

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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| Related Policies: | Home School Agreement Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy |
| Deputy Headteacher (Senior Attendance Manager): | Mr I Goulbourne (info@waldegravesch.org) |

AIM

It is the School's aim that at Waldegrave, students and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that good attendance contributes significantly to students' enjoyment of school and their achievement, meaning they are empowered to move onto their next steps confidently.

PRINCIPLES

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement at GCSE level, with poor attenders much less likely to achieve five good passes at GCSE, including English and Maths.

Similarly, research clearly demonstrates a strong correlation between high absenteeism in schools and poor pupil attainment when studying A Level subjects.

In accordance with [Keeping children safe in education \(2024\)](#), and [Working together to improve school attendance \(2024\)](#), we recognise that Children Missing Education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance and punctuality.
- To recognise the external factors which influence student attendance and work with parents and the students to address these.
- To encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending school regularly.

PRACTICE:

a) Attendance

Form tutors mark the register at 8.35 am using Arbor.

Daily attendance is monitored by the Student Officers, and Sixth Form Student Officer and their Hub teams.

- **Daily absence:** Parents are asked to telephone the school before the register closes at 9.30 am to explain any absence or report via the StudyBugs App. There is a dedicated extension number to report absences.
- **Offsite activities** are normally recorded as an authorised absence, depending on circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- **Family holidays:** In accordance with local authority policy, family holidays during term time are not authorised.
- Parents are contacted if students have failed to arrive and notice of their absence has not been received.

- When the parent/guardian fails to report an absence two days in a row, and staff are unable to make contact on the phone, a home visit is carried out where possible.
- Authorisation of absence in most circumstances requires a written explanation from parents or carers.
- Unauthorised absences are followed up by either a phone call or a letter home.
- Persistent absence is reported to the Head of Year for further action, in conjunction with the Attendance Manager.
- During the first Autumn half term attendance measures are informed by the previous year's attendance.
- Students who have excellent or significantly improved attendance will be celebrated.
- Attendance information is shared with all parents/guardians as part of the monitoring and reporting processes.
- In severe cases of persistent absence, a student will be invited to a legal attendance meeting or, in the sixth form, the student may lose their place.
- **Lesson truancy:** Students who truant lessons will receive a proportionate sanction which may include a detention, internal isolation or another sanction as decided by the relevant members of the pastoral team.

b) Punctuality

Students are expected to be in school by 8.30 am and to register at 8.35 am.

- If students arrive after the register has been taken they should sign in at the appropriate Key Stage Hub.
- In Years 7-11, students who arrive after 8.35 am receive an after school detention on the same day, unless their parents have contacted the Key Stage Hub prior to arrival with a good reason for late arrival.
- Failure to attend the late detention will result in a Head of Year detention which will last 40 mins. Heads of Year will take the Head of Year detention on a rota at the end of a school day.
- In Years 12-13 all lateness is managed by the Head of Year and will be sanctioned accordingly. Overtime will be set for persistent latecomers.
- Students who arrive after 9.05am need a note or telephone call from home explaining their late arrival. If no note is received, this becomes an unauthorised absence.
- Persistent latecomers are discussed with the Head of Year with regard to further action, which may include contacting guardians, being placed on attendance and punctuality report or having a personal punctuality improvement plan created.

c) Long Term Absence

- When students are absent, or likely to be absent, for more than one week on medical grounds, where appropriate work will be set and marked by staff. This can be accessed through their Google Classrooms. On their return to school, the student's Head of Year will organise and oversee appropriate support to help them reintegrate.
- Students with intermittent absences can also access the lesson resources through their Google Classrooms.
- Permission for any absence, including public performances and productions outside of school needs to be sought in writing from the Headteacher.
- Unauthorised term-time absences may result in legal measures including issuing a fixed penalty notice, involvement of the Education Welfare services or other measures deemed appropriate. You can read more about the relevant guidance [here](#).

d) Children Missing Education

- Children who are not attending school and are not being provided with suitable alternative educational provision will be referred to the local authority as Children Missing Education.
- A representative from the school will attend regular multi-agency reviews, to monitor the student's progress and work towards re-integration into the mainstream school setting.
- The school will notify the local authority prior to removing students from the school roll.

e) Monitoring Absence

- Form Tutors monitor attendance of students in their Form and refer any attendance concerns to the Head of Year.
- Heads of Year monitor students with persistent absence with Student Services Manager and take appropriate action e.g. have meetings with students, invite parents in for a meeting.
- Intervention categories for students whose attendance is below the expected level can be found below:

Expected Attendance

Students are expected to have 100% attendance. We recognise and celebrate students that are individually achieving this over different periods of time in a variety of ways e.g. recognition emails home, badges, certificates etc.

BLUE

Students whose attendance is good, but can fall below 96% during a term. (Prevention)

Lead: Form Tutor

- Tutor to check in with student
- Investigate need for catch up support
- Monitored by tutor for several weeks
- Parental contact via email where required
- *Double disadvantaged students (both DAS and SEND) with attendance below 95% will be fast tracked to the yellow group (see below) as this group of students is our key focus cohort.*

YELLOW

Students whose attendance is below the persistent absence threshold of 90%. (Targeted)

Lead: Head of Year

- Regular monitoring of attendance and discussions with key stakeholders including students
- Meeting with parents/guardians and student with follow-up letter
- Use of ERSA guidance where appropriate
- Communication with staff where appropriate
- Plan for “catch-up” support where appropriate
- Review of in-school issues (e.g. absence from particular subjects, peer issues, support at home)
- Liaise with Inclusion / safeguarding team as appropriate
- Positive strategies used to support (e.g. mentoring)
- Liaise with Senco/Inclusion as appropriate
- Monitoring programme for minimum of one half-term
- *Double disadvantaged students (both DAS and SEND) with attendance below 95% will be part of this group as this cohort of students is our key focus cohort.*

RED

*Students whose attendance falls **below 85%** and requires support from external agencies. This group will also include students that fall below the severely absent threshold of 50%. (Targeted)*

Lead: Head of Key Stage & School Attendance Officer

- Daily attendance checks and first day calls if no reason given
- Creation of Pastoral Support Plan, including use of ERSA guidance where appropriate
- Regular Attendance meetings with parents
- Absences are unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided
- SPA referral for Education Welfare Service intervention or communication with other external agencies where the student is already open to them
- Communication with teaching staff if required
- Updated plan for “catch-up” support
- Review of in-school issues (e.g. absence from particular subjects, peer issues, support at home)
- Liaise with Inclusion team as appropriate
- Monitoring programme for minimum of one half-term

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance may be enforced through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education. This might include working with the Education Welfare Service to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or initiate court proceedings.

Where students have long-term attendance issues due to health requiring on-going support and intervention, the following additional measures should be considered:

- Designated member of staff for contact
- Regular meetings with parents and external agencies
- Adjustments to curriculum
- Regular updates for staff
- Remote access for learning
- Pastoral Support Plan
- Options for medical tuition or other placements

f) Students and Achievement

- Groups of students and individual students with excellent or significantly improved attendance may be celebrated through the termly Celebration Assembly for their year group or by other specific attendance focused rewards e.g. ice creams for the tutor group.

g) Changes to the School Roll

- In accordance with our statutory duty, the school will notify the local authority before removing any student from the school roll outside of normal transition times, to minimise the risk of children missing education.
- The school will also notify the local authority within five days of a student being added to the school roll, outside of normal transition times.

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of Parents

- To ensure that their child attends school daily and on time.
- To support their child to have good attendance, by making medical and dental appointments out of school time, as far as possible.
- To notify school as far as possible in advance of any appointments during the school day.
- To contact the school before registers close at 9.30 am to explain any absence.
- To provide a written explanation of their child's absence on or before the day that a student returns to school.
- To avoid holidays during term time and to inform the Headteacher at least a month in advance of any family event which requires absence during term time.

The Role of the Form Tutor

- To mark the register during AM registration daily at 8.35am and on a Friday afternoon at 2.15pm.
- To return any notes regarding absence to the Key Stage Hub.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality of students in the Form, particularly those whose attendance falls below 96% but is above 90% (Blue intervention group).
- To discuss attendance issues / concerns with the student.
- To welcome back students who have been off sick.
- To coordinate tutor group communication with students who are unable to attend long term.
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.

Role of the Subject Teacher

- To take the register accurately every lesson within the first 10 minutes of the lesson starting.
- To inform Hubs of any student missing from the lesson and marking absence in the Arbor register.
- To update the register if a student arrives late to the lesson.
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.
- To ensure that work is accessible on the Google Classroom and missed work is caught up.

The Role of the Head of Year

- To highlight the importance of attendance at all parent/guardian information presentations
- To review attendance of their year group weekly.
- To review Persistent Absence (below 90% Yellow and Red lists) list weekly and take action as appropriate to improve attendance.
- To meet regularly with the Attendance Manager to discuss action with regards to students whose attendance falls below 96%.
- To monitor closely the attendance of students whose attendance falls below 90% and meet with their parents.
- To organise and oversee pastoral and academic support for students who have been on long term absence.

The Role of the Key Stage 3 and 4 Hubs

- To ensure registers are coded accurately and follow up with any staff who have not taken their register.
- To coordinate with the Heads of Year on the daily 'focus' list.
- To telephone home on a student's first day of absence if this is not previously explained.
- To follow up absences and address concerns with students and agree on strategies to improve attendance.

The Role of the Attendance Manager

- To liaise regularly with the member of LT responsible for Attendance and Punctuality, to discuss attendance issues.
- To liaise with the Sixth Form Team to discuss attendance issues and review intervention, where appropriate.
- To carry out a home visit if there is no parental contact within two days, where possible, with support from another member of the pastoral team.
- To liaise with external agencies (e.g. Education Welfare Service or Malden Oaks alternative provision) if students are on the Red intervention list
- To provide Heads of Year and Heads of Key Stage, with weekly attendance reports, including Persistent Absence list, from Arbor.
- To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.

The Role of Sixth Form Team

- To provide Head of Sixth Form and Heads of Year 12 and 13 weekly attendance reports from Arbor on Monday mornings.

- To provide the Heads of Year 12 and 13 with the daily ‘focus’ list.
- To prepare a weekly Persistent Absence list for Head of Sixth Form and Heads of Year 12 and Year 13.
- To telephone home on a student’s first day of absence if this is not previously explained.
- To carry out a home visit if there is no parental contact within two days, where possible, with support from the Key Stage Hubs and/or Head of Sixth Form or Head of Year.
- To follow up absences and address concerns with students, and agree on strategies to improve attendance.
- To liaise with the Student Services Manager to discuss attendance issues and review intervention.

Role of the Head of Key Stage

- To have an overview of attendance in each year group as part of line management of Heads of Year.
- To monitor Persistent Absence.
- To support the Head of Year with attendance issues, particularly for students on the Red intervention list.
- To liaise with Heads of Year and Attendance Manager regarding student attendance.
- To ensure appropriate action is taken to address attendance.
- To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.

This policy has been developed in line with the school Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relationships within the school community.

Appendix 1: Times of the School Day

| Monday - Thursday | | Friday | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Tutorial | 8.35 - 8.55 | Tutorial | 8.35 - 8.55 |
| Period 1 | 9.00 - 10.00 | Period 1 | 9.00 - 10.00 |
| Period 2 | 10.05 - 11.05 | Period 2 | 10.05 - 11.05 |
| Break | 11.05 - 11.25 | Break | 11.05 - 11.25 |
| Period 3 | 11.25 - 12.25 | Period 3 | 11.25 - 12.25 |
| Lunch | 12.25 - 1.10 | Lunch | 12.25 - 1.10 |
| Period 4 | 1.10 - 2.10 | Period 4 | 1.10 - 2.10 |
| Period 5 | 2.15 - 3.15 | Tutorial | 2.15 - 2.25 |

Appendix 2: Excerpts from Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2022)

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Effective school attendance improvement and management



