



# WOODHEY HIGH SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Version Control:

Policy Owner:	Mrs C Lomax
Date Approved by Headteacher:	September 2022
Signed by Headteacher:	
Date Approved by Academy Council: (If applicable)	September 2022
Signed by Chair of Academy Council: (if applicable)	
Review Interval:	Annually
Last Review Date:	September 2022
Next review Date:	September 2023
Audience:	Parents and Carers

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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,'  
(Ifeanyi Enoch Onuoha)**

***#TeamWoodhey***

This policy is designed to support excellent attendance and punctuality. Educational research shows a strong links between 100% attendance and high achievement.

## **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 collaborate with the Local Authority to ensure that we maintain excellent 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. Poor attendance causes gaps in knowledge, which prevents students from making excellent progress. Sometimes, students can be reluctant to attend school, and when this is the case, the school, parents, carers and the student must work together to re-engage the student with school immediately.

The Government expects schools to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absences
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Support parents and carers to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school to attend regularly
- Ensure all students are punctual to school and their lessons. Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent each absence from school has to be classified as authorised or unauthorised. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents or carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

## **Aims and Objectives**

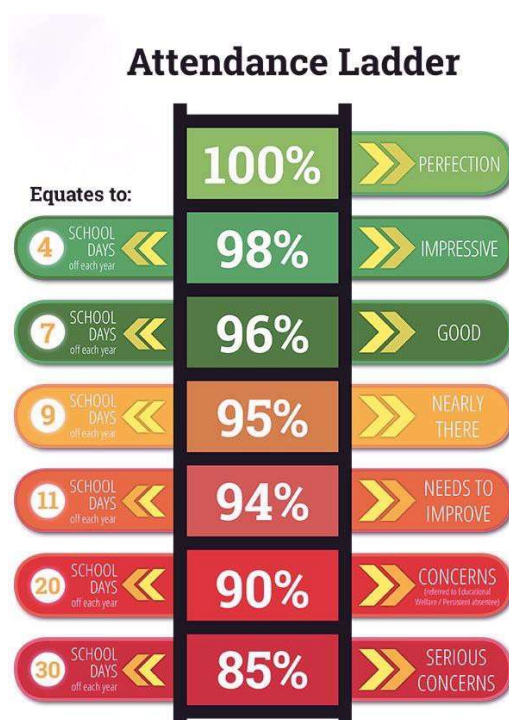
- To ensure all students take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school
- To ensure the well-being and safety of students
- To promote and encourage 100% attendance for all students
- To monitor student absence and to analyse the reasons for that absence
- To reduce disruption to students' education through unnecessary absence

## Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

At Woodhey High School good attendance is paramount and is monitored weekly, any student under 95% attendance is a concern and may be spoken to by Attendance staff.

Woodhey High School will be using the following attendance colour chart system, Woodhey High School's attendance target is 97%:



## Registration Principles

- We will ensure that staff are aware of any new legislation with student registration
- Registers are to be completed accurately at the beginning of every lesson
- Parents and carers are made aware of the importance of contacting school to report absence before 08.30
- Senior Leaders and Academy Councillors will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of absence procedures
- Regular reports will be provided for the Academy Council.

## Registering Attendance

This is the responsibility of the form tutor and teacher in Period 4, attendance is marked using SIMS software. The following procedures must be followed.

Statutory registration morning & afternoon registration.

- Students who are not present in the Registration period should be marked with an “N” (No reason yet supplied for absence)
- Students who arrive late should be given an “L” mark and the number of minutes late recorded.
- Students present should be given a “/” mark (present for that session)
- Paper registers should only be marked when there is no possible alternative (e.g. for cover lessons) and these should be returned promptly to Pupil Services
- All registers should be marked within 10 minutes at the start of the session.

Lesson registration (non- statutory)

- It is also school policy to mark registers using the above procedure for each lesson taught.

### **Being Absent from School**

- Woodhey High School sets an attendance target of 97%
- 90% attendance (which sounds reasonable) actually equates to 19 days of absence (4 weeks)
- If 90% attendance is maintained over 5 years, half a school year will have been missed overall
- 80% attendance (which doesn't sound too bad) actually equates to 8 weeks of absence
- 90% of students gain five or more good GCSE grades at schools with an average absence of 7.5 days or less per student per year
- Only 31.3% of students gain five or more good GCSE grades at schools with an average absence of more than 20 days per student
- Research suggests that 17 missed school days in a year = 1 GCSE grade DROP in achievement

Obviously, students who do not attend school regularly are less likely to achieve their target levels and excellent GCSE grades.

### **Education Welfare and Types of Absence**

We have access to the local authority Education Welfare Service to support improving student attendance. The Education Welfare Service (EWS) are also responsible for helping schools to ensure that their levels of unauthorised absence remain as low as possible.

## **Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

**AUTHORISED ABSENCE** can usually be applied to the following:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable appointments which must be attended during school hours (usually applicable to hospital visits)
- Compassionate circumstances (e.g. bereavement)
- The absence occurs on a day set aside for religious observance by the religion to which the student's parents or carers belong. This absence is authorised for one day only
- The student has a medical appointment or an interview approved by the school
- The student is taking part in approved work experience or alternative provision
- The student is excluded

The list is not comprehensive, parents and carers should consult the school if unsure.

**UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES** are those which the school does not consider reasonable. These could include:

- Parents or carers keeping children off school for no genuine reason
- truancy before or during the school day
- lateness after register closes
- absences which have never been properly explained by parents or carers
- absences due to hair appointments, shopping trips, preparing for holidays, etc.
- Any leave of absence (such as a holiday) not applied for using the appropriate system and not authorised by the school.

Requests for Leaves of Absence can be made but there is no guarantee that the Leave of Absence will be authorised. The Government now require that Headteachers only authorise these absences in exceptional circumstances.

Please be aware that if your child's attendance is under 95% through prior absence and you request a further Leave of Absence, it is extremely unlikely that the absence will be authorised. Schools are advised locally and nationally that in these circumstances, each parent (in the case

of parents or carers who are separated) should be issued with a Penalty Notice for each child who will be absent from school.

If your child is excluded from school and is seen in a public place during school hours, the matter can be referred to the Local Support Team and a Penalty Notice for £60 can be issued to each parent responsible for that child.

### **Medical Appointments**

Parents and carers of students attending a medical appointment during the school day need to produce an appointment card, letter or similar paperwork prior to the appointment. Where possible all medical or dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. We can then confirm lateness as a 'medical' absence and therefore authorised.

### **School Action on Repeated Absence**

Where a student is persistently late or absent, even if the Headteacher has been informed, the following steps will be taken:

- Parents and carers will be requested to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer
- Home visits are conducted to support parents and carers
- Targets will be set to improve attendance and support needed investigated to support our families
- Continued monitoring will take place and if needed referral to the Emotionally Based School Avoidance pathway
- Repeated absence that falls under the criteria for Fixed Penalty Notices will be considered and pursued.

### **School Approved Activity**

For any school approved activity, such as a sporting activity, school coursework visits or school trips, students will be marked present.

### **Persistent Absence**

Some students have persistently high absence rates. These students will be identified by the Pastoral Team and referred for additional support. The particular categories that will normally be pursued are:

- Students with long-term absence
- Students who show patterns of absence
- Students who rarely complete a full week
- Students whose parents or carers condone their child's absences
- Students whose attendance remains below 90%.



In extreme cases, the option to pursue, legal action may be taken. This may involve the use of Fixed Penalties or proceedings in the Magistrates Court.

### **Persistent Absence Managing Lateness**

Students arriving late to the morning form tutor group registration (**after 8.30am**) and pm registration (during Period 4) will be marked late.

- Students arriving on site **after 8.30am** must report to Pupil Services. Their names will be noted, and the Attendance Officer will mark the students as late. The students will then go to their form for the remainder of the form time
- Students on the list will be given an automatic detention that same day after school
- Failure to attend the after-school detention will result in the issuing of a Red Line as detailed in the Relationships and Behaviour Policy. This will include time in inclusion and an after-school detention. Failure to attend will result in the member of the school's Senior Leadership Team calling parents or carers to discuss the issues and to re-issue the detention
- Students arriving late for the PM register (Period 4) will be marked as late and the attendance policy procedure will be followed as per morning register
- Students causing concerns over repeated lateness to school (6 late marks in a half term) will be seen with their parents or carers by the Head of Year
- Any student with 9 late marks in a half term will be referred to the Attendance Officer, who will invite parents or carers in to discuss the matter further
- Any student who continues to be late, after these steps have been followed, will be referred to the Local Support Team and parents or carers may be issued with a penalty notice in accordance with the School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures (January 2015).

### **Procedure for Dealing with Lateness after School Intervention**

If a student is late to school before the register is closed and has been issued with a number of detentions as a sanction but continues to arrive late to school, then a letter be sent to the parents or carers informing them of the continued lateness. If it continues, then parents or carers will be invited in for a meeting with the Attendance Officer and where possible, the student's Head of Year.

If the lateness persists, then a further letter will be sent to the parents or carers and the student will be spoken to in school by the Attendance Officer.

If after monitoring, the student's persistent lateness hasn't improved, then a further letter will be sent to the parents or carers. This letter advises parents or carers that from a certain date, the student's persistent lateness will be unauthorised, and the U code will be used which may trigger a fixed penalty fine. At this point, the parents and carers will be invited into school to discuss their child's persistent lateness to school.

By following this procedure, it gives each student, an opportunity for support and a chance to improve their attendance.

### **New Rules of Leave During Term Time – Holiday is Now Leave of Absence**

The Education Regulations 2006, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 and the Education Act 1996 changed the grounds on which a Headteacher could allow a student to go on holiday during term time.

Prior to the change the law stated that “a pupil may be granted leave of absence from the school to go away on holiday” where the Headteacher considered that there were “special circumstances relating to that application”. This section has been deleted and there is now **no rule** which allows for authorisation to be given for holidays.

The replacement section states that “leave of absence shall not be granted” unless the Headteacher considers that there are “exceptional circumstances relating to that application”.

Unauthorised absences may result in the Local Authority taking legal action. Legal action that may be taken include:

- Fixed penalty notice: The penalty is £120 per parent or carer per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days from the date of issue. Non-payment of the fine will result in court proceedings
- Prosecution: Magistrates can fine each parent or carer up to £2500 per child and costs; impose Parenting Orders and/or impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. When an individual student’s attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the Local Support Team will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent or carer receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

### **Requests for ‘Leave of Absence’ from School**

Woodhey High School follows Bury’s Local Authority Protocol in relation to requests for ‘Leave of absence’ from school during term time.

If you wish to request leave, you should complete the ‘Request for Term Time Absence Form’, addressed to the Headteacher, outlining the exceptional circumstances. In the event of such an application, this will be considered by the Headteacher. We recommend that you do this before booking any holidays. With the achievement of our students of paramount importance and the regulations clear, we will be extremely unlikely to authorise any holiday leave for students.

We need to point out that, in an effort to address poor attendance and unauthorised absences from school, the local authority may decide to issue a Fixed Penalty fine and/or prosecute parents or carers under the Education Act 1996 if a holiday is taken during term time.

### **What happens if a child goes on holiday in term time or takes leave of absence for other reasons without permission from school?**

The absences will be marked in the school register as unauthorised absences, this may result in a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent or carer per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 per parent or carer per child if paid within 21 days from the date of issue, being issued by the Local

Authority. In some cases, parents or carers may be prosecuted for the offences of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

### **Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued**

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence. There will be no limit on the number of times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year
- In cases where there is more than one student in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

### **Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence (holiday) in term time**

- More than one Penalty Notice could be issued for repeated absence without permission during term time
- A combined total of 10 sessions (not necessarily grouped as 5 consecutive days) could trigger a Penalty Notice
- Instead of monitoring and totalling holiday absences taken across each academic year, they are now monitored across the previous 3 terms, regardless of academic year.

### **Penalty Notice for Persistent Absence**

- Parents or carers whose child is repeatedly absent will only receive one warning notice period to bring about improvement in attendance in a single academic year
- If attendance deteriorates again then a 'no formal warning notice' will be issued, and the Local Authority can automatically consider other statutory actions if unauthorised absence re-occurs
- Parents or carers whose child is repeatedly late (after 8.30am) will receive a Penalty Notice if their child is late over 20 times over the current and previous term.

### **Penalty Notices**

Schools follow the Bury Local Authority code of conduct for the procedures of Penalty Notices. Details of this can be obtained from the LEA website. See link: [Penalty notices for non-attendance at school - Information for parents and carers - Bury Council](#)

The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school attendance and take appropriate action for absences during term time, both to support headteachers in their role and in challenging the small minority of parents or carers that choose to disregard the law.

### **Information about individual school targets**

The school has (adopted) the following attendance targets: Woodhey High School's own Attendance Target is 97% for 2022-2023. All staff have a duty to promote good attendance and its educational benefits to students.

### **Referral to the Education Welfare Service**

Students absent for no genuine reason.

Where no satisfactory explanation is provided for continued absences, no medical evidence has been provided and twenty sessions of unauthorised absence have been accrued, the Local Authority will be contacted by us, and a Penalty Notice applied for. Court proceedings can be used to prosecute parents or carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. Maximum convictions vary and further information can be obtained by contacting the Local Authority on 0161 253 5000 for Bury schools. The Local Authority are independent of school and will give impartial advice.

If a child is refusing to attend and/or a parent or carer is having difficulty in getting the child to school, please contact us and we will work together to try to resolve the situation. As an Academy, we collaborate with the Local Authority and engage with the Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) programme.

### **Truancy**

Most truancy is detected using the first day absence system of phone calls to parents or carers. However, should this not be detected on the day this occurs, when it is detected, an unauthorised absence will be recorded, and our Education Welfare Officer will be informed. In school, a decision may be taken to place the student on an attendance report to monitor their attendance over a set period.

### **Lunchtime Arrangements**

Students are not allowed to leave the school site during lunchtime. Students can purchase food from the school canteen or packed lunches brought in from home can be eaten in the canteen and designated areas.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance at the school.

#### **Students**

- To attend school regularly and punctually
- To arrive at school and be in form rooms before the bell that signals the start of the school day
- To attend registration promptly
- Students should attend every day (unless there is a valid reason for not doing so), and they should arrive punctually, wearing our school uniform and with all the equipment they need for the day.

#### **Parents and Carers**

- To ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and ready to learn, both at the school and at any off-site provision each day. **Regular attendance is a legal requirement**
- To notify the school each day of absence by 8.30am to say why child is absent
- To provide the school with up-to-date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility. **If contact details change then we must be informed of new details in writing immediately**
- To recognise the value of good attendance, not only to take full advantage of the opportunities offered at the school but also in preparation for working life to follow.

### **Teaching Staff**

- Form Tutors to keep an accurate Attendance Register at the start of morning and teaching staff for afternoon registration time (statutory)
- Class teachers will take a register at the start of every lesson. On each occasion, relevant staff will record whether every student is present, absent or late (non-statutory)
- Tutor to praise students for excellent punctuality and excellent attendance
- Tutor to monitor student absence and inform the Head of Year when absence is impacting on achievement
- Tutor to contact students or carers where there is an attendance concern and record on CPOMS
- All staff to challenge students that are seen arriving late
- Tutor to question students when they are aware that they have had an absence and support them to catch up learning missed knowledge
- All staff to monitor the circulation of students in all areas of the school
- The Head of Year will liaise with the Attendance Officer and attend meetings on any concerns relating to poor attendance within their year group.

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

- To have a named member of SLT responsible for attendance
- To inform parents and carers of school policy and procedures
- To monitor attendance as a priority and to develop policies and procedures to ensure the expectation of 97% attendance or above is met
- To intervene early when individual student absence gives cause for concern

- Develop a multi-agency response to attendance
- Utilise the support of available specialists in relation to the attendance i.e. through strong links with the Local Authority and specialists within that team
- Report termly to the Academy Council
- To celebrate excellent attendance
- To inform parents and carers of their child's percentage attendance against the target.

### **Attendance Staff**

- To monitor late entrants into school and adjust SIMS accordingly
- To monitor register codes and alert staff of inconsistencies
- To produce individual or class summary sheets
- To produce attendance figures for termly and end of year reports
- To contact parents or carers who have failed to report a child's absence on the first day of absence
- To notify Attend EDC by email of absences which are unexplained as soon as possible
- Send out Attendance letters when required
- To produce a termly report of Persistent Absentees and persistent Latecomers for SLT
- The Attendance Officer will follow up any absences to:
  1. Ascertain the reason
  2. Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
  3. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
  4. Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

### **Academy Council**

The Academy Council will receive attendance data annually to check the statutory targets have been met. Interim monitoring will be undertaken by the Assistant Headteacher, responsible for Behaviour, Attendance and Safeguarding, and reported to the Academy Council, the School will ensure that:

- Attendance data is collected and published in accordance with statutory requirements
- Attendance data is presented to the Academy Council meetings as required for monitoring purposes

- The Academy Councillors support the school in developing positive strategies to improve attendance
- Information on attendance procedures is readily available to parents and carers
- The Attendance Policy is regularly reviewed and updated in line with current legislations.

### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed within an annual cycle, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Academy Council or if new changes occur such as law changes or changes to the school system due to personnel or IT upgrades.

### **Guidance on Attendance**

**Leave of Absence** - granted only in Exceptional Circumstances

**Code H:** Holiday authorised by the school.

Headteachers will not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

**Code G: Unauthorised Leave:** Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher.

Where parents or carers have not applied for leave but the school believes the student has been taken on holiday, staff will make sufficient enquiries to verify or establish this belief. Schools will inform parents or carers that unless they present contrary evidence the school will code absence as a G (an unauthorised leave of absence).

If the Headteacher does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents or carers still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents or carers did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised holidays may result in a Penalty Notice being issued, as detailed previously in this policy.

**Absence** – codes relating to unauthorised absence

**Code O:** Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they will record it as unauthorised.

**Code U:** Arrived in school after registration closed. The School actively discourages late arrival and will monitor for patterns of late arrival, which may result in us seeking an explanation from the parent or carer.

### **Absence Codes – Reference guide**

The following codes may be useful to you as parents and carers to support when we send you a

copy of your child's registration certificate for you to verify:

N.B. Each day is divided into two sessions (am and pm) so two marks are recorded for each day (one for the morning and one for the afternoon)

It is always the decision of the school as to which code is entered for a student absence.



<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (AM)	Present
<b>\</b>	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site	Approved educational activity (absent)
<b>C</b>	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>D</b>	Dual registration	Approved educational activity (absent)
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>F</b>	Extended leave of absence (agreed)	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>G</b>	Extended leave of absence (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence (absent)
<b>H</b>	Leave of absence (agreed)	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>I</b>	Illness	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved educational activity (absent)
<b>L</b>	Late (before register closes)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence (absent)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence (absent)
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity (absent)
<b>Q</b>	Present in school but elsewhere (in inclusion, Mentoring)	Present
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>S</b>	Study leave (applies to sixth form students)	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>U</b>	Late (after register closed)	Unauthorised absence (absent)
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Authorised absence (absent)
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required (absent)
<b>Y</b>	Enforced school closure	Attendance not required
<b>Z</b>	Student not on roll	Attendance not required
<b>-</b>	All should attend/no mark recorded	No mark
<b>#</b>	School closed to students and staff	Attendance not required