



## **Parents' Guide to Attendance**

At Wickham Church of England Primary School, we believe that regular school attendance is essential for children to reach their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing lessons can cause children to fall behind and may expose them to wider risks. School-age education supports health, wellbeing and social development, including forming and maintaining positive relationships.

We want children to succeed in all areas of life, and consistent school attendance is key to this. Our whole-school attendance target for this academic year is **95%**. Following guidance from Hampshire County Council, we will take the following steps to support families where attendance is a concern.

### Absence procedure for Parents

1. If your child is unavoidably absent, please contact the school by phone on the first day and each subsequent day, stating the reason and expected return date.
2. If we do not know why your child is absent, we will call you to ensure they are safe. If we cannot reach any of the three listed contacts within two hours, we may visit your home. If there is still no contact, we may involve the Police and/or Children's Services to ensure safety.
3. If a pattern of absence emerges, your child's class teacher, home-school link worker, or attendance officer may contact you to offer support.
4. Attendance is tracked daily. If your child's attendance falls **below 95%**, we will notify you and provide a termly attendance certificate.
5. If attendance drops **below 90%**, we will contact you again to discuss support options. This may include help from our home-school link worker, a referral to the school nurse, or Early Help Hub support. You will receive a letter outlining our concerns. From this point, absences will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided, until attendance improves to above 95%.
6. If attendance still does not improve, a warning letter will be issued. Once the threshold for unauthorised absence is met, a referral to the Attendance Legal Panel (ALP) may be made and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued.

## Late Arrival at School

- All pupils are expected to arrive on time. The school day begins at **8:55am**. Pupils arriving after this time must report to the main office with a parent to be signed in.
- Arrivals between **8:55am and 9:25am** are recorded as late. If this happens more than three times, your child's teacher or the attendance officer will speak with you to offer support.
- Arrivals **after 9:25am** are marked as unauthorised absences for the session. Ten unauthorised absences will result in a referral to the Attendance Legal Panel and may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- If lateness reaches five times, we will contact you to offer support from our home-school link worker. All further late arrivals will be marked as unauthorised. Ten unauthorised absences may result in a referral and penalty notice.

## Medical Appointments

Please try to schedule appointments outside school hours. If this is not possible, notify the school in advance. We may ask for evidence of the appointment. Pupils should be out of school for the shortest time necessary.

## Unauthorised Holiday Absence

Unauthorised holidays of **10 or more sessions (5 days)** will automatically result in a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please refer to the updated Code of Conduct (issued 19 August 2024), available on the school website or from the office. Penalty payments go directly to the Local Authority, not the school.

Penalty notices may also be issued to parents who attempt to avoid penalties by scheduling holidays that fall just below the threshold, including during Bank Holidays or INSET days.