**Attendance and Punctuality**

**Policy**

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# 1. Rationale

1.1 Walton-le-Dale High School seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise their true potential.

1.2 The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

1.3 All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

1.4 The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

1.5 To meet these objectives Walton-le-Dale High School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents/carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

# 2. Purposes

The purposes of this policy are:

* To affirm that all students have the right to be educated and valued, but this right carries with it obligations;
* To support the development of all students by clarifying for all members of the school community that good school attendance and punctuality are necessary for their success, thereby making attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, staff and governors.
* To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school through the application of the Guidelines outlined in the policy.
* To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
* To develop a systematic approach to gathering, recording, analysing and monitoring attendance related data.
* To define the range of incentives and rewards that will support and encourage those students with acceptable standards of attendance and punctuality.
* To define the range of incentives, rewards and sanctions that will be applied to support and encourage students' return to an acceptable level of attendance and punctuality in the event of this being a problem
* To underline the use of sanctions as a positive and constructive instrument of improving a student’s attendance and punctuality,
* To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
* To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
* To respond to the fact that while a student’s attendance and punctuality can be affected negatively by factors outside the school’s control (including the nature/absence of role models at home, the influence of peer groups in the community, family circumstances, nutrition, the level of physical and mental health, involvement in drugs and/or alcohol abuse and tiredness/lack of sleep) it is our responsibility to help students and their families to manage their attendance and punctuality as best they can and to provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students whenever it is needed;
* To ensure that those factors affecting attendance and punctuality which are under the school’s control are identified are minimised (including the positive encouragement/ethos provided by the school, the provision of clear expectations of standards of behaviour, support strategies for students who experience difficulties related to breaches of the standards of behaviour eg bullying, an appropriate curriculum, appropriately differentiated work, high quality lessons and appropriate SEN and other support when necessary).
* To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.

# 3. Strategies to Improve Attendance

**3.1 To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school**

3.1.1 Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.

3.1.2 Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.

3.1.3 Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.

3.1.4 Monitor progress in attendance against measurable outcomes.

3.1.5 Have clear systems of reward and sanction, including referral to Governor's Attendance Panel.

R**ATEGIES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE**

**3.2 To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, staff and governors**

3.2.1 Use Staff school handbook; DfE literature.

3.2.2 Produce termly/annual reports to governors and report to governors at other times on a 'need to know' basis.

3.2.3 Hold Induction Year 6/7 days/evenings for parents/students.

3.2.4 Ensure that all developments/changes are posted on the website along with the policy.

3.2.5 Provide INSET training for newly appointed staff.

3.2.6 Attendance data will be displayed weekly on student notice

3.2.7 Discuss attendance issues in Pastoral meetings and/or in relevant staff/governor meetings; School Council meetings/assemblies etc.

3.2.8 Have clear award/recognition and sanction systems.

3.2.9 Include attendance as an item at meetings with parents/carers and Parents Evenings.

3.2.10 Facilitate and encourage college and training providers to include attendance as an item when interviewing students in school by providing them with attendance certificates

3.2.11 Promote attendance as an important issue with Year 11 ensuring that all have up to date Attendance certificates when going for interviews.

**3.3 To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks**

3.3.1 Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.

3.3.2 Have Student Support members of the Support staff team with responsibility for Attendance and with Line Management to the DH with responsibility for student welfare.

3.3.3 Attendance Officer to ensure that Group Call is sent daily and to make phone contact, on first day of absence followed up by further phone calls where Group Call has failed or parents have not responded if the student's absence goes beyond the 'appropriate' length of time for the identified absence.

3.3.4 Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.

3.3.5 Respond swiftly to lateness (in respect of both students and parents).

3.3.6 Deputy Head and Attendance Officer to have clear understanding of each other's roles with meetings on a regular basis.

3.3.7 Have clear procedures prior to referral to LA officers eg Court Officer/Attendance consultant.

3.3.8 Review attendance regularly.

3.3.9 Clearly defined system for referring to Governor's Attendance Panel and to the authority for Fixed Penalty Notices and potentially court.

**3.4 To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students**

3.4.1 Highlight attendance in:

* 1. Form time
  2. Assemblies
  3. Staff availability to talk to students
  4. School Counsellor
  5. 'Mentor' systems
  6. Making use of available resources

3.4.2 Involve parents/carers from earliest stage.

3.4.3 Ensure parents/carers always have access to staff to inform/discuss attendance issues - Out of hours through answer phone facility and during school time with Attendance Officer or pastoral staff.

3.4.4 Seek improved communication with parents/carers eg when parents/carers ring in - ensure that systems for communicating with form tutors are in place and are used.

3.4.5 Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents/carers when requested.

3.4.6 Include attendance data in annual report to parents.

**3.5 To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data**

3.5.1 Ensure that updates in the computerised registration are made

3.5.2 Standardise recording of:

* 1. authorised/unauthorised absence (and to have decided after two weeks);
  2. educational activity;
  3. presence;
  4. Illness v medical absence;
  5. Holiday requests;
  6. Education off-site eg vocational courses, dual roll with eg PRUs/Managed moves etc.

3.5.3 Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.

3.5.4 Decide what information, if any, is provided for:

* 1. Governors;
  2. pastoral staff;
  3. other school staff;
  4. parents/carers;
  5. students (individual or groups);
  6. Further education providers;
  7. External agencies.

3.5.5 Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

3.5.6 Analyse data on a termly and yearly basis or when necessary.

**3.6 To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school**

3.6.1 Ensure first day absence contact is made for the target cohorts as a priority eg CLA.

3.6.2 Make full use of computer generated letters and send home annotated attendance certificates

3.6.3 Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.

3.6.4 Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).

3.6.5 Encourage all parents/carers into school.

**3.7 To implement a system of rewards and warnings**

3.7.1 Identify finance for a system of rewards.

3.7.2 Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions.

Rewards – need to check with EGO

* Graduated system of badges for 100% attendance (Bronze - 1 term, Silver-2 terms, Gold-3 terms, year badge for full year)
* Weekly Best form within years/section awards with rewards where applicable - displayed on Student Notices on a Monday morning;
* Weekly Best form in School displayed on Student Notices and toast reward;
* 100% Attendance Certificates for each half term & each term
* Year 11 students with 100% for 5 years receive £100 at the Presentation Evening.

Warnings

* Sanctions - Late detentions on a daily/weekly basis;
* Make up time after school for truancy;
* Staged Warning letters;
* Governors Panel;
* Fixed Penalty Notices.

3.7.3 Ensure fair and consistent implementation.

3.7.4 Involve students in system evaluation through School Council.

3.7.5 Make use of imaginative and immediate sanctions.

3.7.6 Take action which accords with objectives agreed between school and others, eg parent/carer and other Support Services.

**3.8 To promote effective partnerships with the LA and with other services and agencies**

3.8.1 Designate key staff for liaison with LA and other agencies.

3.8.2 Give priority to timetabled meetings with LA.

3.8.3 Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.

3.8.4 Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.

3.8.5 Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community eg community police contact officer.

3.8.6 Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.

3.8.7 Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.

**3.9 To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence**

3.9.1 Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.

3.9.2 Involve/inform all staff in/of reintegration process.

3.9.3 Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.

3.9.4 Consider peer support and/mentoring.

3.9.5 Involve parents/carers as far as possible.

3.9.6 Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan.

3.9.7 Include Attendance Officer, parents/carers and student in reintegration plan.

# 4. Attendance

**4.1 Guidance notes for Staff taking registers**

Regular attendance at school is essential if a student is to make maximum progress. All staff should, therefore, seek to maximise the attendance rate of those students in their teaching groups and tutor groups. The school should actively pursue the goal of regular attendance, both in relation to individual students and for the student population as a whole. Individual absences need to be carefully investigated, and students and parents should be made fully aware that unauthorised absences are unacceptable.

***4.2 Closure of registers***

*Morning registration is from 8.45 am to 9.05 am. Official registers close at 9.30 am*

*Afternoon registration is from 2.10 pm to 2.15 pm. Official registers close at 2.30 pm*

**4.3 Who is responsible for the recording and monitoring of attendance?**

Classcharts is used to record attendance.

The **SIMS Attendance Module** is used to store and analyse students' attendance.

The **Deputy Head, Student Welfare and Progress** has overall responsibility for attendance.

The **Attendance Officer** is responsible for the management of the SIMS Attendance module including the calculation of statistics required by DfE*.*

Progress Co-ordinators are responsible for monitoring the role of form tutors in recording students' attendance *and when relevant informing the LA through the Attendance Officer of issues.*

**ALL STAFF** are responsible for the marking and monitoring of their registers. All absence notes must be given to the Attendance Officer who is responsible for recording reasons for absence in Classcharts. All staff need to be aware of the times when referral to the Progress Co-ordinator or Attendance Officer are necessary.

**4.4 Marking of registers**

**ONLY A TEACHER SHOULD TAKE A REGISTER - NOT STUDENTS.**

In an emergency a member of the support staff may take the register. However, they must immediately inform the Attendance Officer or Deputy Head (Student Welfare and Progress) that this has happened.

* The completion of registers is a **legal requirement**. The attendance register and the person responsible for marking it, ie Form Tutor, can be called in evidence in school attendance cases in court.
* At any time during the day it has to be possible to ascertain whether a student is absent or present.
* A degree of consistency must be shown by all teachers for registration to be conducted accurately:

\* All staff must be **punctual to registration period and lessons.** The register must be called at the beginning of the registration period/lesson. Register to be take on Classcharts.

\* All students should be sitting **quietly** at desks, the **names** (not numbers) called and each student should answer in the same way (as determined by the Form Tutor). Silence should be enforced whilst the registration is taken.

**4.5 Storage of Register, Absence reports, parent's letters and telephone messages etc.**

* Any absence messages received must be emailed/given to the Attendance Officer as soon as possible.

**4.6 Marking of registers**

* Registers must be marked at the very start of the registration period/lesson.
* A mark must be entered for every student.
* If a student is absent they must be marked as such (N)
* The member of staff must have seen a student to mark them present. It is not acceptable for another student to inform the member of staff that they have seen a student.
* Students who are late must be recorded late (L) with the number of minutes.

**4.7** **All registers to be taken on Classcharts at the start of every period, and submitted (need to click submit in order to save).**

**4.8 Absences**

1. It should be remembered that all absences classified as **authorised** by a school may have to be justified in court if **legal** proceedings are undertaken and therefore, a **record** of all relevant telephone information, all medical certificates and notes etc received by the school must be retained.
2. The **Attendance Officer** may be called to a Review at one day's notice and have to account for a student's pattern of absence. The information has to be to hand.
3. It is essential, therefore, that the reasons for absences are **recorded accurately** and notes are efficiently stored on Classcharts / SIMS / CPOMS.
4. Form tutors should monitor patterns of absence developing and notify the Progress Co-ordinator if it is felt that further action is needed.
5. Progress Coordinators will liaise with the Attendance Officer who will in turn liaise with the Education Welfare Officer at their weekly meetings or sooner as appropriate.

**4.9 Informing the school of absence**

**Telephone calls, School Gateway messages or Visits in person form parents/carers to inform of absence.**

**Received by the Office, Progress Co-ordinator or Form Tutors**

* + Must be emailed to the Attendance Officer for the appropriate mark to be recorded.
  + An **Absence Note** is required on the student's return if they miss the last or penultimate day/days of term
  + Evidence is required for any medical appointment. This can be in the form of a letter, prescription or screen shot emailed to the Attendance Officer.

**Suspicious telephone calls**

* It has been known for ' adult friends' to telephone absences to schools.
* If you are suspicious during the call, please tactfully ask for the phone number and check it against the contact number on SIMS
* If the parents/carers know nothing of the absence, the phone number taken might be vital in tracking the student and has proven useful to the Police in some cases.

**Absent notifications from parents**

* ***The High Court has confirmed that schools, not parents authorise absence.***
* Absences should be reported each day as soon as possible, either by phone text message or email.
* A reason must be given for every day of absence.

**4.12 Requests for Holiday leave**

* Please refer all requests to the Headteacher as to whether permission will be granted.
* Permission is only granted in exceptional circumstances.
* Parents taking students on holiday without permission may well be subject to a fixed penalty fine.
* Proformas for parents to request leave of absence are obtainable from the Attendance Officer.

**4.13 Marking of registers by subject teachers**

1. A class register should be taken at the beginning of each lesson by all teachers.
2. Any problems with a student's attendance which cannot be dealt with satisfactorily by the class teacher should be referred to either the Curriculum Manager or Progress Co-ordinator, as appropriate.

**LATENESS**

**Closure of registers**

Morning registration is from 8.45 am to 9.05 am. Official registers close at 9.30 am

Afternoon registration will be taken at the start of Period 5 at 2.10pm.

### What is late?

1. Students should always be punctual to school and to each lesson during the day.
2. Students should be at registration by 8.45am.
3. Anyone arriving after this time will be marked late.

**Late to registration but in school with a bona fide reason**

* Staff who inadvertently make a student late to registration, must inform the teacher by email or via Teams that that student was with them at the time of registration.
* The teacher must update Classcharts with a late mark (L).

**Late to registration with no reason**

* The student should be marked late with the ‘L’ code on Classcharts.

**Late to school but arrives in school after registers have been submitted but before Official registration has closed.**

* A student who is late to school eg due to buses or medical appointment
* A degree of discretion is needed by the Form Tutor in how they deal with the lateness.
* **Reason is bona fide eg the buses were late**
* Students must sign in at D2

**Late to school after the official registers have closed**

* If the lateness was due to an appointment or illness supported by evidence the Attendance Officer will record the appropriate code.
* The code ‘N’ should be recorded on Classcharts.

**Late to lessons**

Students arriving late to a lesson should be dealt with by the subject teacher. A student should be marked late if he/she arrives after the register has been taken at the beginning of the lesson, and given a negative Classchart point.

### How are lates dealt with?

All staff should deal with students in the way thought to be most appropriate at the time, but to achieve consistency throughout the school lateness will be sanctioned proportionately.

### Contact with parents

1. Parents should be aware of problems at an early stage through a phone call or Schoolcomms.

2. Curriculum Manager/Progress Co-ordinator should inform parents of recurrent problems with punctuality at the earliest appropriate stage.

**All members of staff should deal consistently with all instances of lateness.**