

Wentworth Primary School

'Striving for Excellence'



Attendance Newsletter 1 - October 2023

Welcome back to our new school year and a warm welcome to our new Foundation children and their families.

As we start this school year, we would like to take the opportunity to say 'THANK YOU' all our families who consistently work to ensure their children's attendance and punctuality is high. Getting these important habits established early on in your child's life will make a difference in their futures.

We are a school that sets ourselves high expectations in all areas and attendance is no exception. Attending school is extremely important for children's social, emotional and educational development.

The School Day

- Gates open at 8.40am
- Gates close at 8.50am
- Break
KS1 10.20 am
KS2 10.40 am
- Lunch
KS1 11.45 am
KS2 12.00 pm
- School finishes at 3.15pm

Attendance and Absence Figures

As a school, we aim for 96% attendance which would bring us in line with the National average and we report our attendance figures to the Local Authority on a weekly basis.

The whole school attendance figure for the 2022-23 academic year was 94.6%. This figure is slightly higher than the previous year's figures, but still below the National average.

Unfortunately, there were 329 days missed by pupils due to unauthorised holidays taken in term time. This continues to be a concern for us here at Wentworth and is something we wish to work with our parents on to improve.

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**Persistent Absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education and we need a parent/carer's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly. If a child is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark we will inform the parent/carer. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a school based meeting and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Local Attendance Adviser, Home School Liaison Worker, Local Authority, Family Solutions or Social Care.

Attendance Letters

Each half term we look at the whole school attendance, including all the reasons for absence and we will contact, by letter, those parents whose child has an attendance level below 95%. We aim to work with parents/carers to help improve a child's attendance so that all children can benefit from being in school regularly and achieving their full potential.

Whole School
Attendance
so far this academic
year:

97.2%

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Attendance Officer
Mrs K Gunning

Telephone
01621 853572

Email:
office@wentworth.essex.sch.uk

Attendance Matters!


Every Student, Every School, Every Day

Attendance Impacts on Friendships

Infrequent attendance can have a negative impact on your child's friendships. Being absent from school can increase anxieties and have a detrimental effect on your child's mental health since friendship groups move on while they are away from school. This issue can be overcome by simply ensuring your child attends school every day.

Punctuality

The school gates open at 8.40am and close at 8.50am. The register is taken, and learning starts at 8.50am. If your child arrives after the gates have closed, they need to report to the office where they will be marked as 'L' for arriving late.

If your child arrives after the registers are closed at 9.20am, then they will be marked as 'U' for unauthorised lateness. This code covers the entire morning session and will affect your child's attendance record.

Illness

We understand and appreciate that children can become ill and may need to have a few days off school. We are also aware, however, that at times children miss school when they could be in. Sometimes it is worth children coming into school and giving it a go. The guidance below may help you decide if your child is well enough to come to school.

If your child is having a regular, recurring medical issue, please let us know. We could get the school nurse involved and hopefully address your child's medical needs and improve their attendance.

RED – STAY AT HOME	AMBER – SEEK ADVICE	GREEN – COME TO SCHOOL
<p>Temperature over 37.5 – If your child has a raised temperature, they should not attend school. They may return 24 hours after they start to feel better.</p> <p>Sickness & Diarrhoea – Children with these conditions should be kept off school. They may return 48 hours after their symptoms disappear.</p> <p>Rashes – Can be the first sign of an infectious illness. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.</p>	<p>Headache, Feeling Sick, Tummy Ache, Earache</p> <p>Children can come to school with the above – give them some medicine if you feel they need it.</p> <p>Children often feel unwell if they are anxious - if in doubt, contact the school for advice.</p>	<p>Mild Cough, Cold, Sore Throat, Feeling Tired, Hay Fever</p> <p>We have first aiders on-site and will always contact you if your child is ill during the school day and not well enough to be in.</p>

If your child is absent for 3 days or more with an illness, we would expect them to have seen a doctor and will ask for evidence of an appointment or medicine prescribed.

We will also require a doctor's note or an appointment card for all absences of pupils whose attendance is below 95%. If these are not provided, the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If your child is too ill to attend school, please contact the school office before 9.20am with full details of your child's illness/symptoms. If we do not hear from you, we will call you to find out why your child is not in school.

Reporting an Absence

If your child is going to be absent, please contact the school on 01621 853572 by **9.20am**. Please leave a message on the absence line with your child's full name, class and reason for their absence. Please tell us the nature of the illness – **'sick' or 'unwell' does not provide us with enough information to be able to authorise the absence, therefore it could remain unauthorised on your child's record.**

Any absences that are not reported by parents will be marked as unauthorised.

If we do not have regular contact from parents of an absent child, this will become a safeguarding issue. We would then carry out a home visit for a welfare check.

Holidays in Term Time

We fully understand that it is cheaper to go on holiday during term time, but as a school, we can only authorise an absence during term time in exceptional circumstances - **a cheap deal is not deemed an exceptional circumstance.**

If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, you **MUST** complete our Leave of Absence Request Form, available from Reception, and return to the school office **at least 7 days before the first day of absence.**

Extended Absences

Please note, any absences just before or straight after any school holiday will be seen as an extension of the holidays unless medical evidence is provided to authorise these days.

Working Together

Our aim at Wentworth is always to work with families to help improve a child's attendance. We know that there are many reasons why children do not attend school, so we want to support families on an individual basis. However, when we are not successful in supporting families, or they refuse to engage, the law protects pupil's rights to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise improvement efforts.

As such, parents could be:

- Issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by the Local Authority for the child's non-attendance (the penalty is £60 per child, per parent and this rises to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days).
- Prosecuted by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1984.

What will the school do to support good attendance?

- We aim to make school an exciting place to learn so that children want to come every day.
- We encourage parents and carers to come in and talk to us if there are any hurdles to getting their child to school every day.
- We will do our best to support families in any way that we can.
- We will reward good attendance in school.
- We will regularly monitor children's attendance and contact families when attendance falls below 90%.

What can parents do to support good attendance?

- Parents should bring their children to school every day that they are well enough to attend.
- If there is a reason that your child does not want to come to school, talk to us about it. Keeping a child at home does not give us the opportunity to solve the problem.
- Bring children to school on time every day.
- Speak to your child about the importance of attendance and punctuality.

School Matters!



iAttend

ATTENDANCE LADDER

