



ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2019



Wallingford School

Attendance Policy

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Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

Our practice is designed to address the issue of raising attendance on an individual, case by case, basis. There are, however, key approaches and practices which the school would wish to adopt. The core principle is that raising levels of attendance should be a concern of all staff, parents and the wider community.

2. Aim

To continue to raise levels of achievement and participation, by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.

3. Objectives

- To keep an accurate and up to date record of students' attendance and punctuality
- To inform and involve parents if there are any attendance and punctuality issues
- To identify the causes of non-attendance and work with parents and any other agencies to resolve the causes
- To reduce absence through non-term time holidays
- To monitor and review the attendance processes
- To give clear information on expected levels of student attendance.

4. The tutor and registration - responsibilities

- Tutors are required to take the register electronically through the SIMS attendance monitor' module at the beginning of each morning, the AM registration opens at 8.40am and closes at 9.10am. Subject teachers will complete the legal PM registration at the start of period 5, each day.
- The SIMS attendance monitor module will enable the school to print a legal document which is the only evidence related to actual attendance permissible in a magistrates court should a prosecution of parents occur
- All teaching staff must give attendance and punctuality a high profile
- Tutors are responsible for collecting notes, both written and electronic, from parents to explain absence and entering the appropriate code into the SIMS attendance programme. (see section 8 for codes)
- All tutors have 'live' attendance data on their classroom computer workstation and can make alterations, updates, and check for patterns of non-attendance.
- REGISTERS ARE TO BE TAKEN IN EVERY LESSON where the teacher/cover supervisor/supply teacher is present
- Subject teachers should notify the form tutor and their Curriculum Team Leader (CTL) of any suspected truancy
- CTLs should, in the first instance, deal with any 'internal' truancy. (Where a student is marked as present in other lessons during the day)



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- Tutors will regularly check attendance data for their group, so they can be proactive in dealing with emerging patterns of poor attendance.
- Heads of House (HoH) will monitor attendance levels within their house and across tutor groups
- Tutors should recognise their responsibility for contacting parents regarding absence and punctuality to help forge home/school links
- Where students are regularly absent or fall below acceptable levels of attendance the Tutor will liaise with the HoH and attendance officer to ensure daily contact is made with parents
- Where there are serious cases the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for attendance and punctuality will work with the relevant HOH and the Home School Link Worker (HSLW) may be allocated to the case. Under certain situations the school may ask the HSLW or any appropriate member of staff to visit the home address to help parents where a student is 'school refusing'.

5. Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

- Absence can be deemed to be authorised (by the school) if:
 - a. Leave has been granted by the school
 - b. The student is unable to attend for reasons of sickness or ill health, or any UNAVOIDABLE absence
 - c. On a day set aside specifically for a religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
- **All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.** *If in doubt tutors should check with their respective HOH*

6. Procedures

- If a student is absent for more than three consecutive days (without a forthcoming explanation) the Form Tutor will contact the parent(s) by telephone or in writing. If the absentee is a student about whom there are already concerns, the HoH, HSLW or main office will make every effort to contact the parent(s) immediately
- Students who are late are monitored at Student Reception
- If a student is regularly late, a detention may be imposed by the HOH:
- All lates/absences will be available daily for each HOH and Tutor
- This is intended to enable the HOH/tutor to identify those students who have been regularly late and for whom a detention should be imposed
- If a student is persistently (or intermittently) late/absent, the tutor/HOH will write to the parents/invite the parents into school and a parenting contract may be put in place
- Parents may be asked to attend an Attendance Panel if there has been no improvement
- If a student returns to school after a period of absence and fails to bring a note, or if the explanation offered by a note is not satisfactory, the tutor will contact the parent/s
- The school office will provide teachers with a daily list of students whose parents have contacted the school to provide a reason for their child's absence



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- The school will continue to make referrals to the County Attendance Team and enlist their support.

7. Promoting Good Attendance

A variety of initiatives will be in operation to support positive attendance such as:

- Attendance Certificates - 100% on a termly basis
- The office holds standard letters regarding attendance problems to be used by the HoH
- Lunchtime detentions may be used instead of, or alongside, after school detentions as these are often more effective in dealing with truancy or lateness.



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8. Attendance Codes

I	Present AM
\	Present PM - Period 5
-	<i>Register not taken</i>
A	<i>Put it in if you know for definite student has truanted your lesson – not to be used for AM or PM - Period 5 registration as this is specific to us (Unauthorised)</i>
B	Educated Off Site
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (Funeral, Family problems etc.)
D	Dual Registration (Student attending other establishment - e.g. College)
E	Excluded
F	Extended Family Holiday (Authorised more than 10 days)
G	Family Holiday (Not authorised or days in excess of agreement)
H	Family Holiday (Authorised)
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments etc)
J	Interview
K	PE code (no PE kit) <i>(used only by PE Department for students who are present in a PE lesson but do not actually take part in the lesson. (Do not override this mark). This will count as a Present mark)</i>
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical / Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence <i>(this is a temporary mark)</i>
O	Unauthorised absence (Not covered by other codes)
P	Approved Sporting activity
Q	Transport – bus arriving late for registration
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late after Registers closed
V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work Experience
X	Attendance NOT required
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll
#	School closed to Pupils and Staff



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9. The 'Penalty Notice System'

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he/she may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school reserves the right to ask the Attendance and Engagement Team to either issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the Attendance and Engagement Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the school's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for school after registration is closed.

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark **or** is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.



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PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the school and a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and school to try and help resolve any issues. All PA cases will be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

10. Texting

From 2nd June 2014 the school will use a SIMS module called 'In Touch' to alert parents/carers of their child's absence. This operates on a 'first absence' basis.

- Parents are contacted asking them to provide us with a mobile, email or home phone number where we can leave a message informing them of their child's absence. We ask parents/carers which form of contact they would prefer
- If the student is not marked as present in the morning registration AND we have not received notification from parent/carer they will be automatically sent a message
- When parent / carer receive this message they can reply to it directly or phone us at the school to give the reason for absence
- We will also contact the parents/carers if the student subsequently arrives at school after we have sent messages.

A message will be sent on the first day of absence. If no reply is received then a phone call will be made to the parent/carer on the 3rd day of absence. If we still receive no contact after 5 days then a letter will be sent asking the parents/carers to provide us with a reason as to why the student has not been in school.

Each HoH will produce a target list of students that they have identified as need to be monitored for attendance. The triggers for attendance intervention are 90% and 85%.