



Attendance Policy

Autumn 2025

Due for next review in: Autumn 2026

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1. Aims

Woodside Primary School believes that to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

The school understands that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, the school will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

The school takes a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognises the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, relationships with peers, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

The school is committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance, including punctuality, and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance, punctuality, and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is Stacey Marshall. She can be contacted via admin@woodside.shropshire.sch.uk. Staff and families will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation (but is not limited to), which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and parental responsibilities:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- The Children Act 1989
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- Woodside School Behavior Policy
- Woodside School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Woodside SEND policy
- Woodside Pupils with additional health needs who cannot attend school policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance data for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in Woodside's Complaints Policy.

Pupil attendance is reported at Full Trustee Board meetings.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures at this school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trustees
- › Appointing a member of the SLT as a school attendance champion. At Woodside, all senior leaders champion attendance across school and in their teams
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Authorising fixed-penalty notices where necessary
- › Where appropriate, support designated school staff work with families to ensure every pupil has access to full-time education with a focus on early intervention.

3.3 The Attendance Officer (with the support of the Headteacher)

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision and strategic approach for attendance improvement across the whole school
- › Evaluating and monitoring the impact of interventions used to improve attendance
- › Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and remove barriers to attendance
- › Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- › Ensuring parents are informed of their statutory duties in ensuring their child has regular school attendance.

The attendance officer is Stacey Marshall and she can be contacted via admin@woodside.shropshire.sch.uk

3.4 Class teachers

- › Responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis for morning and afternoon sessions via SIMs
- › Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
- › Modelling good attendance behaviour

- › Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently to ensure whole school approach to attendance

3.5 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents/carers to the year group leader or senior leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- › Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently to ensure whole school approach to attendance

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with 3 or more emergency contacts for their child and ensure contact details are updating where appropriate
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- › Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- › Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance. This support can be accessed by contacting school or external agencies.
- › Ensure that leave of absence during term time is avoided where possible. Where this can not be avoided, parents are to inform school in advance of leave

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time
- › Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by the start times as below each school day:

Year group	Start time	Finish time
Nursery (am session)	8.25am	11.25am
Nursery (pm session)	12.10pm	3.10pm
Reception	8.30am	3.10pm
Year 1	8.30am	3.10pm
Year 2	8.30am	3.10pm
Year 3	8.30am	3.10pm
Year 4	8.30am	3.10pm
Year 5	8.25am	3.05pm
Year 6	8.25am	3.05pm

The register will close 10 minutes after the stated start time.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also section 7).

- **Call – 01691 652446, select option 1 for the Attendance Manager. Parents can leave a message if the phone is unmanned or engaged.**
- **Text 07786 201172 – This service is checked regularly throughout the day and is an opportunity to communicate with school.**
- **Email – admin@woodside.shropshire.sch.uk**

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers should complete a 'Leave of absence request form' to request planned absence. This forms can be obtained from the school office. The Headteacher will make a decision on whether this request has been authorised or not. You will be notified of the Headteacher's decision by text and letter.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

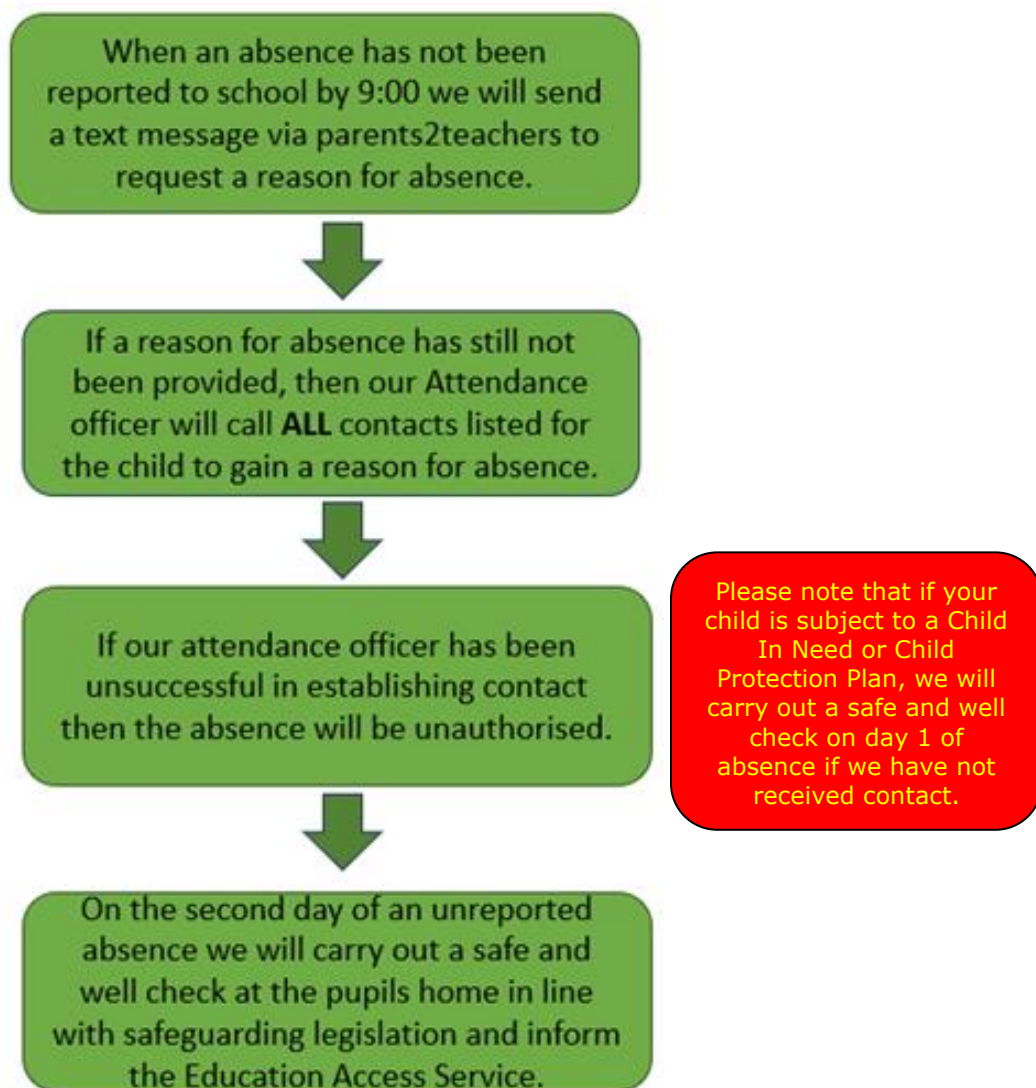
Text messages will be sent out informing parents that their child has received one of these marks. This is reviewed regularly by our Education Welfare Officer and will result in a letter home to inform parents when their child has received 5 or more late marks.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by sending a text or calling the SIMS contacts.

- No contact may result in a home visit by the Education Welfare Officer or by designated staff from school. If school has any safeguarding concerns, the police may carry out a 'Safe and Well visit'.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not and what code is appropriate to use
- Please see parent Attendance Information Booklet for further information



4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

If we have any concerns about your child's attendance and/or punctuality, we will work with you as a family in a timely manner to identify support in order to make improvements. The attendance officer will communicate with **ALL** parents/carers throughout the school year regarding their child's attendance, so that parents are aware of their child's attendance. All parents/carers will receive a report at the end of the academic year which will include their child's attendance record.

4.7 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. **Headteachers are unable to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. This is not deemed as 'special circumstances.'** Headteachers are now only allowed to authorise any leave of absence when an application has been made in advance, and it's felt to be for exceptional circumstances and something that is unlikely to be repeated in a child's lifetime. Family holidays are not deemed an exceptional circumstance. All unauthorised leave of absence will be subject to Shropshire Council and government guidance and procedure, which includes fixed penalty notices.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least one week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- › Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- › Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- › Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

4.8 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

From August 2024, the fine for unauthorised school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- › The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- › One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- › Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- School will follow monitoring processes, working alongside local authority monitoring processes, to ensure early identification of individual cases where attendance is beginning to become a concern. We will plan and implement support to avoid persistent absence and remove any potential barriers to attendance
- Through monitoring processes, identify and offer support to vulnerable groups
- Continuing to improve schools' relationship with whole school community to ensure good communication and that the right support is offered at the right time
- Promoting support agencies outside of school linked with the Shropshire local offer both at a universal and targeted support level
- Attendance Information booklet for parents/carers is shared on our website
- Build a holistic understanding of pupils and our families, and offer support where appropriate
- Build a culture of community and belonging for our pupils
- Follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle for pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance, or pupils who are absent due to mental/physical ill health, or SEND pupils returning to school after a lengthy period of absence
- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority
- Where pupils are persistently absent, School and the allocated Education Welfare Officer to work with the family to reduce barriers to attendance following the Local Authority formal process.

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance, absence, and lateness data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the Trustee Board.

6.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to key staff and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher and Attendance Manager. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Trustee Board.

8. Definition and Appendix

8.1 Attendance codes

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

8.2 Appendix

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration

\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
K	Off-site educational activity	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	For the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Authroised leave of absence	Compulsory school age pupil subject to a reduced timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveler community is travelling with parents due to their work purposes, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence or subject to a formal attendance warning and evidence for absence is required.
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangement	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangement

Y1	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day