

Weatherhead High School

A high performing academy providing excellence for all

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

AIM:

To raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the school.

OBJECTIVES:

- We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:
 - Promoting good attendance.
 - Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
 - Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
 - Acting early to address patterns of absence.
 - Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.
 - Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.

THE LAW:

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE:

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of every member staff to ensure that attendance is given a high profile and that issues are identified, communicated and dealt with by the most appropriate member of staff.

SLT (Assistant Headteacher of Student Services):

- Implement Attendance Policy and inform students and parents
- Monitor and review Attendance Policy annually
- Set and monitor attendance targets – in school and with Local Authority.
- Implement system of rewards and sanctions
- Give attendance a high profile at assemblies, school events e.g. Parents' Evening and in the school Weather Report, Website and Attendance Display
- Support Year Leaders on issues of non-attendance and internal truancy.
- Monitor holiday requests during term time
- Work with Local Authority (LA) and other relevant agencies to tackle persistent absenteeism
- Apply the Staged Intervention: Persistent Absentees Procedure and chair Panel Meetings for persistent absentees with relevant agencies if required
- Report on attendance to Governors and SLT

Headteacher:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing educational-penalty notices, where necessary

The Governing Body:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Year Leaders:

- Give attendance a high profile at assemblies and school events
- Monitor Year Group attendance targets and record keeping
- Implement system of rewards and sanctions
- Support Form Tutors on issues of non-attendance and with internal truancy, remedying causes and applying sanctions

- Contact parents to discuss attendance problems as soon as they are identified
- Alert Attendance Officers of concerns with regard to persistent absenteeism and refer names of students to begin Staged Intervention Approach
- Meet with Attendance Officer and the Local Authority regularly to review attendance of Year Group
- Assist Attendance Officer with referrals to the Education Welfare Service through our designated contact at the Authority
- Ensure work is provided for excluded students and long-term absentees. Ensure that this is regularly reviewed
- Work with Assistant Headteacher, Attendance Manager, Pastoral and Academic Support Worker and, where appropriate, other agencies to create individual packages and re-integration plans
- Review cases following Panel Meetings
- Work with targeted students identified from attendance tracking meetings, with the view to improving attendance

Form Tutors:

- Give attendance a high profile.
 - Praise students for arriving on time.
 - Take prompt action where students are late or absent without explanation.
 - Alert Year Leader / Attendance Manager of any concerns or issues.
- Keep an accurate register.
 - Return register to the Attendance Office promptly at the end of every registration.
 - Chase up absence letters using that the Planner as appropriate.
 - Update codes on the register ensuring that all N codes are cleared weekly or at the very latest fortnightly.
- Monitor individual students at risk of falling below attendance target and take appropriate action with Year Leader as required.
- Occasionally make phone calls home regarding attendance depending on Year Leader requirements.
- Produce a weekly analysis report for absences in the form group which will be shared with the Year Leader.
- Form Tutors are responsible for students' attendance in their form group and should take direction as required by Year Leader, SLT or the Headteacher.

Attendance Manager:

- Oversee administration of the SIMs Register system and ensure that correct and accurate codes are entered
- Oversee administration of Truancy Call system
- Keep parents informed of any unexplained absences before they become unauthorised
- Support the work of SLT, Year Leaders and Form Tutors by:
 - Providing regular attendance information.
 - Contacting parents on first day of absence using the Truancy Call system.
 - Liaising with Year Leaders to monitor accuracy of record keeping.
 - Working with colleagues to identify causes of non-attendance.

- Sending letters to students/parents/carers at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Staged Intervention Approach.
- Liaise with Local Authority monthly to discuss concerns and to track progress of cases open to the Education Welfare Service
- Inform the Local Authority if a student is classed as a Missing Child; follow appropriate LA procedure
- Liaise with the AHT and Social Care to action any children marked as CME 25
- Sign students in as they arrive late and issue notice for same day sanction
- Update attendance display boards to celebrate attendance and maintain high profile

Parents:

- Ensure that children leave for school on time every day
- Ensure that children attend school regularly
- Provide written explanation for children's absences from school
- Avoid taking children out of school in term time
- Notify the school as soon as problems arise with child's attendance
- Inform school on the first day of the child's absence
- Send a note to school to explain or give reasons for absence
- Attend attendance meetings to support child's attendance

Students:

- Arrive at 8.30am for registration every morning at 8.35am
- Arrive on time for lessons
- Make sure a note is sent from parents to explain absences.
- If late sign in at Main Reception
- If late twice in one week – attend a late detention with Form Tutor
- If leaving school during the school day – take a note from home to the Student Services Office and then sign out at Main Reception
- Tell Form Tutor or Year Leader / Support Worker if having any problems attending school
- Attend attendance meetings if required to discuss concerns

Procedures

Intervention and Support:

- Academic and Pastoral Support Worker intervention
- Attendance Reports
- Attendance interviews and regular reviews
- Personalised Attendance Action Plan
- Panel Meetings
- Meetings with Year Leaders, LA and other relevant agencies to provide support for children and their parents
- Meetings with the Assistant Headteacher for Student Services
- Re-integration programme after long-term absence
- Re-integration timetables where appropriate
- Personalised curriculum where appropriate
- ESW involvement including home visits

- Attendance Officer home visits

Rewards:

- Weekly IRIS rewards for individual students achieving 100% attendance
- Weekly Attendance Cup given during assembly for form group with best attendance in each year group
- Reward trips for 100% and most improved attendance
- Good attendance references to potential employers/colleges
- Individual Year Group attendance drives each half term
- Attendance display board

Sanctions:

The school reserves the right to use any of the following sanctions to fulfil its obligations with respect to school attendance and punctuality:

- Form Tutor detention
- Subject Department detention
- YL detention
- LA involvement and referral
- Parenting Contracts
 - Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent the opportunity to enter into a parenting contract following a student's truancy under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (with The Governing Body).
- Educational Penalty Notices issued by the school
 - Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the Local Authority issuing a fixed penalty notice under section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.
- Prosecution by the Education Welfare Service on behalf of the LA.
- Parent guides to these measures are available on www.parentcentre.gov.uk
- If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, the Assistant Headteacher for Student Services, the local authority officer or the police.
- The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
 1. The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
 2. One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
 3. Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.
 4. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Absence procedures:

- If a parent needs to notify the school of their child's absence, they will ring the specified absence number and press the appropriate number for their Key Stage.
- Calls for absences will be taken at the Student Services office and coded appropriately
- Pastoral and Academic Support workers will then contact any students who have not provided a reason and are marked as 'N' code. This will be completed by 10.30am.
- The truancy call will be sent out to remaining students who are not accounted for
- Home visits may be conducted if appropriate.

Punctuality:

- A student who arrives late:
 - Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
 - After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- Students are expected to attend school on time every day.
- Students are expected to be on time to every lesson and subject teachers may detain students at break and at lunchtime for lateness.
- Students will be issued with a 'same day' sanction for any late marks, which could potentially be escalated to AHT involvement if this persists.
- If a student is late more than three times in one week, this will be investigated by their Year Leader and parents/carers will be contacted.
- The Assistant Headteacher, in conjunction with the Attendance Manager and the Local Authority, can issue a penalty for students with persistent late marks.
 - Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent the opportunity to enter into a parenting contract following a student's truancy under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (with the Governing Body).
- The Assistant Headteacher and the Attendance Manager can issue an Educational Penalty Notice after a student is late more than ten times.

Attendance Staged Intervention Procedure:

- **Stage 1:** Form tutor to speak to the student after their absence. A Stage 1 Letter will be sent to parents/carers informing them of their child/ward's attendance if it falls below 95% or there are 5 days of sporadic absence.
- **Stage 2:** If attendance does not improve after Stage 1 intervention then parents will be invited in for a meeting with the Year Leader / Attendance Manager and,

in some cases, the Assistant Headteacher in charge of school attendance. If the parent does not attend the meeting then the meeting will go ahead with the student and the parent/carer will be notified of the outcome.

Only in extremely mitigating circumstances can a Stage 2 meeting be rearranged and this is at the discretion of the Attendance Manager and the Assistant Headteacher.

- **Stage 3:** If none of the above intervention improves attendance then an Educational Penalty Notice will be issued (EPN) and further prosecution may occur in conjunction with Wirral Local Authority.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| / | Present (am) | Student is present at morning registration |
| \ | Present (pm) | Student is present at afternoon registration |
| L | Late arrival | Student arrives late before register has closed |
| B | Off-site educational activity | Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school |
| D | Dual registered | Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| J | Interview | Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| P | Sporting activity | Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| V | Educational trip or visit | Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school |
| W | Work experience | Student is on a work experience placement |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Authorised absence | | |
| C | Authorised leave of absence | Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E | Excluded | Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| H | Authorised holiday | Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |

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|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| I | Illness | School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Student is at a medical or dental appointment |
| R | Religious observance | Student is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| S | Study leave | Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations |
| T | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school |
| Unauthorised absence | | |
| G | Unauthorised holiday | Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school |
| N | Reason not provided | Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| O | Unauthorised absence | School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence |
| U | Arrival after registration | Student arrived at school after the register closed |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|---|--|
| X | Not required to be in school | Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody |
| Z | Student not on admission register | Register set up but student has not yet joined the school |
| # | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |