



Waterton Academy Trust
The Grove
Walton
Wakefield
WF2 6LD
01924 240767

28th March 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: New Attendance Policy

Every school day counts at Waterton Academy Trust. The Board of Trustees holds firm the belief that 'children who miss school miss out'. Lost learning through absence equates to lost progress through school. That is why we have taken the decision to bring a consistent Attendance Policy across all of our schools.

The 1996 Education Act states, '*If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly*'. We therefore ask that parents and carers work with us to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.

While some absences are inevitable, all our schools are committed to reducing absence down to the lowest possible levels. This can be achieved through a balance of rewarding good attendance and supporting families where attendance and punctuality are problematic. Our schools will be proactive in addressing poor attendance and will work collaboratively with our Education Welfare Officer to ensure significant improvements are achieved.

This drive to improve attendance will mean that there is a change in how we will respond to term time holidays in all our schools. From September 2018, term time holidays will not be authorised and a penalty notice will be issued by Wakefield Council for any incidences of 10 unauthorised sessions in a term. This will bring us in line with the vast majority of schools in Wakefield and will ensure that all families are treated equally within Waterton Academy Trust.

The new policy sets out the guidance relating to what is an unauthorised absence.



Each day is made up of two sessions, which means that 5 days of unauthorised absence equals 10 sessions. Please read the policy, to be found on all our school websites, for more information about what would constitute unauthorised absence.

This policy will come into effect from 1st September 2018. However, if you have already booked a term time holiday prior to the date on this letter, you will not be issued with a penalty notice. If you believe that you may be in this position, please bring evidence of your holiday which shows the date on which you booked so that the school can record this and ensure that you are treated fairly.

Our reasons for promoting this policy are based solely on the evidence that good attendance, good progress and improved life opportunities are irrefutably linked. We do not receive any financial benefit from this policy. Penalties are processed by Wakefield Council through the courts and any monies paid are retained by the council.

All schools within Waterton Academy Trust are committed to providing a great educational experience for all of our pupils. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Irregular attendance undermines the learning process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial.

Thank you for your understanding and support on this matter

Yours sincerely

Mr D Dickinson
CEO