



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Woodford Valley C of E Primary Academy

This school is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, learning and love.

*And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.”*

*John 13 34-35*

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To be reviewed	Headteacher and Governors
Authorised by	Headteacher and Governors

### 1. Introduction

Regular attendance is crucial in raising educational standards and in ensuring that every child meets his or her full potential at Woodford Valley Academy. There is compelling and irrefutable evidence which suggests that children with poor attendance tend to fall behind their peers and under-achieve. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils including their safeguarding and welfare and should therefore be seen as everyone’s responsibility in school.

In view of the above, Woodford Valley Academy is committed to maximising attendance for all pupils. This policy gives a detailed overview of the way in which attendance will be recorded and monitored and sets out what is expected from Academy staff, parents/carers, governors and pupils.

#### 1A. The Legal Framework

For Parents:

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure that their children are educated. For most parents/carers this means registering their child at a school and ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted.

For Woodford Valley Academy:

By law schools are required to take the attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon and to report to Wiltshire Local Authority pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for ten consecutive school days or more without known reason.

## 2. Key Principles

Woodford Valley Academy will approach attendance issues taking into account the following key principles:

- i. Ensuring good attendance at Woodford Valley is the responsibility of everyone in the Academy community including: parents and carers; school staff; governors and pupils.
- ii. The default position is that every pupil should be at school whenever Woodford Valley Academy is open. Any instance of a pupil missing any school time should be regarded as wholly exceptional.
- iii. We will keep an accurate register of attendance and will monitor attendance figures.
- iv. Staff and pupils alike will be made aware of the registration process.
- v. Non-attendance will be identified. Efforts will be made to identify the reasons for it and to return the pupil in question to school as soon as possible;
- vi. We recognise that there may be many different reasons why a pupil may be absent from the Woodford Valley Academy. We will always approach issues of attendance sensitively, particularly in regard to our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will at all times do our utmost to ensure that all pupils feel appropriately supported and valued.
- vii. We will put in place procedures for returning absentees to catch up on missed learning without disrupting the learning of other pupils.
- viii. Attendance procedures will be regularly evaluated and reviewed by Woodford Valley Academy. The Academy attendance policy will be shared with all stakeholders.
- ix. Parents/carers will be made aware of and expected to comply with their legal duties.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

As stated above, ensuring good attendance at the Woodford Valley Academy is the responsibility of everyone in the community including: pupils; parents and carers; Academy staff – including the school Senior Attendance Champion and governors.

**Woodford Valley Academy and its staff** will be expected to:

- Reduce absence including persistent absence;
  - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
  - Register and monitor attendance in accordance with procedures set out below;
  - Act early to address patterns of absence;
  - Encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example;
  - Convey high expectations to pupils regarding attendance and punctuality;
  - Promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents/carers;
  - Respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently;
  - Offer prompt support to pupils who experience difficulties.
  - Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
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- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

**Parents/Carers** will be expected to:

- Comply with their legal duty to ensure that a child registered at the Academy attends regularly;
- Ensure that children attend punctually, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn;
- Ensure that children are only absent in cases of genuine illness or other emergency;
- In the event that a child is prevented from attending, notify the Academy as soon as possible;
- Work in partnership with the academy to take an active interest in their child's education;
- Work in partnership with the academy and other agencies (as appropriate) to resolve problems relating to non-attendance or which may have a negative impact on their child's attendance;
- Follow the leave of absence procedures set out below.

**Pupils** will be expected to:

- Attend the Academy and lessons regularly and punctually;
- Take the information home to their parents/carers about their attendance.

**Governors** will be expected to:

- Monitor attendance figures;
- Review the Academy's policy and performance as far as attendance goes.

#### **4. Registration and Absence**

4.1 By law, schools and Academies are required to take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These registers must be kept electronically. Woodford Valley Academy will comply with this by adopting the procedure set out below.

- Registers will be called promptly at 8.45 am and at 1.15pm.
- The morning register will close at 9:00 am.
- If a pupil arrives late, and the register is still open, they will be marked late but present.
- If a pupil arrives after 9:00 am they will be marked 'L'- authorised but late
- If a pupil arrives after 9:10 am, with evidence of a medical/dental appointment they will be marked 'M' (medical).
- If a pupil arrives after 9:30 am with no acceptable reason and/or no communication from parents/carers, they will be marked as a 'U' (late and arrived after the register closed).
- The afternoon register closes at 1:30 pm.
- If staff do not know why a pupil is absent, the absence should be recorded as 'N' (no reason provided for absence yet). On the first day, the Academy absence procedure will be followed and the registration mark amended as appropriate.
- All staff must record absence, using the agreed codes. Consistent criteria should be applied.

#### **5. Monitoring Absence**

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- Records of attendance will be reviewed by the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion on a weekly basis.
- Weekly discussions will take place between the Headteacher and class teachers where individual pupils have a high absence rate
- Attendance which is below 95% over the course of a term (in a six-term year) is closely monitored by the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion and office team.
- If attendance falls below 95% and there are no clear reasons, a letter will be sent home to the parent. If this continues the parent will be invited to attend a meeting with the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion to discuss how working together could improve the pupil's attendance. However, if there is no improvement in attendance a further meeting will be called. During this meeting, it will be made clear that the Academy will proceed by involving the Education Welfare Service and ultimately legal action if no sustained improvement occurs.

## 6. Responding to Absence

### Involvement of Parents/Carers

- 6.1 If no contact is received from the parent/carer of the pupil on the morning of the first absence, the Woodford Valley Academy will contact the parent/carer by telephone on the morning of each absence, or if the parent/carer is unavailable, write a letter requesting information. If this action does not result in an explanation or the return of the pupil to the Academy, a further letter will be sent.
- 6.2 Continued absence will result in an Academy Attendance Meeting being arranged. This will involve the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion contacting the parent or carer to discuss the matter. If the attendance does not improve, the Headteacher will invite the parents/carers to a meeting. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding Academy attendance.
- 6.4 If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved and the attendance does not improve, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. In consultation with the Education Welfare Service and the Chief Executive if necessary, a recommendation for issuing a fixed penalty fine will be considered.

### Safeguarding

- 6.5 It is recognised that frequent absence from and lateness to Woodford Valley Academy could be an indication of abuse or/and an impact of abuse. Attendance reviews therefore consider all aspects of safeguarding as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy. Where concerns have been raised about a pupil, additional attendance monitoring/reviews will be carried out.

### Reintegration

- 6.6 In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence, an individual re-integration programme will be implemented by the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion and monitored by the class teacher.

## 7. Other Procedures

### Notifying the Academy of Absence

- 7.1 Parents and carers should ring/email the Academy on **each and every day** of their child's absence by 9.10am giving reasons for the absence. An absence of more than 5 days may require the parent/carers to provide further medical evidence in the form of an appointment card, a copy of prescription medication or a letter from the GP.
  - 7.2 Failure to notify the Academy of an absence will result in the absence counting as 'unauthorised'. Parents/carers are informed that it is an offence if they fail to ensure their child attends the
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Academy regularly, even if they are absent without the parent/carer's knowledge. Parents/carers should avoid, wherever possible, making medical/dental appointments during Academy hours. We are unable to sanction absences for reasons such as shopping, waiting in for a delivery, birthdays or holidays.

- 7.3 Staff are available to give advice from 8.30 am every Academy day should parents/carers be uncertain whether their child should be at the Academy or not.

#### **Requesting Leave of Absence**

- 7.4 The Leave of Absence request form can be found on our website and in the reception foyer. We are not permitted to allow permission for holidays in term time on top of the 13 weeks holiday a year that pupils already have.
- 7.5 A leave of absence request will only be authorised if it is for exceptional circumstances (not a holiday).
- 7.6 If a leave of absence request is refused permission by the Academy, parents/carers may be issued a Penalty Notice if they still take their child out. Penalty Notices are a fine of £80 per parent/carer per child, which rises to £160 if not paid within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28 day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. Parent(s) can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made

#### **Deletion from Academy Roll**

- 7.7 If Woodford Valley Academy receives notice from parents/carers that a pupil is moving to another school/Academy, we will notify the Local Authority (LA) as soon as we become aware.
- 7.8 If Woodford Valley Academy receives verbal notification that parents/carers are withdrawing, their children from the Academy to home educate them, the Academy will not wait for the written confirmation before informing the LA via the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The Academy will only delete the child from roll once they have received written confirmation from the parents/carers, and been contacted by the intake school and/or notification has had time to be received by the LA. The Academy will not wait until the LA acknowledges the notice nor seek the LA's approval of the deletion.

#### **Children Missing From Education**

- 7.9 A child missing from education is a child of compulsory school age who is not on an Academy/school roll, nor being educated elsewhere. If a pupil does not attend the Academy for 10 Academy days and there has been no response from the parent or carer to our request for information on the whereabouts of the pupil, the Academy will complete a Missing from Education form and send it to the Education Welfare Service. Reference should be made to the separate Children Missing from Education policy. We have a duty to keep a child on roll until we are given permission by the EWO to remove them

## **8. Review**

As noted above, this policy and the practices contained in it will be subject to constant review by both the SMT and governors. Part of the evaluation process will be to consider what interventions have been successful. Attendance is scrutinised in the periodical Headteacher's Report. For instance:

- Has the attendance and punctuality of individual pupils and/or attendance as a whole improved?
  - How successful have pupil reintegration plans been?
  - Has the Academy been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the Academy and the local community?
  - How well informed are new pupils and their families about the importance of attendance and the policies and procedures operating within the Academy?
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- Have attendance issues been included as topics in assemblies or collective worship, lessons or as a theme for any other curricular lessons?
- Have appropriate and timely referrals been made to the Education Welfare Service and advice sought as necessary?

## Appendix A

# Woodford Valley Academy Absence Table

Percentage attendance	Description of Attendance	Actual attendance	Whole days absent per year	Learning hours lost per year
100%	Outstanding	190 days	0	0 hours
99%	Very good -best chance of success	188 days	2	10 hours
98%		186 days	4	20 hours
97%		184 days	6	30 hours
96%	Good -although room for improvement	182.5 days	7.5	37.5 hours
95%		180.5 days	9.5	47.5 hours
90%	Poor -there is less chance of success and it makes it harder for your child to achieve	171 days	19	95 hours
89%		169 days	21	105 hours
88%		167 days	25	115 hours
87%		165 days	27	125 hours
86%	Very poor -attendance is a serious concern and there will be a huge effect on your child's education and learning	161.5 days	28.5	135 hours
85%		161.5 days	28.5	142.5 hours
80%		152 days	38	190 hours
75%		143 days	47	235 hours

