



Woodkirk Academy  
&  
The Sixth Form @ Woodkirk Academy

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Reviewed and approved by the  
Local Governing Board  
on 14 May 2020**

1. At Woodkirk Academy we demand the highest level of attendance from all our students so they may develop their full potential during their time at school. It is our aim to maintain a culture of excellent attendance and punctuality. Missing out on education has a significant effect on students' life opportunities. Everyone associated with the Academy – students, parents, all teaching and support staff, external agencies and the Governors must do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality remain an integral part of our work.

## **2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1. Vice Principal (Behaviour & Safety - Years 7 to 9)**

- 2.1.1. Oversee and monitor overall school attendance and punctuality, initiating whole school policies as required. This will be achieved by liaison with the Principal and other relevant members of the Academy's Pastoral team.
- 2.1.2. Support the Vice Principal (Behaviour & Safety – Years 10 & 11), Vice Principal (Head of Sixth Form), Year Tutors, Assistant Year Tutors and Form Tutors in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- 2.1.3. Meet with parents and students where there are major concerns – including attendance at school based panel meetings.
- 2.1.4. Liaise with the Attendance Officer (“AO”) on a regular basis.
- 2.1.5. Produce attendance reports for Governors

### **2.2. Year Tutors**

- 2.2.1. Oversee and monitor attendance and punctuality for their year groups.
- 2.2.2. Liaise with the Vice Principals (Behaviour & Safety) and Assistant Year Tutors where there are concerns with individual students or forms.
- 2.2.3. Regularly meet with the Attendance Officer (“AO”) to sustain good communication.
- 2.2.4. Meet with parents and relevant staff where there are concerns with individual students.
- 2.2.5. Liaise with the AO and any other appropriate external agencies, to support any necessary re-integration timetables for students who are absent long term.
- 2.2.6. Promote good attendance through assemblies.
- 2.2.7. Liaise with the AO for production of certificates and rewards.

### **2.3. Assistant Year Tutors**

- 2.3.1. Act on any information from staff concerning student absences or habitual lateness to provide additional support.
- 2.3.2. Inform parents of any students whose attendance and/or punctuality are a cause for concern and have been referred for additional support.
- 2.3.3. Attend meetings with parents and relevant staff as necessary.
- 2.3.4. Refer students to the Year Tutor if they are a persistent problem or have reached triggers after they have been offered additional support.
- 2.3.5. Liaise with Form Tutors where there are problems with absence letters.

## **2.4. Form Tutor**

- 2.4.1. Encourage all students in their form to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality.
- 2.4.2. Collect all correspondence from parents with regard to absences and pass to the AO.
- 2.4.3. Keep an overview of students' attendance; follow up unexplained absences and check patterns of absence and poor punctuality.
- 2.4.4. Liaise with Pastoral staff to pass on concerns about individual students.
- 2.4.5. Issue target stickers and support school attendance initiatives.

## **2.5. Subject Teachers**

- 2.5.1. Take an electronic register at the start of each lesson, within 10 minutes.
- 2.5.2. Pass on any concerns about absentees from lessons to the Attendance Department as soon as possible.
- 2.5.3. Encourage punctuality to lesson – pass on any concerns to the appropriate Year Tutor.

## **2.6. Attendance Governor**

- 2.6.1. Attend termly meetings with the AO/Vice Principal to discuss whole school attendance.
- 2.6.2. Participate in Attendance Panels for students with continuing poor attendance, as required.

## **2.7. Attendance Officer**

- 2.7.1. Work with the Senior Leadership Team to develop strategies to improve attendance.
- 2.7.2. Plan and implement attendance initiatives and monitor effectiveness.
- 2.7.3. Undertake home visits to those students who have continuing patterns of poor attendance or where there are safeguarding concerns due to no contact from home.
- 2.7.4. Hold regular meetings with the Vice Principal to discuss attendance concerns, trends, patterns of absence and welfare concerns of students.
- 2.7.5. Produce letters regarding lateness, attendance and holidays in term time, as required.
- 2.7.6. Manage the Fast Track system for students with less than 90% attendance (see Appendix).
- 2.7.7. Liaise with the Local Authority re legal intervention for non-school attendance and the issuing of Penalty Notices with regard to unauthorised holidays in term time.
- 2.7.8. Monitor unauthorised absences and produce regular reports for Year Tutors.
- 2.7.9. Develop and administer attendance initiatives in collaboration with the Attendance Administrator.
- 2.7.10. Responsibility for students who may be missing from school (CME) – investigate and liaise with the local authority.
- 2.7.11. Liaise with the Local Authority regarding work permits for those students who may be in employment.

- 2.7.12. Contact parents to discuss attendance concerns or irregular patterns of absence.
- 2.7.13. Work with students as required, to raise attendance by mentoring or group work, placing students on Attendance Report.
- 2.7.14. Prepare attendance data analysis reports for appropriate members of staff, Governors and the Department of Education.
- 2.7.15. Maintain accurate registers for afternoon classes and follow up queries regarding absences with Parents from the morning session.
- 2.7.16. Hold regular meetings with VP and Year Tutors to identify patterns of absence and agree strategy for improvement.
- 2.7.17. Arrange detentions and inform parents of persistent offenders.
- 2.7.18. Support the Attendance Administrator in the implementation of attendance initiatives
- 2.7.19. Liaise with Sixth Form staff to support in the monitoring of attendance and follow up of unauthorised absences.

## **2.8. Attendance Administrator (“AA”)**

- 2.8.1. Primary contact for attendance queries.
- 2.8.2. Record student lateness
- 2.8.3. Input details of late arrivals and students arriving after/leaving for appointments.
- 2.8.4. Ensure SIMS class registers are accurate and up to date.
- 2.8.5. Responsible for the First Day absence system – use the PS Connect/My Ed text system and telephone calls home to verify student absence.
- 2.8.6. Liaise with the AO regarding regular absentees and patterns of absence as they arise.
- 2.8.7. Monitor attendance of students returning from long term medical absence and implement appropriate support.

## **2.9. Student registration requirements**

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 mean there are four broad classifications in attendance registers:

- 2.9.1. Present - the student is on the premises at the time of registration.
- 2.9.2. Approved Educational Activity - the student is engaged in an approved, supervised activity off-site, for example field trip, educational visit, sporting activity, link course, work experience.
- 2.9.3. Authorised absence - an absence authorised by the school which includes illness, medical appointments, bereavement and other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be appropriate.
- 2.9.4. Unauthorised absence - an absence where the student does not have good cause to be missing from school. Unauthorised absence can be defined in the following ways:
  - 2.9.4.1. Truancy.
  - 2.9.4.2. Parentally condoned absence.
  - 2.9.4.3. Prolonged absence due to minor illness or without medical evidence if requested.
  - 2.9.4.4. Shopping trips.
  - 2.9.4.5. Birthdays.
  - 2.9.4.6. Looking after family members/siblings.
  - 2.9.4.7. Buying school uniform
  - 2.9.4.8. Refusal to attend school.

- 2.9.4.9. Holidays in term time – due to changes to the Education Regulations 2006, the Principal can no longer authorise holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents who feel their circumstances are exceptional should apply in writing or by email to [attendance@woodkirkacademy.com](mailto:attendance@woodkirkacademy.com) (marked for the attention of the Principal) explaining the reason for their request. Note – if a student is absent from school for five or more days due to an unauthorised holiday, parents will be issued with a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority.
- 2.9.5. **Religious observance** – the Academy will authorise an absence of **one** day for a recognised day of religious observance, for example Eid. Parents must inform the Attendance Department prior to the absence when possible, and no later than 9.30am on the day of absence to make sure it is authorised.
- 2.9.6. We will aim to highlight and resolve any difficulties regarding a student's attendance as early as possible, using our strong home/school partnership to help solve the problem and if necessary, to involve Leodis Support Services in more complex cases.

### 3. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

#### 3.1. Registration

- 3.1.1. Registers must be taken promptly at the start of each lesson and during form time. Staff must contact the Attendance Office as soon as possible if there are any concerns about absentees. **Students who arrive late for form time must register with their Form Tutor. Form Tutors should add a late mark to the electronic register (SIMS). Students arriving after 9.10am should register at Student Services.**
- 3.1.2. Anyone taking students out of school for any reason, or delivering activities in school requiring a number of students out of lessons, must supply the Attendance Department with a list of names in advance by email to [attendance@woodkirkacademy.com](mailto:attendance@woodkirkacademy.com) .

#### 3.2. First Day contact

The AA will organise first day contact. This will involve texting all parents where the reason for absence is unknown and when students have arrived late to school without a genuine reason. If no reply to text, the AA will ring all contacts. If no contact can be made then the AO/YT/Safer School's Police Officer may make a home visit.

#### 3.3. Absence letters

Absence letters received from students must be initialled and dated by the form tutor. The information will then be inputted into the system by the AO/AA. All letters must be sent to the Attendance Office for filing. Where parents confirm absence via the student planner, the Form Tutor should send the student with their planner to Student Services.

### **3.4. Exit/Entry to the Academy during the day**

- 3.4.1. Students who arrive after 9.10am must report to Student Services where the member of staff will issue a late mark and add a reason on SIMS for the late arrival.
- 3.4.2. Students who need to leave the school during the day must bring a letter from home and/or an appointment card. The student is responsible for collecting an Exit Slip from Student Services and then having the exit slip authorised by the Vice Principal or Year Tutor from the appropriate year group. This must be done first thing in the morning or at morning break or lunchtime to avoid lesson disruption. The slip must then be handed in to Student Services when the student is leaving the school site. If the student returns to school during the same day they must sign back in at Student Services before returning to class.
- 3.4.3. Full day absences for medical appointments will not be authorised if it is considered there is reasonable time for the student to return to school. Where possible, appointments should be made at the start or end of the school day where possible to avoid disruption.
- 3.4.4. Sixth Form:
  - 3.4.4.1. Sixth Form students must clock in and out of school, using their ID badge barcodes in the Sixth Form Common Room.
  - 3.4.4.2. The first day absence procedures are the same for the Sixth Form as the rest of school. Students themselves can contact the Attendance Office to inform of their absence but medical evidence and parental confirmation requested must be provided for all appointments
  - 3.4.4.3. Any students with persistently low and unauthorised attendance are at risk of losing their place in the Sixth Form. Students and Parents will be invited into school to discuss any concerns as needed.
  - 3.4.4.4. AO will meet regularly with the Year Tutor for Year 12 and Year 13
  - 3.4.4.5. Minimum attendance requirement for Sixth Form is 95%.
  - 3.4.4.6. No holidays to be taken by students during term time.

**It is essential these procedures are followed as in the event of a fire it is vital there is an accurate record of who is on the school site at that time.**

## **4. ATTENDANCE CONCERNS**

- 4.1. Form Tutors play an important role in raising the profile of the need for good attendance and punctuality. Any concerns must be passed by the Form Tutor to the member of the Pastoral team who visits the form.
- 4.2. Regular meetings and analysis of attendance data to be undertaken by the AO/Senior Leadership Team.
- 4.3. Long term absence – students, who are long term absentees for whatever reason, often encounter both academic and social difficulties which they may need time to overcome. For some students this may involve a reintegration programme. The programme will be devised by the appropriate Vice Principal (Behaviour & Safety)

and AO. The programme may include a part-time timetable, time in B16, plus support from a Learning Mentor or other member of staff. Parents will be involved throughout the reintegration process and staff will be informed by the Vice Principal/AO. Appropriate educational support will be put in place for students who have been diagnosed with a long term medical condition.

- 4.4. Reintegration – long term absentees will be regarded as students with special educational needs and therefore a special reintegration programme will be devised to meet the needs of each child. This may involve phased part-time or re-entry with increased classroom and general support and use of the B16 provision. Staff must accept that this process can often be difficult and that problems may arise. In order that the programme can be successful, it will be important for close and regular communication between the parents, the child, Leodis Support Services/AO, VP, Year Tutor and any other member of staff with an active role in the procedure.
- 4.5. Students who are absent during a school day, whether authorised or unauthorised, are deemed as being ill for the full day. This includes after-school trips, extra-curricular or enrichment activities. Where a cost has been incurred and paid for by the parent, the trip leader will make every attempt to secure a refund, or partial refund (in line with Charging and Remissions policy, paragraph 1.4.2)
- 4.6. Rewards and Incentives – excellent attendance is a major priority at the Academy and therefore has a high profile. This will be achieved by:
  - 4.6.1. Students being awarded bonus merits when they meet termly attendance targets.
  - 4.6.2. The Attendance Officer offering small rewards to students who demonstrate an improvement in their attendance over a fixed period.
  - 4.6.3. Dedicated attendance months and weeks throughout the year where incentives will be offered for 100% attendance.
  - 4.6.4. A prize draw taking place at the end of each academic year for all students with 100% attendance and for ‘most improved’ attendance
  - 4.6.5. Students in Year 11 qualifying for a special award at Leavers’ Assembly if they achieve full attendance for five years.
  - 4.6.6. Year 11 students qualifying for a discount from their prom ticket if they have one or two half term’s full attendance prior to leaving.
  - 4.6.7. All students qualifying for termly and annual certificates for achieving full attendance.

## **5. NON ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

If your child does not attend school and all attempts to resolve situations have failed then the case will be referred to the AO or the Leodis Support Services Manager and the following steps will be taken:

- 5.1. You will be informed in writing of your legal responsibility to ensure good attendance and advised of possible legal sanctions.
- 5.2. All students with an attendance rate below 90% where there are concerns that the absences may not be genuine, will be added to the Academy Fast Track system.
- 5.3. Meeting will be arranged initially with the AO and appropriate Year Tutor/VP.

- 5.4. An Attendance Panel meeting with the AO and Academy Governor will be arranged if attendance continues to decline.
- 5.5. If there is a failure to improve attendance, despite intervention, then legal action will be taken.

## **6. CHILD MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

- 6.1. Parents are contacted on a daily basis via telephone or by text messages to establish the reasons for a student's absence.
- 6.2. Any student absent for two days or more will be referred to the Leodis Support Services Manager for a home visit.
- 6.3. The Year Tutor will be informed to ascertain if any students know the whereabouts of the missing student and the Safer Schools Police Officer will be asked to investigate if there are any safeguarding concerns. Any other agencies known to be working with the student will also be contacted.
- 6.4. After 10 days of absence without notification from parents and after all avenues of enquiry have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student, the case will be referred to the Local Authority AO and the student will be registered as a 'Child Missing from Education' (CME).
- 6.5. After further enquiry by the Local Authority the student's name will be removed from the school roll after 20 days if they have not been traced.

## **7. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION**

- 7.1. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their son/daughter receives a suitable education. Elective Home Education is the term used to describe the decision by parents to provide education at home instead of sending their son/daughter school.
- 7.2. The Local Authority have a statutory duty to monitor the provision of education at home but they are not required to provide financial support or tuition. The responsibility to educate children at home, provide funding, resources and a suitable age appropriate curriculum, including examinations, rests with parents.
- 7.3. If you decide to educate your son/daughter at home, the decision to remove them from the school roll should be put in writing to the Principal.
- 7.4. The Local Authority will be informed if a student has been removed from the school roll and they will contact parents within four weeks to evaluate the home education provision and provide appropriate support.

## **8. SCHOOL CHILDREN AND PART-TIME WORK**

- 8.1. Children of 13 and up to compulsory school leaving age must apply for a work permit if they are working. There is no charge for work permits from the Local Authority.
- 8.2. Hours and days of work
  - 8.2.1. Not before 7am or after 7pm.
  - 8.2.2. Not during school hours.



8.2.3. Maximum of two hours on a school day.

8.3. Work permit application forms and Child Employment Guidelines are available from the Attendance Office.

## **9. SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ENTERTAINMENT**

9.1. Children of compulsory school age must apply for an entertainment licence if they are taking part in any performance where:

9.1.1. A charge is being made.

9.1.2. It is at a licensed premises or registered club.

9.1.3. It is for a broadcast intended for public viewing.

9.1.4. They are participating in paid modelling, sporting events, stage, television or film.

9.2. Application forms for entertainment licences can be obtained from the Local Authority.

9.3. There is no charge for entertainment licences.

**FAST-TRACK TO IMPROVED ATTENDANCE**

**What is Fast Track?**

The Fast-track to improved attendance is a time-focused approach to case management and, where appropriate, to prosecution for students who have below 90% attendance where there are concerns that a pattern of poor attendance may continue.

The aim of Fast-track is to ensure that the Academy deals with attendance cases quickly and in the most effective way to get the student back into school and attending regularly. It is a mechanism for ensuring that, where appropriate, parents are prompted to focus on their responsibilities to ensure their son/daughter's regular attendance at school.

The Fast-track framework promotes early intervention both by the school, students and parents and, when necessary, by the LA. The approach aims to ensure that appropriate action is taken to tackle attendance problems as soon as they become apparent. The action advocated under the Fast-track framework involves engaging the parent/student and specifying what improvements need to be made over a set time-frame (usually 12 weeks, interventions targeted at 3 week intervals)

Where a parent fails to meet the requirement to ensure regular school attendance within the specified time-frame, prosecution proceedings are initiated.

The aims and objectives of the Framework are:

- To bring consistency in dealing with students with low attendance.
- To ensure that intervention strategies are put into place **early** to tackle school attendance problems; and
- To ensure that parents who fail to cooperate or are unwilling to work with the school are identified sooner and action is taken to make sure that they take responsibility for their son/daughter's school attendance.

## Stages of Intervention

Timescale	Intervention
<p><b>Week 1:</b></p> <p><b>Fast Track decided as appropriate intervention for pupils &lt; 90% or at risk of this</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter sent to Parents informing them of son/daughter's name being placed on Fast Track.</li> <li>• Text messages/phone calls home if absent</li> <li>• AO to visit home if no contact made as above.</li> <li>• ALL students placed on the Fast Track are required to provide Medical Certificates for all absences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 3:</b></p> <p><b>Initial review date –</b></p> <p><b>Attendance checkpoint 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Meeting/discussion held where there are ongoing concerns with student absence.</li> <li>• Letter home if there are no further attendance concerns congratulating and informing parents of further monitoring period for 3 weeks in line with the whole school Attendance Policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 6:</b></p> <p><b>Attendance checkpoint 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued attendance concerns. Parents invited into meeting with AO/Year Tutors and SLT. Target set for next 3 weeks via Attendance Contract.</li> <li>• Multiagency support offered (see below)</li> <li>• Sanctions and Rewards agreed.</li> <li>• Telephone calls/home visits carried out.</li> <li>• Congratulations letter and removal from Fast Track for those who have maintained attendance above 96%.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 9:</b></p> <p><b>Attendance checkpoint 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/Student called to Attendance Panel with AO/SLT and Academy Governor.</li> <li>• Review of Attendance Contract, sanctions and Rewards.</li> <li>• Further offer of Multi-Agency Support.</li> <li>• Discussion and leaflet provided detailing imminent Legal Action and what exactly this will mean.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 12:</b></p> <p><b>End of Fast Track period</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter sent to inform Parent that Case has been passed to LA for Legal Intervention.</li> <li>• Case referred to Attendance Advisor – Targeted Services for initiation of legal action.</li> </ul>

## **Commitment to supporting students and families as part of the Fast Track Process**

Woodkirk Academy is committed to maximising the potential of all students and to provide tailored support to those individuals who may be experiencing barriers to their education.

With a commitment to Multi-Agency working and involving both students and parents in a mutually agreed action plan, we aim to work holistically in the approach to overcome these barriers.

### **Pastoral support available within the Academy:**

- Attendance Officer – Liaison between home and school.
- Family Support Worker
- Learning Mentors
- Life Coach
- Referral system available to specialised local multiagency support services by the FSW/Leodis Support Services Manager

Working in Collaboration with Local Agencies via the Leodis Support Service and Cluster of Ardsley & Tingley Schools and Services (CATSS) we are able to support parents and students who may need for example:

- Counselling
- Housing/Debt advice
- Youth Service Support
- Mental Health Support
- School Nursing Service
- Police Support

**Please do not hesitate to contact the Academy on: 0113 8873602 or [attendance@woodkirkacademy.com](mailto:attendance@woodkirkacademy.com) should you feel that you need additional support, or to discuss any concerns which are preventing your son/daughter from attending school.**