



## Pupil Attendance and Absence Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

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## **I. Policy Statement, Responsibilities & Definitions**

The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

Woodbridge School expects pupils, including those in the EYFS, to attend its main school activities and any additional activities it deems compulsory from time to time. The Woodbridge School and Prep Programmes are published at the beginning of each term, or in other brochures from time to time, in order to give parents as much notice as possible of events.

The School maintains pupil admission and attendance registers in accordance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

- 1.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- 1.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;
- 1.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- 1.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
- 1.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

### **School responsibilities**

The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.

Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

**Monitoring** - The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. For the Prep, this is undertaken by the Head of Woodbridge School Prep and for the Senior School, this is undertaken by the Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School) on a weekly basis during term time.

It is important that all staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it.

### **Parent / carer responsibilities**

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives education.

Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

### **Pupil responsibilities**

School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to manage poor attendance.

Pupils should be aware that:

- 1.2 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;
- 1.3 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;
- 1.4 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;
- 1.5 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;
- 1.6 any unexplained absence or lateness will be followed up. If necessary, a home visit may be undertaken or a Teams call organised with the parent(s), guardian or carer;
- 1.7 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:
- 1.8 offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
- 1.9 communication with parents;
- 1.10 reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and
- 1.11 sanctions against them in line with the School's behaviour policies.

1.12 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Tutor in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

## Definitions

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

- 1.12.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
- 1.12.2 references to the **Proprietor** are references to the board of Governors.
- 1.12.3 references to a **Parent** means:
  - (a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
  - (b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and
  - (c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.

**SAC** means the School's Attendance Champion. The School has appointed a senior member of staff as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. These are:

- Prep – Head of Woodbridge School Prep.
- Senior School – Deputy Head Pastoral

Full contact details of the above individuals are at the start of this policy.

The SAC will:

- 1.12.4 establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;
- 1.12.5 regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- 1.12.6 have oversight of and analyse attendance data

## 1.2 Additional Needs

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

It will also work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.

Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

## **2. Information Sharing**

Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

Where appropriate the schools will attend regular targeting support meetings.

The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- New pupil and deletion returns;
- Attendance returns<sup>1</sup>
- Sickness returns.

The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint

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<sup>1</sup> Schools are required to provide attendance returns to the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been recorded as absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the national attendance codes (G, N, O, and/or U). Individual local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month

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working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.

Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

### **3. Record keeping and confidentiality**

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law.

## **4. Procedures for Woodbridge School Pre-Prep and Prep**

School staff involved with the procedures below should:

- have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, (as soon as possible, after the first recorded absence), and follow up with parents to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the Head of Woodbridge School Prep of any specific concerns;
- deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils (as appropriate) and parents and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

### **4.1 Attendance**

Attendance is compulsory during the working day;

Pre-Prep Monday to Friday 08:35 to 15:40

Prep Monday to Friday 08:30 to 15:50

All pupils are expected to attend special events published in Woodbridge School Prep Calendar, (on SOCS) or with due notice.

At the Prep attendance is also expected:

- (a) For all team practices, rehearsals, etc, which, with due notice, take place after 15:50
- (b) Where selected, including reserves, at all school representative sports fixtures
- (c) On all occasions where a commitment is undertaken by a pupil, e.g. a play, a concert, a school trip, involves pre-arranged attendance out of normal school hours.

### **4.2 Procedures for Absence for Pre-Prep and Prep**

- Absence from School is normally acceptable only for medical reasons, in which case parents are asked to notify the Woodbridge School Prep on the first, and each

subsequent day of absence on [PrepAbsence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk](mailto:PrepAbsence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk), 01394 382673, prior to Registration at 08:30.

- All requests for leave of absence should be addressed, in advance, to the Head of Woodbridge School Prep via the Head's PA. Leave of absence should only be requested in exceptional circumstances for example, to attend a family wedding or out of school sporting fixture. We ask that families do not take children out of school for holidays or routine medical appointments.
- Prep pupils must be signed out by their parent / guardian at the School Office if they leave the school site during the day.

We ask that pupils are punctual in arriving at School and any late arrivals or pupils returning to School after an appointment must report to the Woodbridge School Prep Office in order to be registered.

#### **4.3 Registration**

Registration plays a vital part in the School approach to Health and Safety and therefore it is vital that this process is accurate and punctual.

4.3.1 Pupils will be registered twice a day. Class teachers will electronically register their pupils in the classroom or via a paper register delivered to the classroom if the network is unavailable; Pre-Prep 08:35 and at 13:15

Prep 08:30 and 13:40

Pupils must be registered in person.

Teachers must use the symbols as identified in the registers.

The Prep Office check the register per class and address any anomalies and unexplained absences as soon as possible.

A weekly report is used to check for accuracy.

4.3.2 At the end of School an 'End of Day' register is taken to account for a pupil's whereabouts; home (H), late room (L) or a specified club (C) and this list is then kept in the Prep Office. Teachers responsible for organising clubs and activities after school also must complete their own SOCS club register for the pupils present and record when pupils are dismissed to parents at the end of their club.

4.3.3 If pupils are going on a school trip a register must be completed before departure and sent to the Office in line with the Educational Visits Policy.

4.3.4 Registers are also kept for Early room and Late room attendance.

#### **4.4. Procedures for Absence for Pre-Prep and Prep from sport**

Attendance at games or PE lessons is excused only on the provision of a parent email or an email from Matron. Correspondence received from parents is sent to Matron who then shares this as appropriate with staff.

## 5. Procedures for the Senior School

School staff involved with the procedures below should:

- have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;
- make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the Head of Year and Deputy Head Pastoral of any specific concerns;
- deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

### 5.1 Attendance

Attendance is compulsory:

- Attendance is compulsory:
- During the working day Monday to Friday 0840 to 1610 for the Senior School.
- All team practices, rehearsals, etc, which, with due notice, take place after 1610.
- At all School representative sports fixtures where selected, including reserves, touch judges and scorers (team lists will be published in advance).
- On all occasions where a commitment undertaken by a pupil, eg a play, a concert, a School trip, involves pre-arranged attendance out of normal School hours.
- At special events published in the Calendar (eg Open Day or Speech Day), or with due notice.
- On Saturday mornings for School detention, or if it is deemed necessary if pupils have to catch up or improve their work.
- At extra study periods or other detentions notified by Head of Years

### 5.2 Procedures for absence

- Absence from School is normally acceptable only for medical reasons in which case you are required to notify the School Office on the first and each subsequent day of absence.).
- Attendance at games is excused only on the presentation of a parent email or email from the School Nurse to the member of staff concerned and : this must be presented by the end of morning break.
- Requests for leave of absence during the school day should be addressed to the Deputy Head Pastoral via [Absence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk](mailto:Absence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk), 01394 615000.
- Requests for leave of absence which is one or more days of absence should be addressed to the Head. These requests should be made only in exceptional circumstances, e.g., a family wedding, county sport fixtures, etc. We do sincerely ask families not to make plans for holidays, excursions or routine medical/dental appointments which clash with School commitments.

- Although we operate a five-day teaching week, this is done on the understanding that all pupils will be fully committed to the life of the School. This can often include attendance on Saturdays for sport or some other reason and the Deputy Head Pastoral will be unsympathetic to requests for absence on these days unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Senior School pupils arriving late in the morning must register at Reception. We ask that lateness is minimised although we are well aware that trains and School buses are late from time to time.
- Senior School pupils must sign out at reception if leaving the school site and back in when/if they return
- Those in the Sixth Form still of compulsory school age at the start of the year are identified, and specific registration is taken of them in the same way via their afternoon classes or private study. Absences are cross-referenced against the morning register and discrepancies followed up.

### **5.3 Procedure for the pupil registration**

#### Statutory Registration Points

##### **Morning:**

- The Tutor (or tutor substitute) is to record on iSAMS, or via a paper register delivered to the School Office, the presence or absence of a pupil by 0850 each morning. If the network/iSAMS is not available Tutors must use paper back-up and deliver to the School Office. The School Office will follow up any registers not taken and will look for absent pupils in lesson before contacting parents to find out the reasons behind unexplained absences.
- Pupils must be registered in person. A Tutor must not accept the word of one pupil substantiating the presence of another. If the Tutor knows for sure the reason for absence they should enter the appropriate code. If not, the code should be changed to an 'N' for the School Office to follow up.
- Unregistered Sixth Form pupils followed up by Director of Sixth Form in the first instance.

##### **Afternoon (Monday to Thursday):**

- Teachers and private study supervisors of pupils in session 6 either register their class on iSAMS or send a paper copy of the registration to the School Office if the network/iSAMS is unavailable. Absences are phoned or completed by Sports or Music.

##### **Afternoon (Friday):**

- Each activity leader within the Seckford Scheme is responsible for taking a register via iSAMS or on paper delivered to Reception by 2:30pm. Absences are cross-referenced against the morning register and the signing in and out books and discrepancies followed up. Sanctions are imposed as appropriate.

#### Other Registration Points

- Teachers take a register on isams for all other lessons.

## **6. Compliance and Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be subject to a thorough review process including consideration at the Compliance and Risk Committee meetings on an annual basis. This will ensure that practice across the whole school is in line with this policy, the Complaints procedure and with current guidance and legislation.

## **Appendix 1 Admission register**

### **1 Admission register**

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:
  - 1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
  - 1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended and in the case of boarding schools whether each pupil of compulsory school age is a boarder or day pupil.
- 1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.
- 1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:
  - 1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;
  - 1.6.2 the address of the pupil;
  - 1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
  - 1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
  - 1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

- 1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
- 1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

## **Appendix 2 Attendance register**

### **1 Attendance register**

- 1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) including boarders in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024
- 1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
  - 1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
  - 1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
  - 1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or
  - 1.6.4 absent.
- 1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
  - 1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
  - 1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
  - 1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
  - 1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
  - 1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

## 2 Recording absence

- 2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:
  - 2.1.1 leaves of absence;
  - 2.1.2 other authorised reasons;
  - 2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;
  - 2.1.4 unauthorised absence.

## 3 Remote education

- 3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.
- 3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:
  - 3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;
  - 3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
  - 3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.
- 3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.
- 3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4 **Unauthorised absence**

4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- 4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
- 4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;
- 4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- 4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

### **Appendix 3 National Attendance and Absence Codes**

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

Attending the school

#### **Code    Definition**

/ \      Present at the school / = morning session / afternoon session

L      Late arrival before the register is closed

Attending a place other than school

#### **Code    Definition**

K      Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

V      Attending an educational visit or trip

P      Participating in a sporting activity

W      Attending work experience

B      Attending any other approved educational activity

Absent - leave of absence

#### **Code    Definition**

C1      Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad

M      Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

- JI      Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- S      Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- X      Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- C2     Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- D      Dual registered at another school
- C      Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons

**Code   Definition**

- T      Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- R      Religious observance
- I      Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- E      Suspended or permanently excluded

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

**Code   Definition**

- Q      Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
- Y1     Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Y2     Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

- Y3      Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4      Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed (e.g. due to adverse weather)
- Y5      Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Y6      Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Y7      Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence

**Code    Definition**

- G      Holiday not granted by the school
- N      Reason for absence not yet established
- O      Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- U      Arrived in school after registration closed

Administrative codes

**Code    Definition**

- Z      Prospective pupil not on admission register
- #      Planned whole school closure