

Attendance policy

Henry David Learning

Woodfield School



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1. Aims

Woodfield School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child the best educational experience possible.

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 pupil 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 pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects 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](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
 - [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
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3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Proprietary body

The Proprietary body 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
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- 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 pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention and reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sandie Cross and can be contacted via sandie@henrydavidlearning.co.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and using the correct codes via Arbor

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school and lessons every day
 - Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45am 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 1 emergency contact number for their child
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- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

Unauthorised absence includes (however, this is not exhaustive):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for Non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes however is recorded as an absence for the session.
- Shopping trips
- Looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Their own or family birthdays
- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the principal - may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have

previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority.

- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

4.2 Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school
- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or call into school personally and speak to the staff
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8.45am
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and provide any medical evidence if requested to support the absence.

(see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

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

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

A pupil 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

The school may send home 'late notes' in order to keep parents/carers informed.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may complete a face to face welfare check at the child's home
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer or Family Support Worker

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via a termly report. We will also make contact where there are concerns about a child's attendance.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as ...being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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 1 week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our website or from the school office. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. See Appendix 2

We will not consider applications for leave during term time:

- At any time in September - this is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class as quickly as possible.
- During assessment and test periods in the school's calendar affecting your child.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best discussed between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support, even involving outside agency support such as the Local Authority Attendance Compliance Team or a Child Family Support Worker.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents/carers are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers 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 principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not 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 an excluded pupil 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school we encourage good attendance through a range of strategies including:

- Letters to parents to stress the importance of good attendance
- Individual certificates presented termly where full attendance (100%) has been gained.
- Celebrate 100% Attendance via letters to parents
- Weekly class attendance shared with all children
- End of year trips
- Ensuring that good attendance is high profile in school through sharing weekly data in celebration assemblies and with class teachers

When attendance falls below expected levels for the school the following early interventions will take place:

1. Courtesy letter to inform that attendance has fallen below the schools target of 97%
2. Medical Letter (if absence is due to consistent illness)
3. Second letter of concern as their attendance has continued to fall below 97% and is now being monitored by school and the attendance team
4. Tutor/class teaching weekly monitoring
5. Pupil attendance matters meeting

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Woodfield School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Proprietary body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

Woodfield School will:

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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

Woodfield School will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils 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

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

Woodfield School will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils 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

8. Deletion from the School register

For any pupil leaving Woodfield School, other than at the end of year 6 parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupils moving from *school*' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of our pupils.

It is crucial that parents/carers keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the principal. At every review, the policy will be approved by the proprietary body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil on part-time timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision

		has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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 pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
Q	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	"Lack of access arrangements"
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil 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 pupil is in

		custody
Y1	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	“Widespread disruption to travel”
Y3	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Part of the school is closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unexpected whole school closure (different from code # for planned closure)
Y5	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Pupil in the criminal justice system
Y6	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Absence due to public health guidance or law
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Holiday absence request

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please read the following notes before completing this form:

- There is no automatic right to take a leave of absence
- All requests will be considered on their own merits
- The power to authorise a leave of absence lies with the principal

Pupil Name:	Tutor Group:
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Reason for Absence:

Reason why visit/trip cannot be made in the school holidays:
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First Day of Absence:
Last Day of Absence:
Number of school days missed:

If the absence is authorised, we will need to know; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The full address of your destination • The name and phone number of a person we can contact if your child does not return on the agreed date

Name of Parent / Carer:

Signature:

Telephone Number:

Date:

Please return the completed form to Woodfield School before making the bookings.

Decision and comments:
Signature of Principal:
Date:

- Please be aware that a Fixed Penalty Notice is likely to be issued if leave of absence is taken without the principal's consent. The penalty is currently £120 per parent/carer per child (reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days)
- There is no right of appeal by parents/carers against a fixed penalty notice.
- If authorised leave is granted, but the pupil does not return to school on the agreed date, the entire absence may be unauthorised. If the child has still not returned after 10 further school days, the child's name may be removed from Woodfield School's roll.
- We may request to see copies of your travel documents to confirm your date of return if a period of leave is granted.