



Attendance Policy

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At Woodhey High School our vision is:

To be a centre of excellence, where students, staff and the community are proud to work together to broaden our horizons, exceed our aspirations and where everyone achieves their full potential.

#TeamWoodhey

At Woodhey High School, we have two key values that drive our actions, our choices, and our decisions.

These are:

Respect

We treat everyone as we wish to be treated ourselves; we are all part of the same team

Excellence

We strive to be the best we can be at all times; nothing but the best is good enough for us

Underpinning our values are two clear expectations.

These are:

Respect every member of staff and student in our community, following all instructions without answering back

Being excellent by being prepared for, and completing all work to the best of our ability without distracting others

We are a team made up of our staff, our students, our parents and carers, and our wider community. Our vision, values and expectations apply to all of our community.

Teamwork is the secret that makes common people achieve uncommon results (Ifeyani Enoch Onuoha)

#TeamWoodhey



Attendance Policy

Principles

At Woodhey High School we believe promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. Attendance is a key issue for all involved in education. The Education Act 1996 states: 'If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his or her parent is guilty of an offence.'

The school collaborates with the Local Authority to ensure that we maintain good standards of student attendance.

Attendance in school is critical in the learning process. If a child does not attend school, they cannot learn and therefore develop as an individual. All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents or carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never a good idea to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Aims

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 school and lessons

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' document 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:

- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2024](#)
- [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 \(Student Registration\) \(England\) 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

The Academy Council

The Academy Council is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by:
 - o Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
 - o Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
 - o Making sure staff receive appropriate professional development in relation to attendance
 - o Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance

The Designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school as the Woodhey Attendance Champion
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement evaluating and monitoring expectations and process
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Developing and leading targeted intervention and support to Students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Lomax, Deputy Headteacher (Student Experience); she can be contacted via 01706 82512.

The Attendance Team

The school attendance officers are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Collaboration with the Progress Teams and Pastoral Manager in order to provide parents and carers with more detailed support on attendance
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with the Local Authority to tackle persistent absence and advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices
- Targeting interventions and support for students and families
- Collaborating with the Progress Team to secure strong attendance and punctuality
- Conducting home visits to support students and families



The attendance officers are Miss Tracy Boswell and Miss Rachel Rothwell and can be contacted via telephone 01706 825125.

Form tutors and Class teachers

Form tutors and class teachers are expected to:

- Form tutors and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via the school's information management system as soon as they are aware
- Form tutors and class teachers complete registers within the first ten minutes of form time and lessons
- Form tutors discuss attendance concerns within Progress Team meetings and will work with students and families to secure improvements in attendance when concerns arise

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and every session on time
- Call the school on 01706 825125 to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence) and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Provide medical evidence of illness and medical appointments, **as required**

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time, arrive in school through the student entrance and be in their form rooms for 8:30am
- Attend every timetabled lesson on time

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register. This register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether each student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity (and the nature of this activity)
- Absent (including whether the absence is authorised or not)
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (including the nature of these circumstances)

From time to time, it is necessary to make amendments to the attendance register. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment



Every entry on the attendance register will be kept for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40 am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:25pm and will be kept open until 12.55pm.

Unplanned absence

The student's parent or carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school absence line or the reception staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as an authorised absence unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent or carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents and carers will be notified of this. For minor ailments, the expectation is that students attend school. We can support students with minor ailments attending school through, for example, providing water for students, or supporting with students to access medication such as paracetamol where this is brought to school by parents or carers and the appropriate permissions are given. Where this is not possible, the first day of absence will be authorised by school; the expectation being that the student returns to school either later the same day or the following day. Continued or repeated absence related to this ailment, or other minor ailments may be unauthorised.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents and carers should inform the school via email or telephone and a note will then be placed on the School Management Information System to inform staff of the appointment in order to release the student for signing out at Student Services.

However, we encourage parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. These requests should be sent to the Attendance Team, who will refer each request to the Headteacher who will determine whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any request should be submitted as



soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical or dental appointments
- Religious observance, where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents or carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's and carer's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes. This covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

The Headteacher is unable to authorise holidays except for in genuine, exceptional circumstances. Holidays that are reduced in cost for any reason are not an exceptional circumstance.

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents and carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Under the new national framework, applicable from August 2024, all schools must consider a fine if a student has missed 10 sessions or 5 days for unauthorised reasons.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent and carer, under the new national framework for attendance from August 2024 must pay the fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where a suspended or excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

The school takes a number of steps to promote the importance of student attendance at school. These include:

- An ambitious, purposeful curriculum that is well-delivered to support students in feeling confident and able to access school
- At the end of each half term, we have year group assemblies where attendance is celebrated
- At the end of each half term, we have rewards breakfasts where attendance is celebrated
- Attendance challenges are set each half-term to reward a range of attendance foci, including improved attendance, 95% attendance and above etc.



- Attendance information is included in all whole school events, for example, at Parents and Carers in Partnership events
- Attendance mentoring with the school attendance officers, form tutors, Pastoral Mentors and Directors of Progress
- Weekly SLT meetings to discuss whole school attendance
- Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 strategy meetings are held every three weeks to support attendance concerns and adopt a team around the student approach
- Home visits, Early Help Intervention and parenting contracts
- Student Attendance meetings

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Collate student-level absence data collected each term and publish at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics
- Compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the Academy Council

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these Students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The Attendance Officers:

- Provide regular attendance data to Senior Leaders and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent and severe (also known as chronic) absence are terms that are defined by the DfE. A student is classed as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of school (i.e. their attendance is at 90% or less). A student's absence is classed as severe (or chronic) when they miss 50% or more of school.

To reduce persistent and severe absence, the school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents and carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school



- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance including referrals to but not limited to Early Help and the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH)
- A parental meeting will be held to discuss persistent unauthorised absences and discuss an action plan of support to help increase attendance.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Academy Council.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy



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
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority	The student is on the school roll but attending a place/provision arranged by the LA.
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	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 and supervised by school staff
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Authorised Absences		
Code	Definition	Scenario
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	The LA have granted a license to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the CYP Act 1963. Where a JP has issued a license for a student to go abroad for a performance or under section 45 of the CYP Act 1963



C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable	For students, in very exceptional circumstances that may require a temporary part-time timetable.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	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
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness (both physical and mental related)
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements	Student is unable to attend because the Local Authority has failed to meet its statutory duty set out in regulation 10, 12 or 13 to make access arrangements to enable the student's attendance at school.
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	Parent travelling for occupational reasons	Student is a mobile child, with no fixed abode is travelling with their parent for trade or business purposes, as agreed with the school.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or Student is in custody
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend due to a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school site is unavoidably out of use and the student is one of those that cannot practicably be accommodated.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	The school is closed unexpectedly due to for example adverse weather



		conditions. Every student on the admissions register is coded with a Y4.
Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend because: They are in police detention. On remand to youth detention. Detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Guidance from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care stated that student is not allowed in school due to transmission of infection or disease.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable causes	Any other unavoidable emergency that prevents the child from attending school.

Unauthorised Absence		
Code	Definition	Scenario
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

Administrative Codes		
Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
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

