

Why good attendance matters -

Whitegate is a safe place for children with clear and consistent routines and secure relationships with caring and responsible adults. Our school environment is inclusive and built on respect and learning with big goals for everyone individually and collectively. When a child is not in school, they are unable to fully access our aspirational curriculum developed on powerful knowledge and consideration for the community and children’s wellbeing.

We place a high value on every child’s attendance and punctuality, and we will work with parents to ensure that all children are in school every day and on time.

The school day

	Start Time	End Time
Nursery am	08.30	11.30
Nursery pm	12.10	15.10
Reception – Y6 Doors open from 08.40	08:50	15.15

Absence

If your child is going to be absent :

- Parents should contact the school on **0115 9152944** as soon as possible so that the reason for absence is known and can be recorded in the register correctly.
- If the absence continues, **parents should contact school each day** unless a longer period of absence has already been communicated and agreed.
- If we do not hear why a child is absent by 09.30am, the we will begin to contact parents/carers to find the reason for a child’s absence. This might result in a home visit as attendance is a safeguarding matter.
- Medical evidence may be requested for absences over 3 days.

Persistent Absence and Irregular Attendance

Penalty notice fines will now be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10-week period. This is equivalent to 5 days of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Holidays in term time

The school **will not authorise** any term time holidays. Any application for a holiday is likely to result in a fine unless there are *exceptional* circumstances.

The Department for Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an *exceptional* circumstance.

Fines

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice fines issued after 19th August 2024.

- The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or irregular attendance is £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days.
- This is reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- The third time an offence is committed for Term Time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates’ Court. Magistrates’ fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Support Available

- Where a pattern of absence is emerging, school will talk to you and offer further support and guidance.
- If attendance continues to be an issue, we will work in partnership with the Local Authority to identify any barriers before any escalation to legal intervention.