



WILLIAM HARDING SCHOOL
Aim high... Work hard... Be kind...

WILLIAM HARDING SCHOOL

Hazlehurst Drive, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP21 9TJ

Phone: 01296 421733

E-mail: office@williamharding.school

Website: www.williamhardingschool.co.uk

Head Teacher: Miss T Cotchin BA(Hons) PGCE NPQH



29 November 2023

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Attendance expectations and FAQ's

William Harding School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. We often receive queries regarding attendance and the policies / procedures at William Harding, so thought it would be useful to provide you with more information.

Our attendance policy states:

"The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child received that education by attendance at school or by education otherwise than a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend school every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance by the school.

Parents are expected to:

- Promote the value of good attendance with their child / children.
- Encourage and expect good attendance and punctuality.
- Work in collaboration with the school to notify us of absence before 8:30am daily.
- Respond to any communication from the school promptly.
- Contact us immediately should any attendance concerns arise.
- Take family holidays during school holidays.
- Participate in any interventions offered by the school to support the good attendance of their child. "

Our School Values are: Inclusion, Perseverance, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Collaboration.



As a Local Authority School, we must follow all Local Authority and DfE policies and guidance on attendance, and all our policies and procedures reflect these set out by the Local Authority and DfE.

Why is attendance important?

At primary level, the pace of development in children is so fast that just a handful of days missed can cause disruption to a child’s learning journey. We will always help your child to catch up on missed work where possible but continued absence may affect your child’s ability to exceed their potential.

Every day counts

Attendance Ladder



What time does my child need to be in school?

Class	Arrival time	Registration opens	Late arrival before the register closes	Registration closes
Reception				
Honeysuckle	8:30-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Bluebell	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Daffodil	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Year 1				
Rose	8:30-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Harebell	8:30-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Foxglove	8:30-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Snowdrop	8:30-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10

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Class	Arrival time	Registration opens	Late arrival before the register closes	Registration closes
Year 2				
Elder	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Juniper	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Cherry	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Lime	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Year 3				
Willow	8:45-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Beech	8:45-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Hawthorn	8:40-8:45	8:45	8:45-9:15	9:15
Rowan	8:40-8:45	8:45	8:45-9:15	9:15
Year 4				
Blenheim	8:35-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Waddesdon	8:35-8:40	8:40	8:40-9:10	9:10
Osborne	8:30-8:35	8:35	8:35-9:05	9:05
Ascott	8:30-8:35	8:35	8:35-9:05	9:05
Year 5				
Chatsworth	8:50-9:00	9:00	9:00-9:30	9:30
Hughenden	8:50-9:00	9:00	9:00-9:30	9:30
Cliveden	8:50-9:00	9:00	9:00-9:30	9:30
Manderston	8:50-9:00	9:00	9:00-9:30	9:30
Year 6				
Dudley	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Windsor	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Cardiff	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20
Warwick	8:40-8:50	8:50	8:50-9:20	9:20

What happens if my child is late?

A child is late if they arrive at school after their arrival time slot (see table above)

Children arriving after their arrival time should be taken to 'late gate,' this is run by the FLO team at the driveway gates at school. You will be asked for a reason for lateness and then your child will be taken down to class.

Children who arrive after the start of the school day but before registers have closed will be marked as L on the official register. Children who arrive after registers have closed will be marked as U. A U code is an unauthorized absence and will impact on your child's school attendance percentage.

Persistent lateness will be followed up using our punctuality escalation system. Parents are notified of our concern promptly and are offered support on an individual basis.

The Local Authority Guidance states that the school are to make a referral to the County Attendance Team who may issue a penalty notice for persistent late arrival to school.

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What happens is my child is absent from school?

We do understand that all children get sick from time to time but we ask that you think carefully before keeping your child from school. If your child will be absent from school, in the event of sickness for example, we would expect you to telephone our attendance line (option 1) or via the attendance email:

attendance@williamharding.school by 8.30am to notify us of the absence.

Please **do not** email the office email to report absence as the Flo team do not have access to this email.

Please note that you will need to telephone into school on each day of absence – even if the absence is continuous. On your child's return to school, you will need to bring to the office medical evidence relating to their absence wherever possible. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

What happens if I have not reported my child's absence?

If we have not received a reason for absence by 9:15am, you will receive a text message requesting a reason for absence is provided. If you do not provide a reason for absence the absence will be unauthorised and a home visit may be conducted. We may also call all emergency contacts you provided to establish the reason for your child's absence.

Why have a received a home visit?

As a school we have a duty of care to ensure we know why children are not attending school and where they are if not in school. The FLO team conduct home visits during the week, these may be due to you not reporting your child's absence or if a child has been absent from school for more than 3 days, these visits are to check in with the child and family and to see if any support is needed.

What are authorised and unauthorised absences?

Authorised absences are absences which the school seeks to allow. This can include:

- Sickness / illness with medical evidence
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after school hours)
- Day of religious observance

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details.

Unauthorised absence refers to absences which the school does not allow. This can include:

- Family holidays
- Day trips
- Your child missing school for their birthday

In line with DfE guidance "A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not (and from certain types of school cannot) be granted."

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I reported my child as unwell, why is their attendance not 100%

Where a parent has reported their child's absence and the school is satisfied that their illness prevents them from attending school it will be marked as illness 'I'. This is an authorised absence but still means the child was not in school and therefore would impact on their attendance percentage.

A child has to be in school every day for 100% attendance.

This also applies to children attending medical appointments. The DfE guidance advises; *"Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours."*

What is the schools view on holidays during term time?

The DfE advise that *"Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely necessary."*

All leave of absence must be requested using out 'Exceptional Circumstances' form and parents/ carers should detail all the exceptional circumstances on which their request is based upon. Evidence should be provided where appropriate. The school may contact parents / carers to request further information or evidence.

If the school do not authorise the request and a child as absent for 10 sessions, a referral will be made to the Local Authority in line with the Buckinghamshire 'Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school.'

Schools do not issue penalty notices nor do they receive the fine payment.

How can I encourage my child to come into school every day?

Seek to establish basic routines to sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped.

Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education and school.

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact our Family Liaison Officers immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties.

It is really important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem early before the situation progresses.

What do school do to encourage good school attendance?

As a school we have implemented a range of attendance incentives to encourage your child to attend school. By implementing a range of incentives, it means that all children have the chance of being rewarded as we appreciate at times absence cannot be avoided. Incentives include:

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- Half termly/termly draws
- WH Cup
- Hot spot days
- Fun Flo Friday
- Attendance Monopoly

As always, if you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance, please contact a member of the FLO team.

Kind regards,

Mrs Bone

Lead Family Liaison Officer

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