

Policy Title – Attendance Management Policy	Reviewed: July 2024
School Section: Woodhouse Grove	Reviewer: AMC/ELN
Audience: Whole School	Revision: 1.2

Attendance Management Policy

Introduction

Woodhouse Grove recognises that a high level of attendance is an essential foundation to students achieving positive outcomes and should therefore be seen as everyone’s responsibility. Woodhouse Grove School’s Senior Attendance Champion is Mr Anthony Cadman (Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL) who sits on the Senior Leadership team.

DfE (Department for Education) Guidance “Working together to improve school attendance” lays out the importance of attendance including legal aspects that all parties should be aware of.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

(DfE ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ August 2024)

Woodhouse Grove School wants all of its students to aspire to 100% attendance and the support of parents and carers is vital in achieving this. Where a student’s attendance falls below 90%, within the education sector this is seen as “persistent absence”.

Attendance at school below 90% is the equivalent of missing half a year of schooling between years 7 and 11. The impact on progress is measurable. Evidence shows that a student’s progress and attainment is adversely affected if their attendance falls below 90%; national statistics indicate that if a student's attendance drops below 90% their GCSE attainment is likely to drop by an entire grade.

When a student is absent from school there is an impact on their learning. However, there is also in very many cases an impact on the learning of other students. If time in lessons, or teacher preparation time, is spent on photocopying notes, finding missing resources, etc. then it is not being spent on the students in front of them.

Of course, students experience health challenges to various degrees at various times; we will continue to be supportive and sympathetic in those cases and work with the families. From time-to-time students and families get presented with exceptional opportunities and we will operate our discretion through written application to the Headmaster. For the avoidance of doubt, an exceptional opportunity does not include getting away early on a Friday; attending a sporting event, pop concert or birthday events.

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Woodhouse Grove School also does all it can to prepare students for adult working life beyond school by promoting good attendance and punctuality.

1. Absence through Illness

Where a student needs to miss school due to ill health, parents are asked to:

- Adopt a sensible approach to illness. Only keep students off school where it is absolutely necessary. Using the guidance provided by the NHS "[Is my child too ill for school?](#)" can provide parents with useful information.
- Contact the school by telephone (01132502477) or email wgsadminoffice@woodhousegrove.co.uk informing the school of the reason for their absence, and if possible, the expected date of return.
- Produce medical evidence when requested (e.g., a doctor's note) to explain the reasons for prolonged absence or repeated absences.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify School if their child is going to be absent and the school expects parents to do so between 8am and 9am on the day of absence. If a student is not present for morning registration and the school has received no communication from home, a message will be sent via text to the parents by 10.30am.

2. Authorised Absence

The Department for Education has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. The main areas where the school will authorise absence are given below:

1. Illness

Where schools accept that a pupil is ill, they must authorise the absence but can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.

2. Appointments

Dental and medical appointments are authorised absences but, where possible, such appointments should be made out of school hours.

3. Religious observance

In line with Local Authority recommendations, Woodhouse Grove School will afford children regardless of their faith up to 3 days of authorised absence per academic year for religious and cultural observance.

4. Exceptional circumstances / unavoidable causes

Authorised absence will be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement.

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Advance permission for absence from School at any time will be given only for exceptional circumstances. If absence is necessary, a letter of request should be addressed to the Headmaster. **We respectfully request that parents adhere to school term dates and avoid booking holidays during term time.**

3. Unauthorised Absence

If a student is absent from School without a valid reason, this will be classed as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence is viewed by the school as a significant issue.

When parents decide to keep their child(ren) away from school without authorisation from the school, this will be classed as unauthorised absence; and will be recorded as such in the register.

Any student found guilty of truancy during the school day will be dealt with in the first instance by their Head of Year and/or an Assistant Head. Major acts of truancy will be dealt with by the Deputy Head.

Students who truant from lessons should expect to receive a detention. Those who leave the site without permission can expect a more severe sanction. Parents will always be informed if their child has taken unauthorised leave of absence and may be required to attend a meeting in school to discuss the situation.

4. Punctuality & Registration (Mornings)

Punctual attendance at school is essential for student progress. Students who are late for school miss valuable learning time and develop bad habits resulting in their being unprepared for the world of work. Punctuality is closely monitored by the pastoral team and students who are identified as late for school, or lessons, without good reason three times within a week can expect to receive a detention. If this becomes a recurring issue, parents will be contacted to seek support and collaborate in improving a student's punctuality.

All students must be present for registration with their Form Tutor at 8.35am. They will also be registered by their teachers at the start of each lesson during the day. If a student misses morning registration with their Form Tutor, they must go straight to the School Office upon arrival in School to sign in.

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Monitoring Student Attendance

At Woodhouse Grove we recognise our duty to proactively manage and improve attendance. We fulfill this duty through daily attendance monitoring and by looking at patterns of absence over time.

Persistent Absentees

The Department for Education has changed the definition of ‘Persistent Absence’ to deal with the reality of pupil absenteeism in schools and its impact on their learning. The Department has reduced the threshold at which a pupil is defined as ‘Persistently Absent’ to 10 per cent. (This is the equivalent to a child missing one day of school a fortnight.) Pupils whose attendance is below 90 per cent are now officially classed as ‘Persistent Absentees’ and as such the School is obliged to contact the parents if their child’s attendance drops below that figure.

Attendance figures for all students will be looked at on a half termly basis to ensure that patterns of absence are investigated, and intervention is put in place where concerns remain. The School will refer to the Woodhouse Grove School Pupil Attendance Concern Flowchart (see Appendix 1) and decide upon actions based on the relevant information and individual circumstances of the pupil.

Stage 1

Attendance 90% - 85%

If the reason is not clear a member of pastoral staff will call or email the parents and log the explanation on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System). The Head of Year or the relevant Pastoral Support Lead will discuss student’s circumstances with parents and the agreement of an Attendance Monitoring plan including any support. Monitoring and attendance targets will be put in place. Additional support and / or sanctions applied as necessary. A letter will be sent to the parents of the pupil and recorded on CPOMS under the absence/Attendance category.

This will be reviewed after 4 weeks, and the Pupil Attendance Concern Flowchart will be used to guide decision making based on the circumstances of the individual pupil. The decision reached will be recorded along with the reasons for the decision and further communication will occur with the pupil and parents.

Stage 2

Failure to meet targets set in Stage 1 Monitoring or Attendance is between 85% - 70%

If the reason is clear and the parents/students are engaging with us (and, where appropriate, have provided a medical certificate), the pastoral team member will contact them to explore updates and review the support in place.

Where it is a new or ongoing concern the members of the pastoral staff (including the Head of Year) will arrange a meeting with the parents to explore factors impacting attendance and options for support. This will be recorded on CPOMS. The school will consider amendments to the student’s academic and co-curricular programme at school.

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In Y11 & Y13 this may include withdrawal from, or deferment of, public examinations. Agreement of a high-priority attendance improvement plan. Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support and / or sanctions applied as necessary.

A letter will be sent to the parents of the pupil and recorded on CPOMS under the Absence/Attendance category.

This will be reviewed after 4 weeks, and the Pupil Attendance Concern Flowchart will be used to guide decision making based on the circumstances of the individual pupil. The decision reached will be recorded along with the reasons for the decision and further communication will occur with the pupil and parents.

Stage 3

Failure to meet targets set in Stage 2 Monitoring or Attendance between 50-70%

In addition to the Attendance Monitoring and regular (at least half termly) recorded contact from a Head of Year or Pastoral Support Lead detailed above, a Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of the pastoral team must complete one home visit per term. In these instances, a Pupil Attendance Improvement Plan (See Appendix 2) would be devised, and the school would explore internal support from the school and work with external support services where appropriate support can be accessed. Any meetings that take place would involve all relevant professionals, including the Senior Attendance Champion, pastoral staff from the school and parents to share updates and review ongoing support.

In addition to the actions outlined in Stage 2 & 3, careful consideration will be given to a pupil repeating an academic year. There may also be a review of the pupil's place in the school, in accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions.

Where a pupil has been through Stages 1 to 3, then improved their attendance, only for it to decline again, it is at the discretion of senior pastoral staff to decide which stage of the process the pupil should be placed upon, involving pupil and parents accordingly.

The Headmaster will be given oversight of all pupils in stage 2 & 3.

Other relevant policies

This guidance should be read in conjunction with other School policies including the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Mental Health Policy, Behaviour Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND).

This policy also draws on specific guidance and material from the following publications:

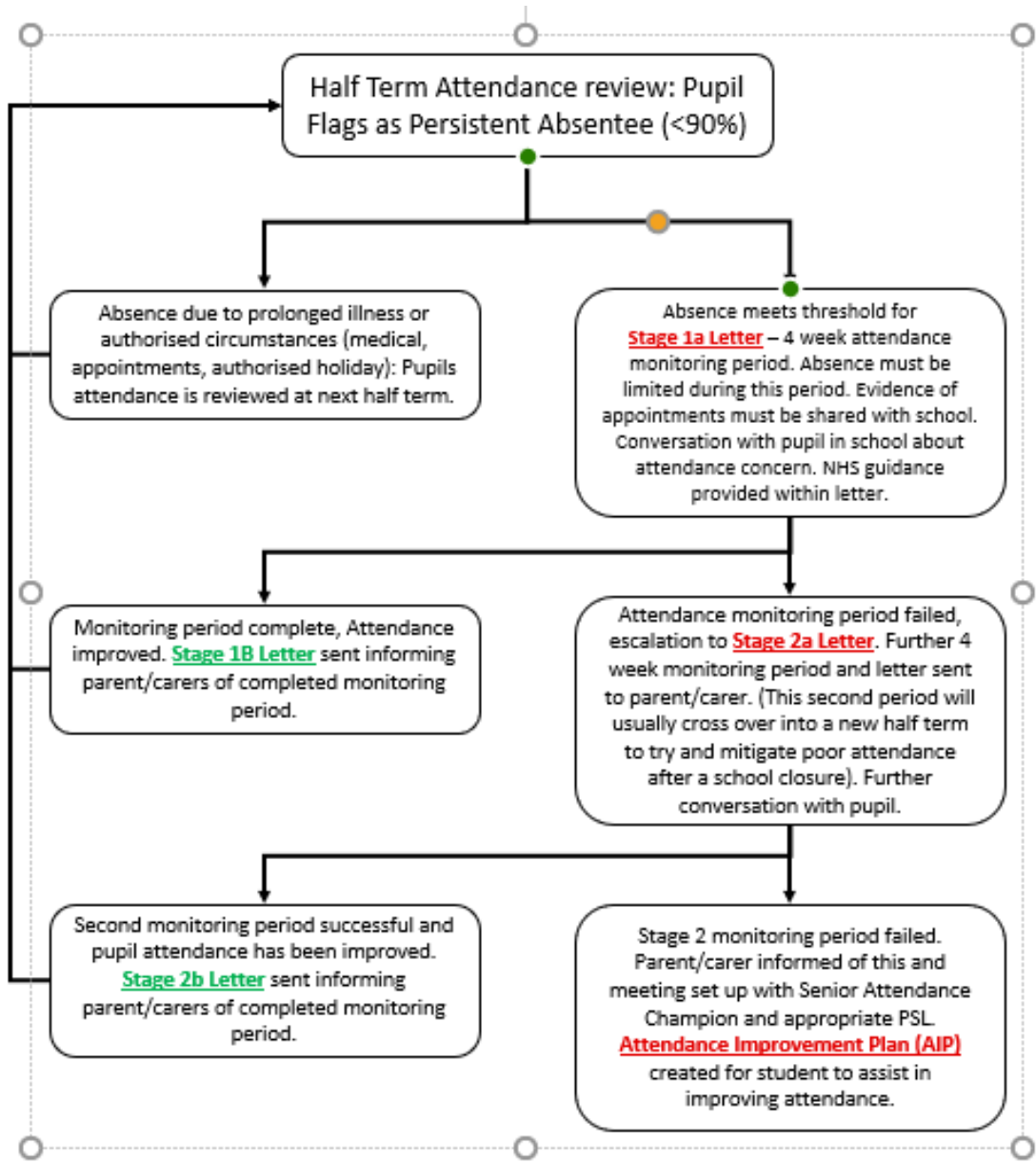
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) DfE August 2024
- [Children Missing Education](#) (CME), DfE September 2016

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- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), DfE September 2024

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Appendix 1 – Pupil Attendance Concern Flowchart



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Appendix 2 – Pupil Attendance Improvement Plan

Student Name:		Date of Commencement Plan:			
Year Group		Form Tutor & Head of Year			
Total Absences (School Year to date)					
Codes for Absences Used					
<u>C</u>		<u>N</u>		<u>Y1</u>	
<u>C1</u>		<u>S</u>		<u>Y2</u>	
<u>C2</u>		<u>R</u>		<u>Y3</u>	
<u>M</u>		<u>I</u>		<u>Y4</u>	
<u>!</u>		<u>G</u>		<u>Y5</u>	
<u>N</u>		<u>J1</u>		<u>Y6</u>	
		<u>Q</u>		<u>Y7</u>	

Notes

Chronology of Correspondence

<u>Letter Type</u>	<u>Date Sent</u>	<u>Staff Responsible</u>

Possible Contributory/Significant Factors

Documented Illness (Physical/Mental Health)		Legal Concerns	
School Avoidance/EBSR		Home issues	
Social Issues (Peers/Bullying)		Transport	
Academic Challenges		Other (Please state below)	

Other
