

# WEATHERFIELD ACADEMY

To become the best person you can be.



## Attendance Policy

L Meenan  
February 2021

To be reviewed: February 2022

## Attendance Policy

The staff of Weatherfield Academy are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors, to build a school which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud.

The school staff, alongside the Access and Inclusion Service, firmly believes that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

### **Expectations**

**We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend school regularly;
- Attend school punctually;
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day;
- Discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher, Key Stage Leader, Assistant Head, any problems that deter them from attending school.

**We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is/are unable to attend school;
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and send a note on their return to school;
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

**We expect that school staff will:**

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- Monitor every pupil's attendance;

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- Contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence;
- Encourage good attendance;
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children; provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns;
- Make initial enquiries of parent/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the Access & Inclusion Service expectations with regard to regular school attendance;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Access & Inclusion Service.

### **Holidays**

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays. If a family holiday in term time is unavoidable, a holiday form must be completed prior to the holiday. This can be obtained from the school office. The Headteacher will then decide whether or not to authorise the absences. The Headteacher, on behalf of the Governors, can grant leave of absence for up to 10 days. No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their child/children as a right.

The Head teacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence having considered:

- The child's record of attendance;
- That the holiday does not exceed the maximum to 10 days in any one year (unless it is felt that the experience would be of beneficial educational value to the child or it is an exceptional circumstance);
- The time of the holiday, ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important examinations/assessments.

### **Encouraging Attendance**

Weatherfield Academy encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment;
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils;
- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be

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recorded as an unauthorised absence and the pupil's name recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill;

- If lateness to school occurs more than 2 times in a fortnight then a **Late Attendance at School letter** will be sent home.
- By celebrating good and improved attendance.
- Having mufti days for tutor groups with the best attendance.
- Having a Key Stage 'Attendance Bingo' draw each week for the previous full week's attendance.
- By monitoring pupils. Informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance
- Family Link workers (TE & KH) arrange meetings with families to help identify and arrange support for them if necessary.
- Referring the family to the Access & Inclusion Service if the irregular attendance continues.

### **Responding to non-attendance**

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child, by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows that these gaps at whatever level affects attainment. We monitor all absences thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

1. On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 11 a.m. the school will send a text message asking for a reason.
2. If there is no response by the end of the second day the tutor will endeavour to contact the parents/carers by phone or email.
3. If attendance has fallen below 96% then a **letter of concern (trigger 1)** will be sent home.
4. If after the letter of concern has been sent the child's attendance has still not improved then an **escalation letter with a copy of the child's register (trigger 2)** will be sent home.
5. If there is still no improvement then a **pre-referral letter (trigger 3)** will be sent home with a date for a meeting to discuss solutions going forward.

Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Access & Inclusion Service may result in further action which could result in a fixed penalty fine, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

### **Changing Schools:**

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It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform the Head teacher as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated.

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the new school.
- The address of the new school.
- The new home address, if known.

The pupil's records will then be sent to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information the child will be referred to the Access & Inclusion Service immediately.

### **School Organisation**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition to this, the School has the following responsibilities:

Head Teacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- Adopt the whole policy;
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- Monitor a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence;
- Ensure that key staff have time-tabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Access & Inclusion Service and appropriate access to attendance data;
- Consult and liaise closely with the Access & Inclusion Service on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay;
- To work in close collaboration with the Access & Inclusion Service during their termly/half termly register analysis;
- Institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards;
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the Access & Inclusion Service.

### **Assistant Head teacher:**

- To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually;

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- To liaise with the Access & Inclusion Service regularly;
- To reinforce good practice at year group meetings;
- To share the form tutor's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Access & Inclusion Service.

**Class teacher/form tutors:**

- To complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily;
- To follow up any unexplained non-attendance;
- To record all reasons for absences in the register;
- To inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance/head of year of any concerns;
- To be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Key Stage Leader.