



Westacre Infant School

Attendance Policy

Date Approved: 16.10.25

Review Date: October 2026

Governor: Mrs A Dalton Chair of Governors

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

We are committed to:

- Following 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 him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’.

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies within the Disability Discrimination Act (2010)
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

The policy will be updated in line with current School Attendance Legislation as necessary.

Key roles and responsibilities

- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Westacre Infant School.
- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s complaints policy.
- The Headteacher, alongside the Attendance Officer, will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Westacre Infant School.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for following the attendance policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.

- Parents will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
- Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.
- Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

Definitions

Westacre Infant School “absence” as:

- Not attending school for any reason.

Westacre Infant School defines an “authorised absence” as:

- An absence due to sickness.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school have granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency or other exceptional circumstances where the leave of absence has been granted by the Headteacher prior to the leave being taken.

Westacre Infant School defines an “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Westacre Infant School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Less than 90% attendance across an academic year for whatever reason.

Training of staff

At Westacre Infant School, we recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at risk pupils.

- Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction.
- Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Absence procedures

- Parents must contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- If a child is classed as vulnerable (Social Care Support) and we have not been informed why that child is absent from school a home visit will be made on day 1 of the absence.
- If a child is not classed as vulnerable and we have not been informed why that child is absent from school a home visit will be made on day 2 of the absence.
- In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Headteacher or Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- If pupil absence drops below 95 per cent (95%), the pupil will be tracked for the rest of that half term. (Continue to use relevant support strategies with parents and communicate with tiered letters)
- If pupil absence drops below 90 per cent (90%), the pupil will be tracked for the rest of that term. (Continue to use relevant support strategies with parents and communicate with tiered letters)

Contact information

- Parent must provide accurate and up to date contact details, including at least two emergency contact numbers.
- Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.
- If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local EWO will inform the LA who have the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

Lateness

- Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- The school day starts at 8:40am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.
- Registers are marked by 9:00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- Any child arriving late to school must be signed in at reception by the Receptionist

Term time leave

- At Westacre Infant School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example, bereavement or serious illness.
- Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis.
- If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Monitoring

- Westacre Infant School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- Whole School attendance is monitored weekly and compared to the national data available at that moment in time.

Religious Observances

- Westacre Infant School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

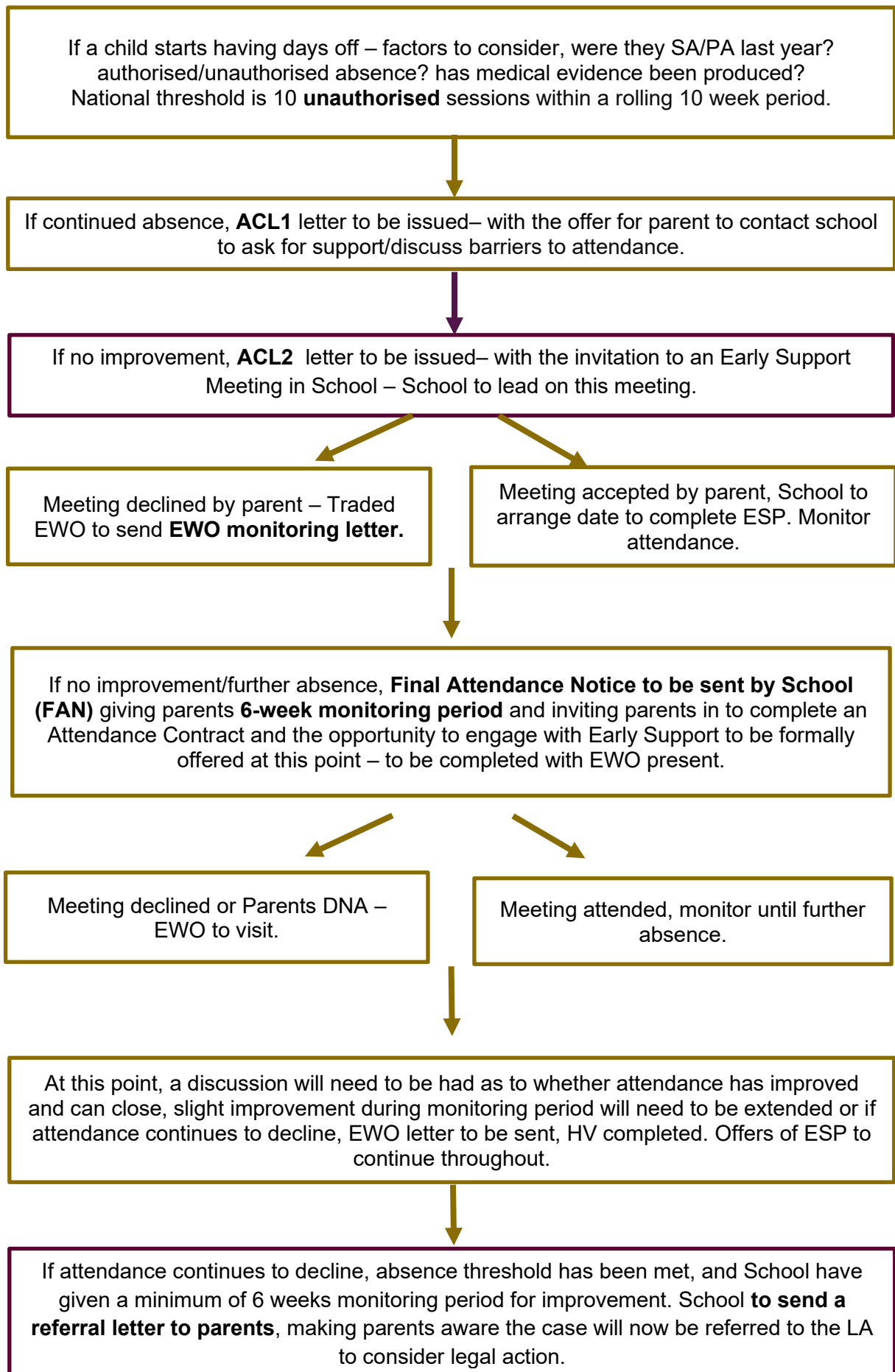
Appointments

- As far as possible, parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be presented to school.
- Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

Rewarding Good Attendance & Punctuality

- The 3rd, 2nd and highest attendance weekly all receive a trophy for the display in the school hall that is then collated at the end of each term for an additional reward in school
- Classes that achieve the highest attendance for the week will be celebrated with a reward the following week
- A child with 100% attendance that week may be chosen to receive a headteacher award
- Pupils with 100% attendance for the academic year receive a certificate and attendance prize presented by the Headteacher
- Pupils with 98% attendance receive a silver attendance award at the end of the academic year
- Pupils with 97% attendance receive a bronze attendance award at the end of the academic year

Attendance Processes for Schools:



School Attendance: The law has changed

From 19th August 2024

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance have changed

The government has introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notices

5 days of unauthorised absence

Penalty Notice fines may be issued for any term-time absences that are unauthorised (for example, a 5-day term-time holiday)

- whether these absences are taken consecutively or cumulatively over a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 10-week period

Penalty Notice fines will also be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any rolling period of 10 school weeks

A school day has 2 sessions:

1 morning and 1 afternoon session per day

A **school week** means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 6 sessions of holiday plus 4 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

What is a Penalty Notice?

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution.

If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from August 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate. Any further offences will result in criminal prosecution. The law will be clear that where a Penalty Notice threshold met – in each individual case, the school **must** consider if a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance, the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days)

Reduced to: £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

Second Offence (in a 3-year rolling period)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance to the **same parent** for the **same child** the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days)

Third Offence or Any Further Offences (in a 3-year rolling period)

The third time an offence is committed for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance by the **same parent** for the **same child** (including those by other Local Authorities) a Penalty Notice will NOT be issued but will be referred to Wolverhampton City Council's Education Welfare service for Prosecution which may result in fines of up to **£2,500** per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in a Magistrate's Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate.

Wolverhampton City Council have the discretion to issue Penalty Notice fines before the above threshold is met in cases where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the threshold, or for repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.

Unchanged

Penalty Notice fines are issued **Per Parent, Per child**. This means that fines are issued to each parent, for each child who is absent. **For example:** If 2 siblings are absent for a term-time holiday this will result in each parent receiving 2 separate fines.