



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Implementation Date – Sept 2020

Date of Review – Aug 2021

Introduction

Regular attendance in school is essential in helping pupils' reach their full potential. At Westfield Academy, we believe that regular attendance to school is the most important factor in developing successful pupils who, when they leave us, are ready to make a positive contribution to the community.

1. Aims of the policy

At Westfield Academy, we believe that our Attendance Policy promotes our core values and ensures that regular attendance is encouraged. The aims of this policy is to:

- i. Improve attendance to school
- ii. Improve punctuality to school
- iii. Improve the monitoring of pupils' attendance and punctuality

- iv. Improve the outcomes of individual pupils by ensuring that they attend school regularly

2. Responsibilities of parents/carers

Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives on time. There may be some occasions where it is not possible for a child to attend school, such as

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointment
- Exceptional circumstances, e.g. Bereavement in the family

i. Actions to be taken by parents/carers when pupils are absent

- If a child cannot attend the academy due to illness a parent must telephone the academy to inform us by 8:15am. If a child has a prolonged bout of illness then you may be asked to provide medical evidence such as a doctor's appointment card or a prescription.
- We ask that medical, dental and other appointments are made outside of school time. If this is not possible we would expect pupils to miss only part of the day and we would expect parents to inform the academy office in advance of the appointment and provide the appointment card as evidence.
- If a child cannot attend the academy due to exceptional circumstances a parent must telephone the academy office to inform us by 8:15am.

3. Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The academy opens its doors at **7:30am**. Pupils must arrive in school by **8:15am** on each school day. The entrance via the sports hall is closed at **8:15am**, after this time pupils must enter via the Croxley View entrance and will need to sign in with the late team by reception.

The register for the first session will be taken at **8:15am** and will be kept open until **8:40am**. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:40pm and will be kept open until 14:00pm.

4. Unacceptable Attendance

The Heads of Year/Attendance Officer review the attendance of all pupils weekly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below 95%, the reasons for the absence are investigated. If the attendance falls below 90%, the Head of Year/Attendance Officer will follow the staged approach outlined below.

Stage	Description	Actions
1	Drops under 90%. Heads of Year/Attendance officer meet with the member of the Senior Leadership Team who is their line manager to discuss reasons for absence. If there are no extenuating circumstances move to actions.	Letter 1 sent. Meeting with parents arranged.
2	Reviewed 2 weeks later. If attendance has not improved move to actions.	Letter 2 sent. Meeting arranged with parents with a request for any documentation to support absences.
3	Reviewed 2 weeks later. If attendance has not improved move to actions.	Letter 3 sent – risk of Fixed Penalty Notice.
4	Reviewed 2 weeks later. If attendance has not improved move to actions.	If 15 sessions have been recorded as unauthorised in the current and previous term, Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued. If not, meeting with parents arranged.
5	Reviewed the following week. If attendance has not improved move to actions.	Referral made to Attendance Improvement Officer at the Local Authority.

5. Lateness and punctuality

- i. A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late.
- ii. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the “U” code for unauthorised absence, unless a parent/carer informs the academy of any exceptional circumstances for the absence.
- iii. If the lateness of a pupil rises to above 10% the reasons for the lateness will be investigated. Appointment made to see Head of Year/Attendance Officer. 3 weeks will be given for improvement.
- iv. If no improvement is seen the Head of Year/Attendance Officer will request another appointment where any documentation to support lateness will be requested. 3 weeks will be given for improvement.
- v. If there are no improvements, a referral to the Attendance Improvement Officer at the Local Authority will be made.

5. Following up absence

The academy will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. This will be done via phone or e mail on the morning of the absence.

6. Reporting to parents

The academy will report to parents on attendance on a termly basis. Reports will be mailed to the home address of the pupil. Attendance can be checked at any point throughout the school year by registering as a parent for Go 4 Schools at <https://www.go4schools.com/parents> or by downloading the app.

7. Authorised and unauthorised absence

i. Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- i. Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in section 2
- ii. Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- iii. Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

8. Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- i. A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- ii. One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- iii. Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

9. Roles and responsibilities

i. The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

ii. The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

iii. The Attendance Officer/Heads of Year

The Attendance Officer/Heads of Year:

- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

iv. Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

v. Office/reception staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

12. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
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I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

