



WETHERBY HIGH SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy applies to students and parents

Reviewing Committee:

Responsible SLT member	-	G King
Delegated policy updater	-	G King
Responsible governor sub-committee	-	Learning and Inclusion
Specific governor advisor (if required)	-	P Sibbons

Publication date: March 2022

Next review date: March 2023

Attendance Policy

There is an intrinsic link between attendance levels and overall attainment. The following policy gives details of the systems which are operated at Wetherby High School to ensure that attendance records are accurate.

(In the following document the terms 'unauthorised absence' and 'unexplained absence' are interchangeable. DCSF uses the former and SIMS uses the latter.)

Expectations of students

Students are expected to attend every day unless they are ill. Students are also expected to be on time for school and each lesson.

Registration begins at 8.40am (Tuesday to Friday) and 9.00am on Monday. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as 'late' in the register. Their name will be collected and sent to the relevant year manager for approval to issue an after-school detention the same day, via text.

If a student arrives in school **after 8.40 am** they must sign in at student reception.

Afternoon registration takes place in academic classes. The lesson begins at 12pm. Any student who has to leave school early (even when they are being picked up by a parent) must sign out at reception. The receptionist will give the student an out of school pass which they should keep with them in case an Attendance Officer or member of the Police stops them to ask why they are out of school.

When a student returns to school after illness they must provide a note from their parents explaining the absence.

Students with 100% attendance will be celebrated in merit assemblies and receive a certificate which will also enter them into a prize draw to win a voucher. Year managers will also celebrate most improved attendance.

Expectations of the Coach/teacher

The role of a coach/teacher is crucial in ensuring the attendance system operates well. The importance of ensuring accuracy in the registers cannot be understated:

- The school has introduced an automated phone call system which will ring or text parents to inform them that their child is absent from school.
- In the event of a fire it is essential that all staff and students are accounted for.
- The Attendance Service uses school registers as part of Court evidence when prosecuting parents who are failing to send their children to school.

The morning and afternoon registers are legal documents that individual members of staff have a duty to record and ensure are accurate. **Due to the importance and legal status of the school register, if a member of staff persistently fails to take or accurately mark the register the matter will become disciplinary.**

The following passages give details of the expectations of Coach/teacher

Coach/teachers are expected to:

- Set an example to students by being punctual - teachers should be in their room ready to begin registration by 8.35am each morning/8.55am Monday morning.
- Use the SIMS system to record the register each morning. When taking the register it is advisable to use the weekly view as it will allow staff to check if any errors have occurred in the pm register. E.g. if a student was present in the previous morning but absent in the afternoon the year manager should question the student about this.
- Monitor and deal with unauthorised absences on a weekly basis

Unauthorised Absences

When a student returns following an absence, coaches are expected to ask the student for a note to explain their absence and notify the office and they will **amend the register accordingly**.

- If the parents of a student call the office to explain their child's absence, the office will amend the register.
- If the student has a note explaining their absence this should be handed in to student reception.

Role of parents

Parents are expected to ensure their children go to school every day. Parents are also expected to inform the school every day by phone when their child is absent.

In addition, parents are expected to write a note for their child that will be given to student reception on their return to explain their absence. If a parent fails to inform the school within two weeks of a reason for their child's absence, they will be sent a letter by the office staff formally requesting an explanation.

Parents should then contact the school office by phone or letter to inform the school of the reason. If no reason is provided, the absence will be recorded by the office staff as 'parentally condoned truancy'.

The school has adopted a term time holiday policy which is being operated by all schools in the North East area. Term time holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Any parent requesting that their child misses school should write to the member of SLT with responsibility for attendance to request permission.

Role of Period 4 teaching staff

All teaching staff are required to take an accurate afternoon register. As stated previously, the morning and afternoon registers are legal documents that individual members of staff have a duty to record and ensure are accurate. **As stated previously, if a member of staff persistently fails to take or accurately mark the register the matter will become disciplinary**. (As also stated previously, the vast majority of our registers are completed on time and are accurate).

Teaching staff should ensure that their register list is accurate. Any class changes (i.e. students moving class) should be emailed to the school office.

Role of the Office Staff

The office staff have a key role in ensuring the smooth operation of the system.

The office staff will send a text to parents if a pupil is off school and we have not received any communication regarding their absence from the parent/carer.

A text will also be sent out to parents/carers if the school has to close for any reason and school will ensure that all pupils are able to get home safely if the closure has to occur during the school day.

The receptionist is expected to log the calls that parents make explaining a student's absence and inform the Year Manager. The admin support staff will amend the register for the day, for the student, after checking the voicemail system.

The office staff will automatically send a letter to the parents of any student who has an unexplained absence which took place over two weeks ago. The parents will be given one week to contact the office staff by note or phone. If the parents do contact the office, the admin staff will amend the unexplained absence accordingly. If the parents do not contact the school, the office staff will send out a further letter confirming that the absence has been recorded as 'parentally condoned truancy' and they will amend the register accordingly.

The office staff will monitor the registers each morning and afternoon in all lessons. They will log when a member of staff fails to take a register and will immediately email the member of staff to request that they complete their register.

If this happens on three occasions, the member of SLT with responsibility for attendance will contact the member of staff. If the matter persists it will become a disciplinary matter.

Summary

Ensuring that we have an effective and efficient attendance system relies on all staff, pupils and parents working together to ensure the system operates effectively. Everyone has a key role to play.

WHS day by day policy

Absence	Action	Outcome	Staff
Day 1	<p>If no reason received: Telephone call / text to key contact</p> <p>Ask for expected return date and for daily updates if absence more than one day).</p> <p>Challenge parents Explain what they will miss and they are expected to catch up in their own time. Being off school is not acceptable</p>	<p>Parent provides acceptable reason – authorised absence.</p> <p>Reason provided is unacceptable - unauthorised absence</p> <p>Unable to contact family – check if child is identified as vulnerable – refer to Safeguarding Lead.</p>	Year Manager
Day 2	<p>If no response at day 1 – repeat above – if no contact then tries emergency contacts. List on SIMS try all numbers.</p>	<p>If contact made – as above YM decides if absence should be authorised or not.</p> <p>If no contact made refer to Attendance Lead & check with coach / school friends consider home visit.</p>	Year Manager
Day 3	<p>If no response at days 1 & 2. Carry out home visit. Plus, note delivered.</p> <p>If parents have responded but absence is unauthorised – Letter 1</p>	<p>Home visit – if no response - note – if appropriate check with neighbours.</p> <p>Parents provide evidence for absence then authorised if they don't unauthorised.</p>	Year Manager Attendance Administrator - Letter
Day 4	<p>Telephone call / text to key contacts</p> <p>If no contact from family or emergency contacts</p>	<p>Check with coach/Safeguarding/Senior Leader for Inclusion to see if known and ask for advice from Senior Leader for Inclusion.</p>	Year manager
Day 5	<p>Telephone call / text to key contacts</p> <p>If no contact from family or reason provided is unacceptable - letter 2</p>	<p>Penalty Notice Warning (if appropriate)</p>	Year Manager Attendance Administrator - Letter
Day 7	<p>Telephone call / text to key contacts</p>	<p>No contact a) leave note b) speak to neighbours</p>	Year Manager

	If no contact – home visit If contact but absence unauthorised	If continued unauthorised – Attendance Service for Penalty Notice Fine (if appropriate)	
Day 10	Telephone call / text to key contact Continuous absence – no reason provided	Notify Local Authority	Attendance Administrator /Senior Leader for Inclusion

Guide to WHS Targeted Work per Attendance Figure

%	Responsibility	Action
94% - 96%	Year Manager <i>Coach Inclusion Manager Attendance Officer</i>	Review attendance – consider is the absence authorised (is it one period of absence of several individual days - look for patterns) If authorised - monitor. If unauthorised – write to parents advising them of attendance level and of concerns / expectations and possible next actions.
92% - 94%	Year Manager <i>Coach Inclusion Manager Attendance Officer</i>	Review attendance – consider if authorised – is evidence being provided? How many times? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In school meeting with Year manager and coach. 2. Above with Year manager and Senior Leader for Inclusion 3. Above with Senior Leader for Inclusion and Assistant Headteacher 4. Above with appropriate governor and Headteacher <i>if in school not possible, meeting at home.</i> If unauthorised has it reached the threshold for Penalty Notice Warning?
90% - 92%	EPOSS/JW <i>Year Manager Coach Inclusion Manager Attendance Officer</i>	Review attendance – consider if absence is authorised – review reasons and pattern. If they are subject to CP plan or other safeguarding concerns raised then raise with child’s Social Worker. If low attendance is authorised due to behaviour have all inclusion options been considered? Consequences in school/inclusion room etc.
Below 89.9%	Safe guarding /EPOSS/JW <i>Year Manager Coach Inclusion Manager</i>	Less than 90% attendance a child = Persistent Absentee and absence requires further investigation and possible statutory intervention depending on reason for absence.

	<i>Attendance Officer</i>	Long term illness should have been referred to HTS; exclusions to Exclusions Service – possible referral to NRC depending on length of single exclusion.
--	---------------------------	--

Summary

Ensuring that we have an effective and efficient attendance system relies on all staff, pupils and parents working together to ensure the system operates effectively. Everyone has a key role to play.