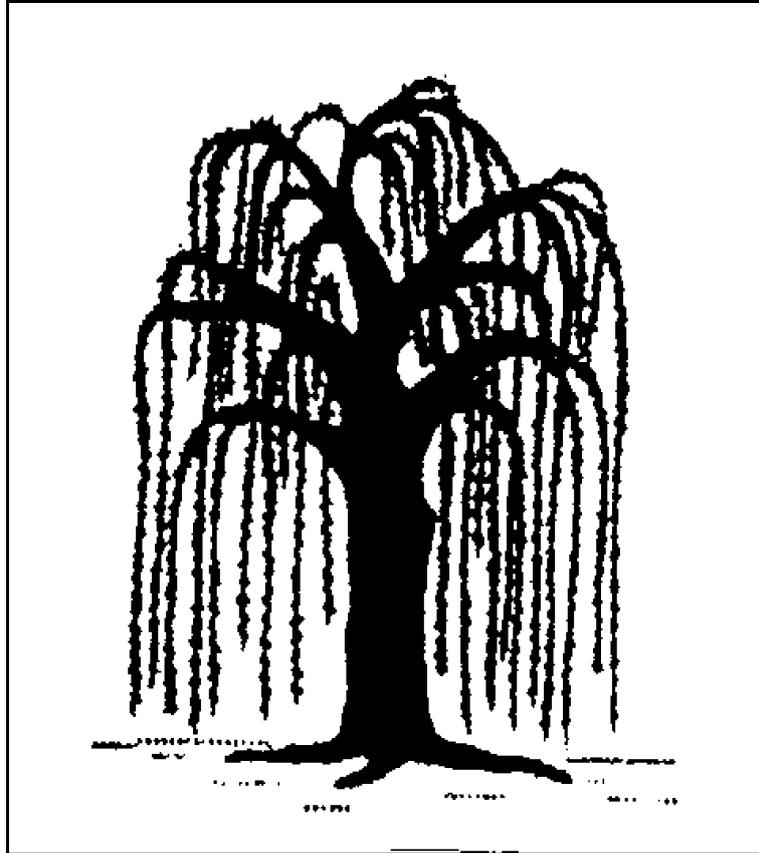


Willow Farm Primary School



Attendance Policy

Head Teacher- Michelle Robinson
Deputy Head Teacher- Karina Fulton
Chair of Governors- Carla Middleton

September 2018

Willow Farm Attendance Policy

At Willow Farm we place a high value on the regular attendance and punctuality of all our pupils. Every lesson in school has an educational value; therefore attendance and punctuality support the school's foremost aim of maximizing pupil learning. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children.

Our Aims:

- To maximise attendance rates for all pupils individually and for the school community as a whole.
- To clarify parental responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality.
- To inform pupils and parents of the clear procedures to be followed in cases of absence or lateness.
- To make effective use of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when the attendance or punctuality of individual pupils causes concern.

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the

- behavior and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school daily whenever their child is unable to attend school.

Examples of absences

Authorised absences:

- genuine illness of the pupil
- hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil
- major religious observances
- visits to prospective new schools
- external exams or educational assessments
- parents are service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays in school holiday time
- parents are subject to strict and un-negotiated holiday rota and evidence is provided from their employer to this effect

Unauthorised absences including, but not limited to:

- shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park
- holidays
- a birthday treat
- oversleeping due to a late night
- looking after other children / other family member
- appointments for other family members
- remaining at home when another family member is ill

We encourage parents, where possible, to make appointments at the beginning or end of the school day. If a child has an appointment in the middle of the day they must attend before and after the appointment when possible.

The school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere,
- provide a safe learning environment,
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns,
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality,
- monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality,
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence,

- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers,
- although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence,
- in the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested,
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition,
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- monitor and support school attendance and punctuality,
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Local Authority Targeted Support Department, if school support does not bring about the necessary improvement in attendance.

Methods:

- Children should be in the playground by **8:50am** as doors open ready for **9.00am** when lessons begin.
- Parents will, where possible, inform the school by telephone or the school app **before 9.00am** that their child is ill and will not be attending school that day.
- Office staff will phone home if no reason is received for an absence by 9.30am.
- Teachers/office staff will pursue reasons for all absences when they have not been given and inform Miss Robinson or Mrs Fulton if no satisfactory reason is given by the parent/carer.
- Miss Robinson and relevant staff to use Scholar Pack to monitor and analyse whole school, group and individual pupil attendance.
- Full 100% attendance certificates will be awarded every term in a whole school assembly with a special prize for those pupils achieving full attendance for the complete academic year.
- Each week one class in KS1 and one in KS2 are awarded a 'Pride Lion' for the best attendance.

Late arrivals:

- Pupils late for the start of the morning and afternoon session should report to the school office. The office staff will record them in the late book, mark them late in the register and check their dinner arrangement. Your child will be marked late if they arrive after **9.10am** or after **1.25pm**.
- Pupils who are late for school more than **eight** times in any one term will have a letter and a discussion with parent/ carer by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head to find out the reasons.

Holidays taken during term time:

- Parents **should not** take pupils on holidays in term time and parents must apply for the leave in advance of taking it. Each request for holiday absence will be considered individually, taking account of:
 - the age of the child
 - the time of year proposed for the trip
 - the overall attendance pattern of the pupil- must be 95% plus attendance for the previous academic year
 - the child's stage of education and progress- Leave will not be authorised during statutory testing periods

Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance:

The Headteacher may only grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.

Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time are as follows:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where a parent can only have certain holiday patterns due to the nature of their work- evidence must be provided.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs";
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the governing body prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Evidence would be required in each case.

Process for requesting holiday absence

- By law applications must be made by a parent normally residing with the child.
- Seek permission for authorised holiday absence **before** making firm bookings/arrangements/payments for your holiday- attached or from school office.
- Applications should be made in writing on the school form at least 1 month before the absence is due to begin and sent to the school office.
- Absence will not be granted retrospectively.
- After consideration of the above criteria, a decision will be returned to the parent.

Holiday absences of greater than 10 days within any one academic year will be classified as unauthorised and parents will be informed accordingly. Absence of more than 10 school days in a school year will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Work will not be set for completion during the holiday, but children should be encouraged to read and keep a diary of their experiences.

Parents who decide to take a holiday without permission, will incur unauthorised absences for their child and may be fined. These remain on a child's record and are monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Officer, and could result in a fine or court action.

Parents needing exceptional circumstances to be considered for absences longer than ten days within one academic year, should make an appointment to discuss this with Miss Robinson well in advance of the absence.

Attendance percentages are reported on the end of year school report for each child.

Miss Robinson will report to the governing body on the levels of attendance and punctuality termly.

Persistent absence or lateness will result in careful monitoring by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Arrangements for absence in other circumstances:

Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances:

Sudden, serious circumstances do occur when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that school is informed as soon as is possible of the circumstances so that the appropriate code can be written in the register.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Review- September 2019

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Attached is an application form for you to request permission for your child to be absent from school to take part in a family holiday. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully:

- The law states that you do not have the right to take your child out of school for holidays during term time. The Local Education Authority works with schools to reduce the numbers of children missing school because of holidays taken in term time and schools can refuse your request to take your child out of school.
- If you wish to take your child on holiday during term time, you must apply for permission in writing using the attached form. Permission for authorised leave of absence may be granted for holidays totalling no more than two weeks in any school year, unless there are very exceptional circumstances.
- There are certain times of the year when a child may experience problems because of missing school. These include examination periods, at the time of starting a new school and at the start of a new school term. In deciding whether to authorise your child's absence and give permission for a holiday in term time, the school will take these and other factors into account.
- If the school refuse your application and you still take your child out of school the absences will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Penalty Notice or a Summons being issued against you for irregular school attendance.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child to accompany you on holiday during term time then please complete the application attached. This form should be returned to your child's school as far in advance of the proposed holiday as possible.

Issued by Nottinghamshire Education Welfare Service

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM WILLOW FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Pupil's Name Tutor Group/Class

Home Address

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I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the following dates:

Date of Last day at School Date of Return to School

Total number of school days missed

Reasons for absence from school:

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.....
I/We make this application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I/We understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

.....

Signed

Date

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE

Absences / Late Arrivals.

Reason for absence	What to do	Notes
Illness / emergency	Phone school before 9.00am. (0115 9878501) Send message on the school app Send letter with sibling.	Check school website for guidance on infectious disease.
Holiday	Discuss holiday plans with Miss Robinson/Mrs Fulton before making a booking. Obtain holiday form from School office or online. Return to school at least 4 weeks before you intend to travel. If you do not hear from Miss Robinson assume your request has been granted.	Please see guidance for the school policy about holidays taken during term time.
Other events such as music / dance examinations.	Inform class teacher in advance. If necessary, obtain guidance from the school.	
Lateness	Please inform the school if possible, particularly if your child has school lunches. Late marks will be recorded in registers if your child arrives at school after 9.10 am or 1.25pm .	