



WOODFIELD ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ratified on 5th December 2017

Signed (Chair of Governors)..... Date.....

Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole Woodfield community, thus enabling and encouraging all on roll at the Academy to achieve excellence.

To enable the pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time every day that the Academy is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable, as poor attendance disadvantages pupils.

The gates open at 8.30 am and the school day begins at 8.45 am. Registers are taken at 8.45 am and must be closed by 9.05 am in the morning session and 1.45 pm in the afternoon. It is vital that all children attend the registration room. The school day ends at 3.15 pm.

Rationale

Parent/carers of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (Section 444) to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be referred to the Worcestershire County Council Senior Education Welfare Officer for Prosecution, if the issues around the non-school attendance cannot be resolved by the use of Woodfield attendance strategies and staff.

Attendance matters and statistics will be regularly reviewed by the Head teacher and members of the leadership team.

Woodfield aims to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all pupils.

Attendance is an Ofsted trigger: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils and the standards thereby achieved by the Academy. Attendance also underpins the five Every Child Matters Outcomes:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

Aims:

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at Woodfield.
- To improve pupils' attainment through good attendance.
- To recognise that good time keeping and attendance at school is a key requirement for good progress in learning.
- To maintain effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance.
- To investigate any underlying causes for poor attendance.
- To inform parents in order that they may cooperate with the systems and procedures of the policy.

To encourage parents:

- To ensure their child attends school regularly
- To ensure their child leaves in plenty of time to arrive on time.
- To support and encourage their child by attending parents' evenings and other events.

- To contact their child's tutor to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- To work in collaboration with Woodfield to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.

The Deputy Head teacher is responsible for the operational management of the attendance policy. The Leadership Team and all teaching staff will work to raise the priority given to attendance.

Procedures for registering pupils and categorising absence

Schools have a statutory duty to keep two legal documents, an admissions roll and an attendance register which must be kept accurately. Documents to refer to for statutory requirements and guidance in regards to completing and maintaining attendance register:

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Absence and Attendance Codes DCSF
- Keeping Pupil Registers DCSF.

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

On each occasion, school must record whether a child is 'present', 'absent' or 'present at an approved educational activity'.

Registers must be taken at the start of morning registration and at the start of afternoon registration. No pupil should be marked present unless they are actually in the room when the register is called, information has been received from a staff member informing the registering teacher where they are, or he/she has been given permission to be absent by the registering teacher.

Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with statutory legal requirements and the Government guidelines.

Spaces must not be left in the register; it is the initial responsibility of the tutor to ensure the register is complete.

All registers will be checked and absences monitored on a weekly basis. This is a collective responsibility involving: tutors, Heads of Key Stage, Attendance officer and the Education Welfare Officer.

If a pupil is absent from school their parent/carer should contact the attendance officer at Woodfield on the first day of absence and maintain contact throughout the absence.

In exceptional circumstances, Woodfield will request further evidence of a pupil's illness. This request will be put in writing to the parent/carer.

Parents/carers are advised to make appointments for doctors, dentist or opticians outside of school hours where possible.

Lateness

Pupils must attend registration on time to be given a present mark.

Where a pupil arrives after the register has closed, 9.05am and 1.15pm, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence and code 'U' will be used in the register.

It is the initial responsibility of the tutor to address the issue of persistent lateness with the pupil and their parent/carer.

Persistent lateness should be notified to the Attendance Officer who will issue a letter to parents stressing the importance of good time keeping and regular attendance.

Children who arrive at school after the gates have been locked will need to use the main entrance and be registered via the Inventory System.

Poor Attendance

Those pupils whose attendance falls below 95% will be closely monitored and further action considered. Between 95% and 90% it is the responsibility of the Tutor to discuss the matter with the pupil and if appropriate the parent/carer in consultation with the Deputy Head and administrative staff. 90% and below further intervention will be required. All intervention must be documented.

Recognition of a pattern of absence is vital. Liaison between tutor, Heads of Key Stage and Education Welfare Officer with support from the attendance officer will ensure a holistic approach to the cause for concern. Early involvement of parent/carer is paramount.

Woodfield has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding a pupil's attendance at the Academy:

- Letters to parent/carer
- Meetings with parent/carers and pupils to discuss any issues
- Home visits
- School mentoring
- Parenting contracts
- Pastoral support plan
- Individual educational support plan
- Pre prosecution meeting County/parent/carer/child/school.

If there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance following the schools' interventions, the Academy will refer the matter to the Worcestershire County Council Senior Education Welfare Officer for Prosecutions for advice and possible legal action.

The legal action to be considered in full consultation with Woodfield:

- To prosecute a parent/carer for failing to ensure that their child regularly attends school to the statutory requirement through the Education Act 1996, section 444(1 or 1A)
- Application to Magistrates Court for an Education Supervision Order – to ensure that the child of compulsory school age and registered at a school attends regularly
- Application to Magistrates Court for a Parenting Order – to enforce regular attendance following a successful prosecution by the Local Authority
- Penalty Notice issued for an instant monetary fine - for irregular attendance.

Family Holiday requests during term time.

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they deem it to be exceptional circumstances.

Only the Headteacher or Deputy at Woodfield has the discretion to authorise leave and this will be considered on an individual basis.

The Headteacher or Deputy will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Parents/carers cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right.

Parents can be fined for taking their children on holiday during term time without the consent of the school.

Procedure

- In the interests of safeguarding, parents/carers should complete a Request for Leave form and submit this to the Deputy Head at least six weeks prior to the requested absence.
- Woodfield will respond in writing to the request within a fortnight excluding school holiday periods.
- Parents/carers should be made aware that any unauthorised absence in respect of leave will be referred to the Worcestershire County Council Education Investigation Service for Prosecution, for appropriate intervention.
- School registers will be marked as follows:
- Pupil should be marked H (authorised absence) for the agreed period of leave
- Pupil should be marked G (unauthorised absence) if the period of leave has not been authorised or for days taken in excess of an agreed period.

Travellers

There is provision within the legislation to permit Travellers to remove their child/children from full time education whilst they are travelling, however this can only be done after the completion of 200 sessions (100 days) in an academic year. The parent/carer must attend school and discuss the pending period of absence with the Head prior to removing the child. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise this absence or not. Should permission be granted 'T' will be entered into the pupil register system.

Maintaining good attendance

The school aims to achieve and celebrate success in terms of good attendance. Praise, Certificates and Rewards will take place weekly, termly and yearly for individual attendance. At the end of the school year, those children who have achieved 100% attendance will be awarded a reward in recognition of their success.

This policy will be reviewed annually.