



Wade Deacon High School

Wade Deacon Trust

Exceptional Values

Exceptional Learning & Teaching

Exceptional Achievement

ATTENDANCE & LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY



**Innovation Enterprise Academy
Wade Deacon High School**

Policy & Procedure Number:

Date of Governing Body Review: Autumn 2017

Next Review Due: 2018

School Link: Mr M. Roberts

Aims

- To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone in the Schools and the broader school community;
- To develop and implement an effective Attendance Policy that touches all aspects of school life, and relates directly to the schools' values, ethos and curriculum. To these ends staff particularly strive:
 - i. to encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others, i.e. have a positive attitude to life-long learning;
 - ii. to value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavors.
- This Attendance Policy and its implementation is intended to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly by the implementation of specific measures, e.g.
 - i. registering pupils accurately and efficiently;
 - ii. setting attendance targets for individual pupils and year groups;
 - iii. contacting parents the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
 - iv. regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality;
 - iv. reporting school attendance statistics to parents, Local Authority (LA) and DfE as appropriate.
- To reinforce good attendance and to encourage improved attendance by using such measures as:
 - i. informal comments from pupil support and subject staff;
 - ii. by the more formal issue of attendance certificates in tutor time and assemblies;
 - iii. by the use of rewards at regular intervals.
- To monitor and evaluate this policy and its implementation by, amongst other means, rigorously collecting and analysing data about attendance to check our progress against measurable outcomes, e.g. National and LA-level targets.

Rationale

- Good habits of attendance and punctuality will assist to develop self-discipline and responsibility in preparation for future employment.

- Through monitoring attendance, staff can ensure the safety and academic progress of each pupil.
- Regular attendance promotes the effective and continuous learning of all pupils.
- Regular attendance promotes positive friendships and well-being.

Refer to policies: - Behaviour for Learning, Learning and Teaching and Child Protection policies are available on request.

General guidelines for checking pupils' attendance

- When a pupil is absent, the Attendance Officer will telephone home that morning to establish the reason why.
- If a pupil is absent and the Attendance Officer is unable to contact parents the Home School Liaison Officer will make a home visit for specific identified target groups.
- If absence continues or a pattern is seen to be developing the Progress Leader and Home School Liaison Officer should be alerted.
- The EWO will work with the Home School Liaison Officer inviting parents into school for an attendance surgery meeting when a pupil's attendance falls below government guidelines and causes concern.
- If truancy is detected the parents/ guardian should be informed by telephone or letter.
- Where the school based strategies are deemed inadequate in combating truancy or poor attendance the Educational Welfare Service should be informed by the Home School Liaison Officer with the Progress Leaders knowledge via the official referral form.
- If a pupil is late for two registrations then they will be placed on school detention, either with their Personal Tutor or Progress Leader. Notification will be sent by post to parents, informing them of the date and the duration of the detention or notice may be given directly to the pupil in their organiser.
- A pupil is deemed late if they are not present at lines when the school starts at 8.40am.
- If a pupil arrives at school after 9.30am they will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence.
- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance each term will receive a certificate from the Progress Leader.
- Pupils who have completed a whole academic year without absence will be rewarded.
- If your child is absent from school through illness the absence will be authorised with a covering note from parents on the day they return to school. If your child is being monitored by the Educational Welfare Service or by the Attendance Officer at Wade Deacon medical verification must be provided in order for the absence to be authorised.
- Parents and carers are asked to contact the school on the first morning of absence by 9.00am either by phone or Email and contact each day the absence continues.
- Absences of 10 sessions or more will not be authorised unless medical verification is provided in the form of an appointment card, prescription counter foil, doctor's note or packaging for medication.
- At any point during an absence the Home School Liaison Officer may visit in order to satisfy safeguarding regulation and offer support where necessary.

Procedures to Promote Attendance, Punctuality and to Combat Truancy

Truancy from School: Is staying away from school for any reason other than:

- Illness of the pupil
- When the parents have obtained the school's prior permission by providing a detailed explanation for a request for absence in order for the School to determine if the absence will be authorised.

Note that truancy is often condoned by parents, but legally, it is still truancy. The sanctions are will be in-line with the schools' Behaviour for Learning policy.

The investigation of absence and truancy is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer who will report to; The Home School Liaison Officer, Progress Leader, Personal Tutor and Education Welfare Officer.

PUNCTUALITY:

Note that pupils who are not present in lines or in personal tutor rooms before the 8:40am bell will be marked as late. We understand that there may be occasions when pupils will be late for school due to unavoidable reasons. If this is the case, we ask that this is supported with a note or phone call from parents or guardians.

Late arrival to school results in an immediate break time detention where the student completes a questionnaire targeting the reasons for their lateness which is then recorded by the student's Personal Tutor. Students who fail to attend the detention or who do not complete the questionnaire, will then attend a 30 minute detention after school on the following day. Failure to attend these prescribed detentions will lead to a Standards Detention of 1 hour after school on a Friday where relevant pupils will be escorted from Period 5 to the Main Hall by a member of the school's SLT.

PERSONAL TUTOR (PASTORAL STAFF):

Personal Tutors and Progress Leaders must enforce this policy rigidly. If a pupil is absent without explanation when the register is called, the Attendance Officer should contact the parents the same day wherever possible. The absence should also be followed up with the parent to ensure that a written note is received explaining the absence. Where no reply is received, a further letter should be sent from The Attendance Officer to the parents requesting an explanation for the pupil's absence.

SUBJECT TEACHERS:

When a pupil is missing from their lesson for no apparent reason subject teachers should inform the Attendance Officer and Progress Leader who will follow the procedures outlined under *General Guidelines*, so that the pupil's absence can be further investigated. Subject teachers should monitor their class registers to check for patterns of irregular attendance. Subject teachers can also contribute to the reduction of unauthorised absence by delivering interesting and engaging lessons and insisting on punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils.

POLICE:

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the police now have powers to remove truants found in public places and to return them either to their schools or a place of safety designated by the LA.

Internal Truancy: Is either, registering and then leaving school, or, missing particular lessons.

- A register should be marked by the class teacher in every lesson. Subject Leader should check that this is done. The Attendance Officer should check the missing register report throughout the day and report any registers that have not been completed.
- The Attendance Officer should check the post registration truancy report throughout the day. All incidents where pupils receive an absence mark during the day should be checked with the subject teacher, Progress Leader and Personal Tutor.
- The Personal Tutor should check the register from the previous day to see if there were any incidences of absent marks for lessons. If internal truancy is discovered, then the Personal Tutor should take this up with the pupil; inform the Attendance Officer and Progress Leader.
- Persistent offenders will be sanctioned in-line with the Behaviour for Learning policy.

Progress Leaders should:

Liaise with the Attendance Officer and Personal Tutors, to ensure that the system is working and organise a full year attendance check where it is deemed appropriate. Look for patterns of non attendance, internal and external truancy in consultation with the Attendance Officer.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

All children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly. In addition to statutory obligations parents have all signed the Home-School Agreement; a section of which describes

the agreed responsibilities of the parents: The Home-School Liaison and Agreement Policy is available upon request.

THE PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

To help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents are requested:

- To ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually;
- To notify the School if their child cannot attend for any reason with a phone call to the school on the first day of absence; this is for the child's safety as well as administrative reasons;
- To work with the School and Education Welfare Service to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence;
- To ensure they obtain 'leave of absence' for their child if required during term time in exceptional circumstances only.
- Take an interest in their child's school work;
- Support the School in its efforts to control poor behaviour;

PUPILS:

- Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school and at the start of lessons.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence, e.g. bullying, racism, personal issues etc.
- **Pupils will pass on absence notification from parents to their tutor.**

Local Authority (LA) & EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE (EWS):

Prosecution. The LA has a statutory responsibility to ensure that a parent of a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school and attends regularly. If a parent fails to do this the LA may bring prosecution under the Education Act (1996). As a parent you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly and is punctual. If you fail to ensure this you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence. You may find yourself issued with a penalty notice.

Penalty Notice The LA in conjunction with the School may issue a Penalty Notice if a child has 10 or more unauthorised sessions where the pupil's attendance is causing concern and, or below 90%, if the pupil has been excluded from school and is found in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion, late after the register has closed or has holidays in term time. The Penalty Notice is £60 per child for each parent. The fine is to be paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the fine and the amount is doubled to £120 to be paid within 28 days of the initial notice. Non-payment of fines can lead to prosecution under the Education Act (1996).

THE GOVERNING BODY:

The Governing Body is legally responsible for many aspects of school management including the attendance register and so it is registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the Principal manages the day-to-day running of the School and in so doing takes responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy. The School will ensure that the register is marked with the standardised codes in accordance with the 2006 registration regulations. A copy of the registration regulations is available on request

Initiatives to Improve Attendance Rates:

The School has considered initiatives that are best for the School and always takes into account a pupil's individual circumstances, e.g. setting reward schemes such as certificates, for 100% attendance or effort to attend. Other helpful initiatives include:

- Implementing first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge. It is hoped that this sends a clear signal to pupils and parents that absence is a matter of concern and will be followed up;
- Encouraging attendance checks, scheduled or unscheduled, which is effective in monitoring post registration truancy;
- Having a senior member of staff responsible for attendance;
- The introduction of breakfast clubs;

The introduction of mentoring:

Learning Mentors are school-based employees who help identify and support pupils by early intervention and by helping them overcome problems inside and outside of school, leaving teachers more free time to teach. The role of the Mentor includes: Contributing to assessment of pupils entering or returning to school; after periods of long term absence an appropriate reintegration package will be discussed between all parties.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:

We will consult with the whole school community to develop the school attendance policies.

PUPILS:

1. The degree to which the social inclusion targets have been met – these include,
 - a. pupil achievement, e.g. increase in attendance over time;
 - b. the numbers of fixed-period and/or permanent exclusions;
2. Any improvements in the support infrastructure for disruptive and disaffected pupils and those responsible for teaching them;
3. The number, frequency or extent of incidents of poor behaviour in school;

4. The rate of reintegration into mainstream education of pupils who have been out of school;
5. The incidences of bullying;
6. Any pertinent feedback from pupil voice, this may take the form of questionnaires such as moods and feelings and Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires (SDQ).

OUTSIDE AGENCIES & LA:

7. The instigation of effective links with LA's behaviour support plans;
8. The effectiveness of a partnership approach, making full and appropriate use of the experience and expertise of all agencies with relevant skills, e.g. the Education Welfare and Educational Psychology Services, voluntary organisations and the private sector wherever appropriate;

BUDGET:

9. Any appropriate adjustments in budget allocation to reflect changing needs;
10. The amount of school budget (expressed as £ and %) spent on initiatives which affect attendance rates;

PLANNING:

11. The consideration of attendance issues in development planning (to include behaviour policy). Planning should have a clear implementation strategy and statement of objectives and targets, together with performance indicators against which the effectiveness of provision can be measured;
12. The effects on school ethos/atmosphere related to attendance and related policies;

STAFF/INSET:

13. Involvement by all staff in INSET courses relating to attendance issues;
14. Senior Leadership involvement in attendance issues;
15. Any improvements in the support infrastructure for disruptive and disaffected pupils and those responsible for teaching them;

INDEPENDENT REPORTS:

16. Analysis and publication of OFSTED/HMI/LA reports.

Categories of Authorised Absence:

For all absence known in advance pupils should be encouraged to give advance notice and to supply written evidence, such as dental appointment cards, a letter of invitation for interviews, etc. In all cases tutors should consider criteria such as the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the pupil's overall attendance pattern, etc.

Illness, medical and dental appointments:

Pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools and EWOs can consult the School Health Service, or the pupil's GP and medical verification may be sought.

Interviews with prospective employers, or for a place at another school (including entrance examinations):

If the interview takes place during Year 11 and the School is satisfied it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as 'approved educational activity.'

Dual Registration:

Where a pupil is dually registered at two institutions, e.g. a mainstream school and a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or special school, the pupil is registered as having an approved education activity while they are attending the other institution. A similar situation arises whilst traveller children are traveling; during this time they should enrol with another school. N.B. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not acceptable alternatives to attendance at school.

Public performances:

The Local Authority must license a pupil aged 5 – 16 to take part in a public performance. Licensed participation should therefore clearly be treated as authorised absence.

Birth of a child to a pupil:

A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed up 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child; any other absence related to the birth should normally be treated as unauthorised.

Approved educational activities off-site:

The following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

- Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas;
- Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;
- Interviews with prospective employers or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (Year 11 only);
- Link courses, whereby pupils attend an FE college for part of the time;
- Pupils receiving part of their tuition off-site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school, i.e. a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration. This can include special tuition for dyslexic children and children with medical issues that remain on the school roll that receive home tuition.
- Approved work experience placements.

Employment:

While children are of compulsory school age, they may not be employed full-time. They are; however, free to undertake a range of part-time jobs. All children of compulsory school age who choose to work part-time must be registered with the Local Authority. For further details, contact your local Education Welfare Service.

Early Leaving:

A child enrolled in a school remains on the register until the last Friday in June in the year of their 16th birthday and **cannot leave at Easter or the last week of May as was previously the case**. This does not necessarily mean that the child must be on site full-time every day until the leaving date.

Leave of Absence

1. Aims

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which the School monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. The School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence

is not taken in school time. Absence during term time for any reasons interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

2. The Law

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3. Leave of Absence during Term Time

- (i) The School will not routinely grant permission for leave of absence to be taken in term time and discourage parents/carers making an application for leave except in “special or exceptional circumstances”.
- (ii) The School will only consider leave of absence for one period of absence within an academic year.

- (iii) The School will not grant permission except when special/exceptional circumstances exist for leave to be taken in term time:
 - During transition time when a pupil is settling into school.
 - During preparation time for examinations.
 - During school and public examination periods and in the period of time surrounding course work deadline dates for All Year Groups.
 - The pupil already has unauthorised absence.

4. Special and Exceptional Circumstances

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher may consider that the following circumstances are “special” or “exceptional”.

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by evidence from the employer. This will only be considered with excellent attendance historically. (Last 38 weeks)
- A family member is seriously ill

- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and leave may promote the child's well-being

5. Additional Information

- Parents/carers may be required to attend an interview with the designated member of staff to discuss their request for term time leave.
- Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for leave in term time within 10 school days of the date of the application.

When leave of absence during term time is agreed by the school, the absence will be recorded as 'C' on the school attendance register. This will mean that the absence has been recorded as authorised absence on the school attendance register.

If the leave of absence during term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'O'. This will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is taken out of school for leave of absence during term time without the prior permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority will commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.