



WOODFIELD ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Ratified on 12th February 2020

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Introduction:

Woodfield Academy provides a welcoming and caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels part of the school community and secure.

The Equality Act 2010 is recognised and embedded in our school values.

- We teach pupils to understand others, promote common values and to value diversity, to promote human rights and, of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- We promote equal opportunities for all to succeed removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
- We provide a means for pupils, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations including links with different schools and communities.

We expect all pupils on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the pupils to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to enable attendance. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all pupils.

Aims/Objectives:

We will always encourage pupils to strive for 100% attendance, however, we do understand that this is not always possible and we will engage with families to address any barriers to learning. To support this we will aim to:

- Improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, all staff and Directors.
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Implement a system of rewards and interventions.
- Promote effective partnerships with the EWO service
- Recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Have a whole school approach to attendance.

Statutory Duty of Schools:

Under The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present or absent at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. At Woodfield we also record and monitor each session of learning across each day using '*lesson monitor*'.

An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll. We follow Department for Education (DfE) guidance when coding attendance for all pupils. We monitor the attendance of our pupils and aim to support parents in improving attendance where there is a concern. The final responsibility for the decision of what codes to be used on the register is solely the Head teacher's.

Parental Responsibility And / Or Day-To-Day Carer:

Parents/guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their pupils receive efficient, full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise under section 7 of the Education Act 1996:-

'Duty of parents to secure education of pupils of compulsory school age.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

Estranged parents with whom the child has had regular contact may be prosecuted as well as the day-to-day carer. Each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The term 'parent' also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Pupils Act 1989 or who have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1996.

Legal Framework:

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their pupils receive efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude; to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Prosecution

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for pupils of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. Woodfield Academy will use legal process when necessary.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Penalty Notice

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers for designated Local Education Officers, Head teachers and the police to issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure a pupil's attendance at school.

How to Report an Absence:

If a child is absent for any reason, the school should be informed by the parent/carer **by 8.30am** (not family friends or siblings) **on the first day of absence and every consecutive day of absences until the child returns to school**, including providing the school with an expected date of return and reason for absence. Please be aware this. All correspondence with parents will be recorded on Sims.

Any absences for which the school have received no explanation, or when the school has reason to doubt the offered explanation will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Wherever possible, parents are expected to make routine appointments such as dental or medical, outside of school time and/or in school holidays. School will only as a matter of rule authorise one session of absence for unavoidable medical appointments.

School will require a copy of the medical/dental appointment information for their records.

Categories of Absence:

There are two categories of absence:

- (i) Authorised (approved)
- (ii) Unauthorised (not approved)

Absences can only be authorised by the Head teacher (or designated member of staff).

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if the child has been unwell and the parents telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can authorise an absence, parents **do not** have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore an absence can be unauthorised even if the child is absent with the support of a parent i.e. Leave of Absence for the purpose of an unauthorised family holiday.

A child arriving after the close of registers, without good reason, will be classified as a LATE mark.

Every Day Counts - Some Attendance Facts

- Attending school every day will give your child the best chances in life.
- Regular attendance is important at every stage of your child's school career.
- All evidence suggests that regular attendance equals greater opportunity.

It is important to be aware that days missed soon add up!

- Attending school every day = 100%
- Absent for half a day a week =90% = 4 weeks a year.
- Absent for 1 day a week =80% = over half a term during the course of the year or 2 full years over the course of the school career.
- Absent one and a half days each week = 70% attendance = over a quarter of the school year.

Remember for every day that a child is absent they will miss up to five lessons.

Punctuality:

When pupils arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the learning area where everyone else is settled.

Furthermore, when one pupil arrives late, it disrupts the entire form and the teacher, therefore everyone's education is compromised.

Any pupil who is late on two or more occasions within the same week will be given a lunchtime detention. For pupils who accumulate more than 6 sessions of lateness in any half term, the Attendance Officer will write to parents to ensure they are informed of their child's lack of punctuality and source their support in improving this.

Punctuality is vitally important and is a life skill that reaches into employment in later life. Pupils who are persistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

	AM Session		PM Session
Form Registration	8:45am	Lesson 4	1.15pm
Close of Form Register (unauthorised late)	8:55am	Close of Lesson 4 Register	1.25pm

Pupils arriving **between 8.50am and 8.55am** must register at school reception on the inventory system. All pupils arriving late, after 8.55am to school must sign in at the school office and provide a reason for lateness to the Attendance Officer for the school monitoring and management of punctuality.

Some Punctuality Facts

- Teaching starts when school starts. Your child will never miss out on important lessons if they are on time.
- Teachers issue clear instructions at the start of the school day. Your child will be there to hear these important messages.
- The start of the school day is an opportunity to further develop important social skills with other pupils and adults.
- Walking into a classroom or assembly late can be embarrassing for a child. Being on time everyday means your child will never have to experience this.
- It is important to establish good habits now.

How it adds up!

- 5 minutes late everyday adds up to over 3 days lost a year.
- 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- Being 30 minutes late every day is the same as 19 days absent a year.

Persistent Absences:

The government uses the term **Persistent Absence to refer to absence of 10% or more**, whether authorised or unauthorised.

There are some reasons which affect attendance at school. Lessons missed cannot be repeated and 'catching up' on work is never as good as the original learning experience. Pupils with persistent absence are unlikely to attain their full potential at school, are at risk of failing to stay in education after leaving and are more at risk of other negative outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Improved school attendance can only be achieved if viewed as a whole school approach which works in conjunction with families and the wider community. The school will endeavour to promote good attendance and punctuality through staff setting good role models. Attendance is the responsibility of every member of staff and not just Form Tutors. The school will use a range of strategies and procedures to address attendance or punctuality issues and will investigate any absenteeism, liaising closely with parents.

We will:

- Provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide an empathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns
- Acknowledge good or improve attendance within our positive behaviour and rewards policy
- Assist in addressing any identified barriers to learning.

Board of Directors

Directors will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff
- Annually review the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Identify a Director with responsibility for monitoring attendance.
- Require the Headteacher/Attendance Officer to report on attendance and punctuality at termly Board meetings
- Ensure that the school comply with The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 and appropriate amendments, DfE coding guidance and other related legislation

The Leadership Team

The Leadership team will nominate appropriate members of the school staff with individual responsibilities:

Attendance Officer

- Ensure that all staff receive as part of their induction and ongoing CPD training in supporting families identified as an attendance concern
- Ensure that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (including amendments), DfE coding guidance and other related legislation is complied with
- Report schools' attendance data to the relevant members of staff, including the leadership team who meet weekly, the pastoral team who meet fortnightly to focus vulnerable students or students causing concern
- Report schools' attendance of vulnerable students or students causing concern on a fortnightly basis to all Form Tutors for each Directors meeting (half termly)
- Report schools' attendance data to the Governing body for each Directors meeting (half termly)
- Ensure that attendance data is collated, analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions to attendance concerns, in collaboration with the Pastoral Manager meet and work with families to improve attendance, including completing home visits.
- Ensure accurate records are maintained in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Engage with a multi-agency response to support families and pupils to improve attendance
- Implement systems to report and monitor attendance of pupils of at alternative education provision
- First response (same day) contact with parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents
- Utilise the SIMS system to ensure that accurate records are kept in relation to reasons for absences
- Instigate where appropriate an Early Help process

Form Tutors/Subject Teachers

- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents and actively promote the importance and value of good attendance in collaboration with the Attendance Officer
- Ensure that as a whole school approach to reinforce good attendance; good teaching and learning experiences
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM, PM and lesson attendance and punctuality
- Reward and recognise good attendance and punctuality in accordance with school policy
- Use staged interventions to establish guidelines and boundaries to sustain excellent attendance and punctuality concerns
- Ensure accurate records are kept in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings.
- Track whole form and individual attendance on a weekly basis.

Parents/Carers

To support their child in attending school we ask that all parents/carers:

- Ensure their child's regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Talk to their child about school and take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress, instilling the value of education and regular school attendance
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and fully prepared for the school day
- Contact school by 9.30am each day their child is absent from school. Failure to advise school of a reason for absence could result in a home visit where appropriate.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Attend meetings as requested to discuss attainment and attendance where appropriate
- Contact the school to discuss any planned absences (i.e. funerals) prior to the absence
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences, where possible make appointments for doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Do not arrange any leave of absence during term time

Pupils

We expect that a pupil will:

- Attend school regularly and arrive punctually
- Arrive well prepared for the day ahead
- Speak to an adult if they are experiencing difficulties or challenges

Monitoring Procedures:

Pupils who are in school every day find learning more satisfying and manage the demands of the school day in a more positive way. The school monitors the attendance of all pupils and uses a staged approach to address any issues.

Staged Approach To the Management of Attendance		
<p>Whole school attendance is monitored by school on a continued basis. The whole school attendance target is based on an evaluation of previous years' attendance. Attendance is more closely evaluated of pupils whose attendance is below the whole school target.</p>		
Stage	Trigger	Outcome
1	Attendance percentage falls below 95% and the child's attendance is of concern.	<p>Letter 1 will be sent to parents by the Form Tutor and this is to be logged on SIMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of current attendance • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence' • Welcoming the parents to arrange contact the school if they wish to discuss attendance further. <p>Attendance is monitored.</p>
2	Parents have received a Stage 1 letter and attendance remains a concern, or deteriorates	<p>Letter 2 will be sent to parents by the Attendance Officer and logged on SIMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of current attendance • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence' • Notifying parents that the child's attendance is being monitored and of the duration of the monitoring period. • Other School strategies will be utilised including • A school meeting will be arranged to discuss concerns with parents. • Attendance Panels. • Or home visits will be conducted by the Attendance Officer. <p>Attendance is monitored.</p>
3	Parents have received a Stage 2 letter and school interventions and attendance remains of concern.	<p>Letter 3 will be sent to parents by the Attendance Officer and logged on SIMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of current attendance • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the definition of 'persistent absence'

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting that the parents provide medical evidence of absence for illness, to enable the school to consider the authorisation of absence. • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing attendance, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, and setting an internal school attendance target, legal action will be considered. • Notifying parents that should they chose not to attend, the meeting may take place without them and a target set, prosecution proceedings started.
4	Attendance has continued to deteriorate and parents have failed to engage with school.	<p>Letter 4 will be sent to parents by Attendance Officer and follow up discussion with Local Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying parents that the school intends to request legal proceeding are commenced by the Local Authority.
	Attendance improves.	<p>A Letter of Praise will be sent to parents/pupil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period. • Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor attendance to ensure sustained improvement.

Rewards:

The school promotes regular attendance through Assemblies and a system of rewards. Parents are able to track and monitor their child/s attendance via our on line system.

Attendance is discussed and Registration Certificates are shared during Parent Consultations and in School Reports, as well as Form Tutors discussing attendance weekly with pupil/s, where necessary. Along with other reports, attendance records are passed on to receiving schools when a child moves school at the end of Year 8.

All pupils at Woodfield Academy are celebrated for positive choices, achievement, attendance and behaviour in a number of ways as stated in the Behaviour Policy. In addition, pupils are acknowledged and celebrated who have outstanding attendance in any one term by receiving an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the Awards Ceremony every term. Annual awards are also given, awarded at the end of year Awards Ceremony.

Children Missing in Education

The attendance officer at Woodfield Academy follow up each absence on a daily basis.

In the unlikely event that we are unable to contact a family after 3 attempts at contact, to ascertain where the absent pupil is, we will take the following procedures:

- Attendance Officer will carry out a home visit and other diligent enquiries, in order to make contact with the family
- If the home visit is unsuccessful then the Attendance Officer will refer the matter to the Police for a safe and well check.
- The Attendance Officer will also notify the Local Authority and/or any other agencies as appropriate in order for more extensive enquiries to be made.

Leave of Absence in Term Times

Parents and carers are strongly advised that leave of absence is not to be taken during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. ***Exceptional circumstances do not include:***

- ***Visiting relatives***
- ***Family holidays***
- ***Celebrating religious festivals during term time which have not previously been agreed by the Local Authority***

Families should not make any travel arrangements prior to completing a 'Request For Leave of Absence' form available from school office, 6 week prior to the leave, unless in emergency situations.

In emergency situations, please contact the school directly to discuss.

Any applications made will be discussed by the Headteacher and Attendance Officer and parents will be advised on the outcome of the application and the possible action that may be taken.

Please be aware any holiday taken without prior consultation with the school will automatically result in the period of absence being marked as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice being issued.

Please refer to the Parental Guidance regarding leave of absences during term time

Government and LA guidance September 2013. (DFE website)

Fixed penalty fines may be issued or court action taken.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE OR PUNCTUALITY CONTACT THE SCHOOL.

Ratification and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Directors in conjunction with the Headteacher.

APPENDIX 1

Roles, procedures and escalations process for attendance:

All staff members are responsible for the monitoring and addressing of school attendance. This is a whole school approach.

All staff members will record any intervention on attendance on Sims Contact Log under the individual child's log. Please ensure that the entry is robust enough for legal action by the Local Authority.

Intervention for attendance includes= conversations in persons or via telephone with pupils/ parents. Letters home, meetings and home visits, NB this list is not exhaustive.

Form Tutors:

- Ensure that the AM and PM registers are taken **diligently and on time on a daily basis**. This is a legal requirement.
- Ensure that all the lessons registration are taken within 5 minutes of the start of each lesson. NB this is for our safeguarding obligations.
- Attendance Officer to pass a weekly report to FT regarding whole tutor groups attendance breakdown for the academic year to date.
- FT to address any concerns regarding attendance and ongoing trends/concerns with individual pupils.
- FT to hold a return to school discussion with pupils following an absence.
- FT to chase up any unexplained absences within 2 weeks of absence.
- FT to discuss any attendance concerns at Parents consultations.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents and actively promote the importance and value of good attendance in collaboration with the Attendance Officer
- Ensure that as a whole school approach to reinforce good attendance; good teaching and learning experiences
- Reward and recognise good attendance and punctuality in accordance with school policy
- Use staged interventions to establish guidelines and boundaries to sustain excellent attendance and punctuality concerns
- Ensure accurate records are kept in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings.
- Address any lateness with pupils.
- Send Letter 1 to parents where attendance continues to be a concern.
- When all the above have been addressed and attendance continues to be a concern, escalate the pupil to the attendance officer.

Attendance Officer:

- Ensure that all staff receive as part of their induction and ongoing CPD training in supporting families identified as an attendance concern
- Ensure that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (including amendments), DfE coding guidance and other related legislation is complied with
- Report schools' attendance data to the relevant members of staff, including the leadership team who meet weekly, the pastoral team who meet fortnightly to focus vulnerable students or students causing concern
- Report schools' attendance of vulnerable students or students causing concern on a fortnightly basis to all Form Tutors for each Directors meeting (half termly)
- Report schools' attendance data to the Governing body for each Directors meeting (half termly)
- Ensure that attendance data is collated, analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions to attendance concerns, in collaboration with the Pastoral Manager meet and work with families to improve attendance, including completing home visits.
- Ensure accurate records are maintained in relation to attendance including minutes to meetings
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Engage with a multi-agency response to support families and pupils to improve attendance
- Implement systems to report and monitor attendance of pupils of at alternative education provision
- First response (same day) contact with parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents
- Utilise the SIMS system to ensure that accurate records are kept in relation to reasons for absences

Pastoral Manager:

- To assist in addressing any pastoral barriers to attendance alongside the Attendance Officer, where attendance is an issue.
- To attend level 3 meetings where appropriate.
- To communicate any safeguarding, (where appropriate) concerns regarding poor attenders to the Attendance Officer.
- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff.
- To attend and share information at the fortnight pastoral meetings.

Key Stage Leaders:

- To support Attendance Officer in level 3 meetings with parents and address any identified barriers to learning.
- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff.
- To attend and share information at the fortnight pastoral meetings.

SENCO:

- To assist in addressing any SEN barriers to attendance alongside the Attendance Officer, where attendance is an issue.
- To attend level 3 meetings where appropriate.
- To communicate any general SEN, (where appropriate) concerns regarding poor attenders to the Attendance Officer.
- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff.
- To complete any PSP where a part time timetable is offered to pupils.
- To complete medical care plans for pupils.

Head Teacher:

- To support the Attendance Officer in level 4 meetings with parents in addressing any identified barriers to learning.
- To make the overall decision for cases to be forwarded to the Local Authority for consideration for prosecution proceedings.
- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted within school, including pupils, parents and staff.