



Friday 10th January 2020

Attendance Procedures

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back to the spring term. We hope you have had a really enjoyable break with your children and that they're excited for the term ahead.

Our greatest barrier to achievement at Westfield is our attendance. Good attendance and good academic outcomes are strongly linked. We have a fantastic teaching team at Westfield but if children are not in school, they cannot access this high quality learning.

We appreciate that there will always be times when children are unwell and will need some time off school. However we have a number of children whose poor attendance is ultimately leading to a loss of learning time.

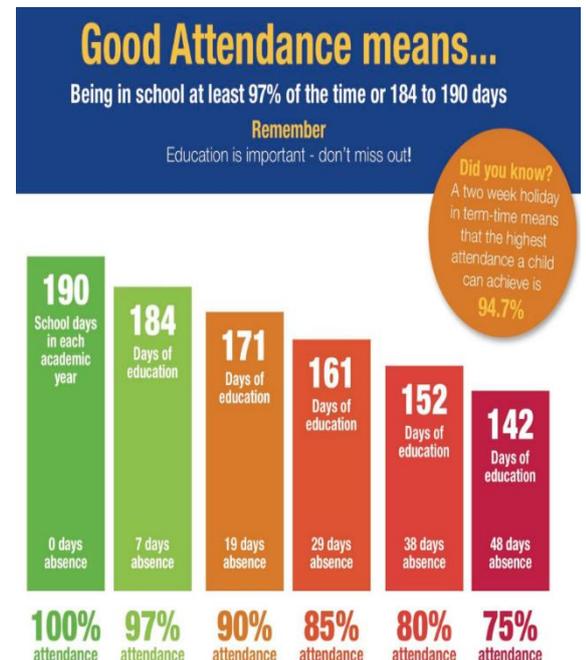
As a school, our overall attendance is significantly below the national average and this is something we are committed to improving. Persistent absence nationally is 8% in primary schools where as ours is more than double. This is a concern for many reasons. When children miss odd days of school there is a disruption to the continuity of their learning. They often find themselves on catch up, struggling to understand the next lessons due to gaps; and this leads to unhappy children. We all know that happy children learn well.

We thank those parents who encourage good attendance at all times and appreciate their continued support. We must now support those families for whom their children have poor attendance or who are persistently late. This will be a collective process in the first instance and we will work with families to support improvements. If families do not engage we will refer to the City of York guidelines and procedures and external agencies will become involved.

The points below summarise the key changes, and a copy of our updated new Attendance Policy has been sent via email and is on the website, also hard copies are available from the school office. We would encourage you to read the policy in full so you are aware of how attendance and punctuality will now be managed as some changes will affect all families:

- From 13th January 2020, if a pupil is absent from school and no reason has been provided for their absence, all of the emergency contacts for that pupil will be telephoned (further details on Page 4).

Please note that to protect our children the school gates are locked between the hours of 8.30am and 9.05am and 2.45pm and 3.30pm. If you are travelling to school by car during these times please be aware that you could be locked in the school car park. Please find alternative parking outside the school gates, if required.



- The introduction of a strengthened system to address concerns and provide support when pupil attendance / punctuality falls below the expected standard.
- The City of York's Fast Track model will be used to improve the attendance of children who are regularly absent without authorisation.
- Fixed penalty notices will now be issued for term time holidays, and may also be issued for persistent lateness and unauthorised absence.
- Proof for all medical appointments is now required in order for the absence to be authorised. Any non-urgent or routine medical and dental appointments must be arranged outside of school hours where possible

We have looked at all pupils whose attendance is less than 94% and considered all the reasons given for absence. Families who may need support at this time will be contacted by their children's class teacher next week. Please remember the office staff are always here to help you and advise you about managing appointments etc.

Please give us a call if you would like clarity on the new policy. It has been approved by Governors in autumn term and will come into effect from Monday 13th January 2020.

Yours Sincerely,
Claire Gomez
Deputy Headteacher

John Hattam
Children's Champion