school has concerns about a child's attendance being adversely affected by illness, either through missing several days at a time or through regular days off, the school reserves the right to request that the parent/ carer either:

- a) brings the child to school so that the school can make the decision as to whether the child should be at school or at home, or
- b) completes the pro-forma in Appendix A, Parental Authorisation for Access to Medical records, giving the school permission to talk to the child's medical practice to verify the nature and extent of their illness and when they should be back at school.

Where a parent refuses to either bring their child to school or provide consent for the school to liaise with their medical practice, then the child's illness may be registered as unauthorised.

### ***Term Time Holidays and Exceptional Leave***

The Headteacher may not authorise absence during term time for the purpose of a holiday.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for parents to request a leave of absence during term time. The procedures for doing so are covered in a separate Exceptional Leave Policy. Such requests should be made in advance on the form available from reception or the school website.

### ***Examples of Absence which Can be Authorised***

Only the Headteacher (or person deputising) can authorise an absence. Absence should be authorised if:-

- The pupil is absent with leave.
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carers belong.
- The pupil is the child of traveller parent/carers who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has given leave of absence.
- The pupil is attending an interview for a place at another school.
- Leave of absence is granted under the conditions of the Exceptional Leave Policy by the Headteacher for a period of no more than 10 school days.

### ***Examples of Unauthorised Absences***

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent/carer.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation (e.g. absence through illness where a parent refuses to give the school permission to talk to the child's GP)
- The pupil is staying at home to mind the house or look after siblings.
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions e.g. the pupil's birthday.
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday.
- The pupil is away from school on exceptional leave for a period of time longer than that authorised with the Headteacher and does not return when agreed unless due to unavoidable circumstances.
- The pupil is on leave without permission or if the parent/carers have failed to apply for permission in advance and, instead, seek retrospective approval on their return.

### ***Fixed Penalty Notice Information and Unauthorised Absence***

The Local Authority has brought to the attention of every school in East Riding of Yorkshire the new powers in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to tackle poor school attendance.

These include Penalty Notices, which mean that for pupils with unauthorised absence from school (i.e. any absences that the school has not given permission for) their parents/carers may be subject to a prompt fine of either £60 or £120. These can be levied per pupil, per parent, per week of absence. A week can be accumulative over a school year.

Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absence developing. They will be issued simply by post to a pupil's home. Cases of absence without acceptable cause will also include:

- pupils caught on truancy sweeps

- holiday in school term time and
- persistent late attendance after the register has closed.
- absence through reported illness which causes concern and which cannot be verified.

### ***Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality***

The school monitors the attendance and punctuality for each pupil very carefully. Where there are causes for concern, the school will inform parents. In some circumstances, parents will be invited in to school to discuss their child's attendance and identify any possible underlying causes with a view to helping them improve.

### ***Conclusion***

This policy is designed to be a useful, informative working document. It has been designed to be amended in the light of practice and procedures. It seeks to support the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Authority in our shared aim to ensure the maximum attendance and maximum benefit for pupils from their school life. It also seeks to support families. The school wishes to be a friend to families recognising the central role which a successful family life contributes to the development of the individual and citizen of the future.



**Willerby Carr Lane Primary School**

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 School Business Manager: Mrs G Mortimer  
 Administrative Team: Mrs D Clipson, Mrs J Clements, Mrs D Johnson

**Parental Authorisation for Access to Medical records**

By signing this form you are giving permission for your child’s Medical Practice to share your child’s medical records with the school and for the school to share attendance information with your child’s medical practice. Information will only be sought and shared as relevant to your child’s attendance at school. All information will be kept confidentially within school and only shared with staff on a need to know basis. This permission may be rescinded at any time by writing to the school c/o the Headteacher and marked Confidential.

Name of pupil	
Date of birth	
Address	
Name and address of Medical Practice	
Name of Parent’s/ Carer’s completing this form	
Signed	
Date	