



Attendance Policy

Introduction:

Regular school attendance is crucial if the children in Yatton Infant School are to achieve their potential and meet the five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' which are to:

- **Be happy**
- **Stay safe**
- **Enjoy and Achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic success**

At Yatton Infant School we aim to work closely with parents/carers to achieve and maintain high standards of attendance.

In order to achieve this, the school will:

- Promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere in school, where children feel safe and that their presence is valued.
- Promote parents support of this policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education.
- Create attitudes towards high standards of attendance and punctuality, which pupils should retain throughout life.
- Ensure that attendance is maintained effectively and absences and lateness are followed up promptly.
- Meet legal requirements, with particular reference to identifying unauthorised absence.
- Keep accurate registration documents identifying authorised/unauthorised absences and check registers regularly, to note unexplained absences and identify patterns of absence and lateness if they are occurring.
- Raise parental awareness of the importance of attendance and punctuality through a variety of strategies.
- Involve other agencies e.g. Education Welfare Service, Social Services, Educational Psychologist, when difficulties arise.
- Ensure all staff are aware of school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Ensure good liaison when a change of school occurs.

Lateness Procedure

- Parents should notify the school before 9.30am if a child is going to be absent.
- If a child is absent and a message has not been received by 9.30am office staff will telephone parents to find out why the pupil is absent.
- If verbal contact has *not* been made the child should bring a letter explaining their absence when they return to school.
- A child arriving after 9.05am will be marked late.
- A child arriving after 9.30am will be marked absent. (This absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no reason is given). An accompanying adult should sign in children arriving at reception after these times.

Medical and Dental Appointments

- If possible, routine appointments should be made outside school hours.
- If an appointment is made in school time an explanatory note should be sent to school on the day before the appointment.
- Parents should sign children out and back in again when attending appointments during the school day.

Where there is doubt about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, school and education welfare officers can refer the matter to a school doctor or GP. If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period or the school notices a pattern of school absence emerging, early contact should be made with the EWS or School Health Service.

Holidays

Parents should avoid taking their children away during term time.

The governing body recognise the constraints of the present economic climate and the difficulty if a parent/carer is self-employed, shift worker or in other employment that has constraints on holiday requests.

The governing body at Yatton Infant School recognise that for infant aged children, the experience of travelling to a different locality (UK community) or country (global community) can be a learning experience.

Therefore taking into account stakeholder views the Headteacher will authorise ONE holiday in the academic year if:-

- 1.) Attendance of the child is above 90%**
- 2.) The request is for 5 days or less.**

Holidays for Year 2 pupils will not be authorised under any circumstances during the months of April, May and June for reasons of preparation for and administration of end of KS1 assessment.

Children who have to go on holiday during school time will be encouraged to take a 'travelling bear' with them so that they can share their experiences when they return.

Teachers will not be expected to provide any other 'work' for this period as it is the parent/carers choice to take his/her child out of the school.

Applying for absence for holidays

If a parent has no option due but to take a holiday during term time, a statutory Appendix 1 form (available from the School Office) must be completed well in advance of booking the holiday. Authorised leave of absence in exceptional circumstances is intended for the purpose of **one family holiday only during an academic year and is not an entitlement to a cumulative total of 5 days holiday on a number of separate occasions.**

(North Somerset Guidance/ National guidance states one holiday of up to 10 days in exceptional circumstances only. Yatton Infant School has agreed on a compromise of 5 days in order to be responsive to stakeholder views and improve attendance figures).

If a pupil goes on holiday during term time without the headteacher's permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Education Welfare Service will be informed.

Unauthorised Absence

Her Majesty's inspectors define unauthorised absence as "Absence from school for any period as a result of a pre-meditated or spontaneous act by the pupil or parent or both. This includes parentally condoned absence." (*The Education Regulations 2006, No.13*).

Examples of parentally condoned absences include absences when:

- A parent gives in to a pupil who wants to stay at home
- It is a pupil's birthday
- A parent does not care whether the pupil attends school
- A parent has taken the pupil shopping
- A parent cannot control the pupil
- Family holidays/celebrations

All unauthorised absence will be noted on the child's school record and Annual Report to Parents and reported to the Educational Welfare Service as well as included in Government Data.

Travelling families

Absence of a child from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if it is believed that the family intends to return.

Strategies to promote and maintain high standards of Attendance and Punctuality

Children at this school are dependent on their parents/carers, who are responsible for their level of attendance and punctuality. It is vital that children enjoy coming to school, and whilst being encouraged to attend well and on time, will not carry blame and be made to feel unhappy if their parents are not supportive or effective in these areas.

Registers will be checked for regular attendance by the designated administrative staff.

Teaching staff should also be aware and report any concerns to the headteacher. The register is a legal document and may be used as evidence in a Court of Law.

The headteacher will consult/discuss with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when:

- a) Attendance less than 90%
- b) Contacts with home have not brought about any improvement in attendance
- c) Poor communication with home regarding explanations for absence/lateness

The headteacher will refer to EWO when there is:

- a) 2 weeks (10 school days) continuous absence
- b) 30 absences in a 10 week period
- c) 30 late sessions over a 10 week period

Governors

Attendance will be reported to governors through the termly headteacher's report. This report will identify any attendance issues and progress against LA targets.

Ratified by Governors: Full Governing Body September 2009

Review Date: September 2010

