



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

<b>Version Number:</b>	V 4.1
<b>Applies to:</b>	Whole School / Prep (inc EYFS)
<b>Author (s):</b>	Deputy Head (SS (Pastoral)); Head of Woodbridge School Prep
<b>Review Frequency:</b>	Annual
<b>Policy category (1, 2, 3, 4):</b>	2
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	Michaelmas Term 2024
<b>Next review due by:</b>	Michaelmas Term 2025
<b>Approved on (date):</b>	07.10.24
<b>Committee (s) Responsible:</b>	C&R
<b>References (including legal and others eg ISBA).</b>	<a href="#">Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a>
<b>ISI Reg:</b>	7(b)
<b>Other related policies and documents:</b>	Missing Pupils Safeguarding

## Key School contacts

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## 1. Policy Statement & 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:

- the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

- 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;
- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
- 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.

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.

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.

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.

## Definitions

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

- references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
- references to the **Proprietor** are references to the board of Governors.
- 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

### **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.

## **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**

### **4.1 Attendance**

Attendance is compulsory during the working day;

Pre-Prep Monday to Friday 0835 to 1530

Prep Monday to Friday 0830 to 1550

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) or 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.

We ask that pupils are punctual in arriving at School and any late arrivals 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.

4.31 Pupils will be registered twice a day. Class teachers will electronically register their pupils in the classroom;

Pre-Prep 0835 and at 1315

Prep 0830 and 1340

Teachers must use the symbols as identified in the registers.

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

4.33 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.

4.34 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 / sport is excused only by the presentation of a note signed by a parent or with Matron's permission.

### **5. Procedures for the Senior School**

#### **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, 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 (01394 615000) by 0900 and to send a written note on the pupil's return. 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 the Deputy Head Pastoral and Head of Sixth Form: 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 the absence email address.  
[Absence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk](mailto:Absence@woodbridgeschool.org.uk)
- 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 Head 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 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.