



GREAT BUDWORTH
CE Primary School



Catholic Primary School



Weaverham High School

Leave of Absence Policy

Weaverham Cluster of Schools

Date of policy: February 2015

Date of review: February 2018

This policy was written by those leaders responsible for monitoring attendance in the Weaverham Cluster of schools and in consultation with Cheshire West and Chester Education Welfare Service (September 2013). The policy is written in line with the legislation 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.'

Policy Statement

All children need to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year in order to receive their educational entitlement and to make the most of that education. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. All schools within the Cluster will follow procedures that comply with the law, relevant education legislation and codes of practice, other relevant national/local requirements which aim to achieve best practice for all groups of children.

Principles

The Cluster Policy is founded on the following key principles:

- ✓ every child will have access to a full-time education to which they are entitled
- ✓ any patterns of absence will be acted upon early in collaboration with pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Service
- ✓ parents will be held accountable in performing their legal duty of ensuring that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly
- ✓ children will be punctual to lessons

Policy in Practice Punctuality

School starts at 8:55am and all children are expected to be in school for registration at 8:55am. Children arriving after that time must come into school via the main entrance and parents must sign the Pupil Book stating the reason for lateness. The register is recorded at 8:55am and at 9.25am the register is closed (this is 30 minutes after registration is opened). Afternoon registration starts at 1.00pm for Reception, Year 1 and year 2 and closes at 1.30pm. Afternoon registration starts at 1.20pm and closes at 1.50pm for KS2.

Children arriving after close of registration without a satisfactory explanation will receive unauthorised absence mark in the register. Persistent lateness may result in the school contacting Education Welfare or Social Care.

Absence

Absence is recorded legally as '**authorised**' (approved by school) or '**unauthorised**' (not approved by school). Parents are required to telephone the school office by 9.10am on the first day of absence and then on all subsequent days of absence. When school has not been informed of the reason for absence attempts will be made to contact a parent. Persistent failure to make contact with a parent may result in the school contacting Education Welfare or Social Care.

Parents requesting **Leave of Absence** for any reason (other than medical must complete the form (Appendix 1) in advance. **All leave of absence is at the Headteacher's discretion.** In making a decision to authorise leave of absence the Headteacher will consider if the absence is due to exceptional circumstances (examples):

- ✓ the parent has leave from the **Armed Forces** (Services)
- ✓ **Family Crisis** (adoption; bereavement; additional medical needs)
- ✓ **Religious Observance** by the religious body to which the parents belong

If leave of absence is authorised, a date to return must be agreed with the Headteacher. A child who is absent for longer than the 5 days (or 10 sessions - a session being either a morning or an afternoon) after the agreed return date may be legally removed from the school register and the parent may be liable to prosecution.

Leave of Absence due to Family Holidays

Leave of absence due to a family holiday during term time may not be authorised, however, the request must still be processed by the school. In response to any leave of absence request, a decision will be made and a letter sent within 10 working days.

Fixed Penalty Notice

A fixed penalty notice may be issued by the Local Authority:

- 10 unauthorised consecutive absent sessions due to a family holiday
- Where persistence absence is recorded as unauthorised

The current rates payable by parents are £60 where the amount is paid within 21 days and £120 where the amount is paid within 21-28 days. This charge is per parent/guardian per child. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid this could lead to prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.

Date policy approved by School Governing Body: February 2015

Updated: January 2024

Appendix 1 Request for leave of absence



GREAT BUDWORTH
CE Primary School



St Bede's
Catholic Primary School



Weaverham High School

Name of School		St Bede's Catholic Primary School	
Name/s of Child/ren		Year Group/s	
Do you have any other children in other schools? If yes please write name of child/ren and school.			
State reason for absence			
First day of absence		Total number of school days missed	
Return date to school			
Signature (parent/carer)		Date	
Signature (parent/carer)		Date	

For School Office Use Only	
Current Attendance	%
Previous Years Attendance	%
Headteacher's Decision:	
Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
Reason for Authorised or Unauthorised Absence	
Signed (Headteacher)	Date
Copied to Parents (Date)	Register Code
LA informed of absence/fixed penalty requested	Yes/No

Appendix 2 Letter to parents

School address

Date

Dear

Thank you for your recent letter requesting authorisation for (insert name of children) to be absent from school to go on holiday for (insert no of days) days ((insert no of sessions) sessions) from the (insert from date) up to an including (insert to date).

The Government discourages the taking of holidays in term time. Evidence shows that children who miss school do not achieve as well as those who attend regularly.

As of September 2013, the law has restricted a Head Teacher's ability to authorise holidays during term time. Head Teachers are now only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

As this request to take a holiday does not meet the criterion of 'exceptional circumstances', I am unfortunately unable to authorise this absence.

Should you still choose to take this leave with (insert name of children) during this period the Local Authority will be informed as this will constitute an unauthorised absence. A Fixed Penalty Notice will then be issued in accordance with section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The law stipulates that the current penalties payable by parents are £60 when the penalty is paid within 21 days and £120 when the penalty is paid within 28 days. This penalty is per parent/carers per child.

If the fixed penalty is not paid this could lead to you being prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

If you feel this decision has not taken into account any relevant exceptional circumstances, please contact the school immediately for further discussion.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Weaverham Forest



Crowton Christ Church
CE Primary School



University
Primary
Academy



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