



Overview

Woodlands Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. Regular attendance is essential to allow children to fully access the curriculum. To this end, Woodlands Academy will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'

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- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home Visit Policy

Attendance Staff

Miss Laura Turner (Headteacher) has overall strategic responsibility for attendance of Woodlands Academy.

The Attendance Officer at Woodlands Academy is **Sue Killips**:

Sue.killips@woodlands-cit.co.uk

The Home School Liaison Officer at Woodlands Academy is **Jodie Lingard**:

Jodie.lingard@woodlands-cit.co.uk

If pupils are persistently absent, then the attendance team will attempt to resolve the situation through a parenting agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, Woodlands Academy has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

The attendance team will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence and will provide weekly reports to SLT to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.

School Times

The school is open to pupils from 8.45 am

The School Day ends at
2.45pm

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed

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- Arrival at school late, before the registration has closed will still be classed as an absence, the time of arrival will be recorded
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Any reason that the headteacher feels is not appropriate

Persistent absenteeism:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason
- If a child is absent for 10 days, on the 11th day, the absence will be reported to the LA.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

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The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, take the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

Home School Liaison Officer and Attendance Officer:

- Update any communication with pupils or parents/carers onto School Pod
- Highlight irregular absence and inability to contact parents to the DSL and Senior Leadership Team
- Make at least fortnightly home visits with pupils that are absent from school long term
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding pupil's attendance concerns
- Keep an up-to-date folder with all attendance paperwork including any intervention/actions and evidence

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Calling the school before 9.30am with the reason for their child's absence. Failing to do so will result in an unauthorised mark on the register.

Pupil Expectations

Pupils will be expected to attend school every day.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

To ensure the school has effective procedures for managing PA, the SLT/ Attendance Officer will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of PA, the school will:

- Welcome the pupil back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meet with the pupil to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Undertake weekly reviews of progress and assess the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with the pupil's parent to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The School pod system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in need
- CiC
Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils in TAC

Absence Procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9.30am to give reason for their child's absence.

A telephone call will be made to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence.

The school will always follow up on any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data into the school census system.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance Leader/ Attendance Officer.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85 percent, a letter of warning will be issued, if no improvements are seen by the following term the parent/carer will be invited to a School Action Panel Meeting, where targets will be set to support their child's attendance.

If a parent wishes to request a "leave of absence" for their child, they are to contact the school at the earliest opportunity. The request will be given to the headteacher. The headteacher will either approve or deny the request.

Parental Involvement

The school will build respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance, and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services

The school informs parents with at least one letter regarding their child's attendance at least once per term.

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Parents will be expected to:

- Treat staff with respect.
- Actively support the work of the school.
- Call staff for help when they need it.
- Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

Attendance Register

Classroom staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day during Tutor time.

These registers will be cross checked against the taxi register and the Signing in sheet at reception. The Attendance Officer will then complete an afternoon register at 1pm. For a flow chart of the process for registration please see *Appendix 2*.

The register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Having a medical appointment
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

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- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Unable to attend due to Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on the admission register
- S = Study Leave
- W = Work Experience
- # = Planned whole or partial school closure

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as an absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind the absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 9:00 am and 12:55 pm, where the teacher will record the attendance.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the SLT is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

Appointments

As far as possible, parents will be encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent. Pupils will be expected to attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

Young Carers

The school understands the difficulties young carers face and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as throughout their time at the school.

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The school will take a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by LA or the parent is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which have prevented the pupil from attending.
- The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.
- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable circumstances.

The use of the 'Y' code for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

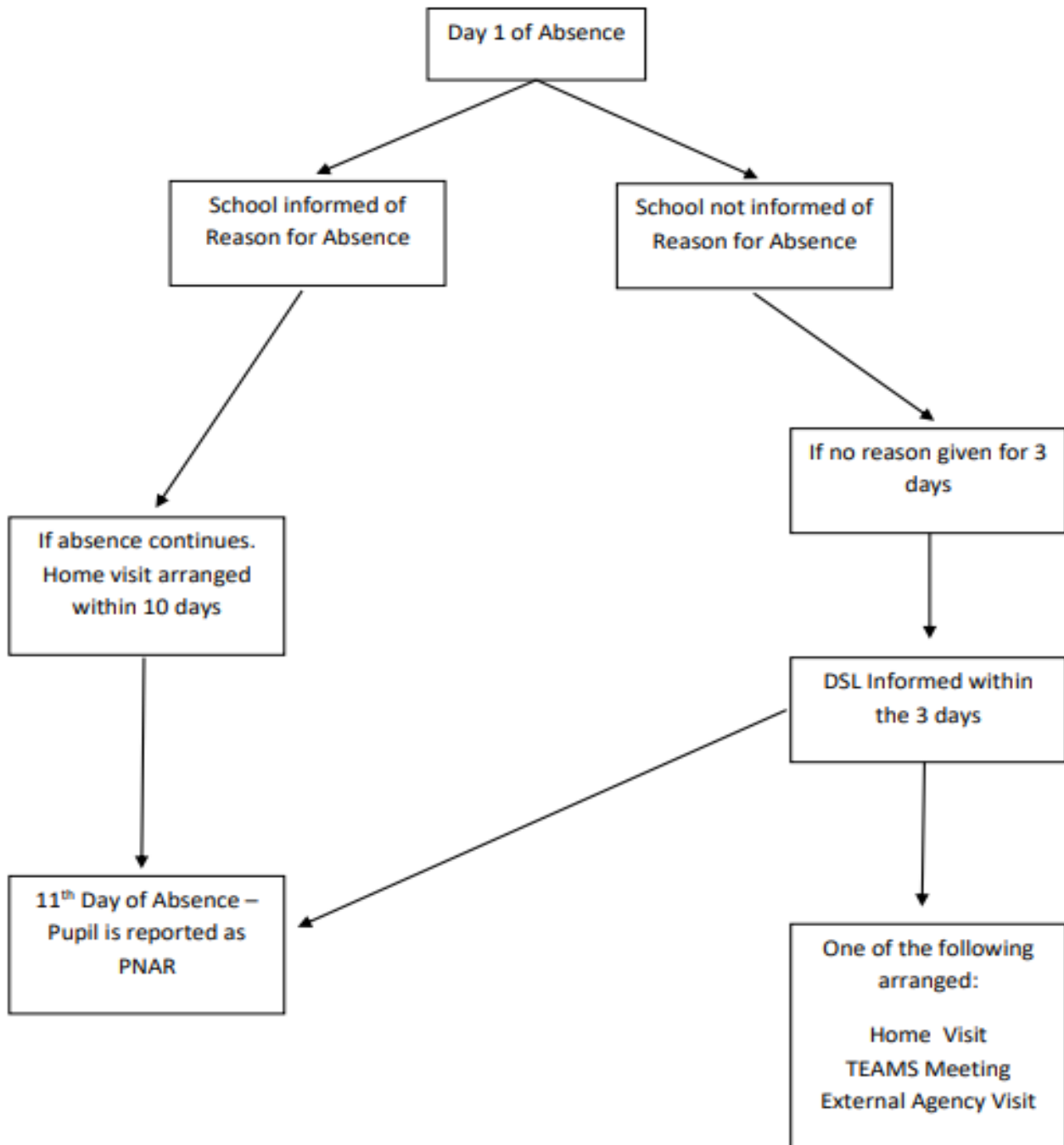
- Transport provided by LA or the parent is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which have prevented the pupil from attending.
- The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.
- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable circumstances.

The use of the 'Y' code for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

Celebrating Attendance

At the end of each week, Woodlands Academy celebrates attendance with the pupils in the weekly assemblies. During these assemblies any pupil that has attended for the full week will receive a 100% attendance certificate as well as a raffle ticket that goes into the half termly draw to win a £30 voucher. The pupils will also add points to their house teams for this achievement. On a termly basis we also celebrate the pupil's attendance successes by sending attendance letter home to inform the parents of the progress and achievements their children have made regarding attendance.

Reporting Attendance



Appendix 1

Lincolnshire County Council – Improving School Attendance

Severe Absence = >50%

Consider social care role and focus of attendance in all assessments e.g. is attendance featuring in children in need and child protection plans.

Escalation protocol, where support is not in place. Review reasonable adjustments

At Risk of Severe Absence = 51%-79%

Re-assessment of needs considering the escalation of non-attendance, with additional targeted support assisted by the local authority and other appropriate partners.

Persistent Absence = 80%-90%

Hold more formal conversations between senior leaders and parents. Consider a parenting contract, Education Supervision Order or Early Help Assessment. Consider the whole family.

Consider FPN or prosecution where further support would not be appropriate, engaging with or change parents' behaviour, in conjunction with the local authority

At Risk of Persistent Absence = 91%-94%

Identify the triggers, what is the cause of the absence. Use all or parts of the ATTEND assessment/EBSA/ Early Help Assessment/ V SEND to identify triggers and need.

Discuss cohorts or specific individual cases at Termly Support Meetings, inform parents/carers in language they understand. Consider a safeguarding concern

As Expected = 95%-100%

Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends. Celebrate good attendance, link with achievement and wellbeing of the child

Appendix 2

