

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

The Local Authority has agreed with Religious Leaders and SACRE that one day for each religious festival (no more than three days in any one academic year), should be counted as authorised absence. We ask parents and carers to inform the school beforehand of any intended days of absence.

PUNCTUALITY

Pupils are expected to be within the school gates before 8.40am

- Pupils arriving after this time up until 8.50am will be recorded as 'L' (late before register closes).
- Pupils arriving after 8.50am may be recorded as 'U' (late after register closes) and will therefore be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- Punctuality issues will initially be addressed with the parents/carers by correspondence; however this may lead to more formal meetings in school.

Where any child hits the Local Authority threshold for unauthorised absence, whether through lateness or otherwise, a request for a Penalty Notice and/or legal action can be made.

At William Booth we use a range of incentives to encourage and support the drive to achieve good attendance and punctuality. This includes:

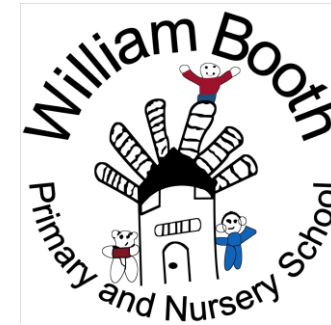
- Weekly attendance and punctuality leagues with an award for the winning class.
- Class prizes for the overall winning class each half-term.
- Special prizes for individual pupils achieving 100% attendance over a certain period.
- 'Attendance Week' rewards spread throughout the year for classes and/or individual pupils.
- A range of other incentive schemes and attendance based prizes including: tickets to local events; school trips to local attractions; vouchers and coupons for local businesses; certificates and stickers for pupils.

If you would like to read the Attendance Policy in full then you may access it by:

- Requesting to see a copy of the policy at the school office
- Visiting the school web-site
- Purchasing your own copy of the policy for a small fee

WILLIAM BOOTH PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

PARENTS/CARERS SUMMARY



PROMOTING AND MAXIMISING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS!

“Good attendance, including punctuality, is essential to raising the educational attainment of all pupils and affording them the best possible life chances following statutory education. In order to achieve this, children and young people need to attend school regularly and be equipped to learn. Children cannot learn if they are absent from school.”

What should you do?

- Ensure your child attends school every day they are well enough to do so.
- Inform the school before 8.40am if they will not be in school and explain why.
- Make appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Return your child to school immediately after an appointment.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT?

You must inform the school before 8.40am on any day which your child is going to be absent. It is your responsibility to do this and you should do so by telephone or in person at the school office.

Any failure to inform the school of reasons for absence will be officially recorded and may result in a home visit from our Attendance Officer or another member of school staff. Where a reason is not provided any absence will also be **unauthorised**.

Any child, who is absent for more than 3 days may need to bring in medical evidence as proof of illness.

If a child's attendance falls below 90% they are classed as a Persistent Absentee (PA) and a serious concern for the school. Parents/carers will be notified of this and steps will be taken to address the issue. This could include:

- 1. Parents/carers being invited to attend a formal review of their case in school.**
- 2. Any further absences being unauthorised unless one of the following is shown to school: a medical certificate, a letter from a medical practitioner or a dated prescribed medication.**

In any situation where a child accrues sufficient unauthorised absences, and/or a Persistent Absentee's attendance remains a concern, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service, who may decide to issue a penalty notice or take further legal action.

A Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days increased to £160 if paid within the 28th day.

If attendance remains unsatisfactory, the Local Authority may have no alternative other than issue a Penalty Notice or proceed to court in accordance with Section 444(1) or Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996. Convictions of an offence under these acts may result in a fine of £1000, £2500 or a prison sentence.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE NURSERY?

Parents/carers of children who are not yet of compulsory school age are reminded that **the provision of a place in our Foundation Unit for Nursery 1 and Nursery 2 pupils may be at risk if a child demonstrates consistently poor attendance.**

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME (FAMILY HOLIDAYS)

The Department for Education have determined that schools can no longer authorise holidays in term time. If families choose to take their child out of school during term time a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a penalty notice.

A Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increased to £160 if paid within the 28th day. This will be issued to each parent for each child who is not at school on the dates when the holiday is taken.

- An Education Welfare referral may also be submitted if the school is informed or suspect that a family has been on holiday whilst suggesting to the school another reason of absence. It will be up to the family to prove that they have not taken a family vacation.**
- Children/young people taken out of school for a holiday will have the non-attendance recorded as an unauthorised absence.**
- A child or young person who does not return to school at the end of the recorded unauthorised holiday date will initially be subject to enquiries being made by the school, followed by a referral being made to the Education Welfare Service.**
- Following the above information, if a parent/carer still intends to take their child on holiday during term time, they have a duty to inform the school of this action and give at least 6 weeks' notice of the event. NB- Notified holiday absence will still be classed as an unauthorised absence and families may still be issued with a penalty notice.**

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Schools have a discretionary power to grant a pupil time off school during the term if they believe that there are exceptional circumstances or compassionate reasons that justify the leave. **This is not a holiday in term time. Cheaper holidays are NOT exceptional circumstances.**

- Requests are treated on a case by case basis. If the request is refused then any absences taken on the dates requested will be recorded as unauthorised absences.**

Such requests receive a response in writing that addresses the following points:

- The expected date of return**
- That the parents/carers are expected to contact the school if anything delays the pupil returning to school when expected**
- What action will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected**

Similarly, a letter will be sent out should a request be refused, stating what action will be taken if the parents/carers ignore the refusal.