

# THE WENSLEYDALE SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Principles

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at the The Wensleydale School and Sixth Form are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

### Responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this Attendance Policy and should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance.

The school will encourage and value high attendance rates. The school will recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents, the Attendance Officer and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

### Procedures:

#### Registration

- Registration will be carried out at 9.00 am and 1.45 pm. Registers will be marked promptly at these times and will be closed at 9.15 am and 2.00 pm respectively. Should a student arrive after the start of registration but before the registers have closed he/she will be marked as late for that session. If they arrive after the close of register, this will be an unauthorised late and referred to the Attendance Officer.
- Registers should be marked in accordance with the DfE guidelines.

#### Absences

- All absences will be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. Should an explanation for an absence not be received or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised. (Absence will not be authorised for such reason as shopping, day trips and birthdays).
- Parents are required to contact the school each and every day that their child is absent from school. A record of communications will be made by the Attendance Officer and the absence noted (pre-entered) on the register. In the event of no notification of absence being received from parents by 9.15 am, the school will contact home.

#### Lateness

- Students who arrive at school after 9.15 am will be classified as unauthorised late and the register will be coded accordingly. They should sign in at the Attendance Officer's office upon arrival at school.
- Students arriving late to Period 4 will be marked late by the relevant teacher, (this will include the number of minutes late).
- The Attendance Officer will regularly review lateness and relevant reports/updates will be provided to the Progress Leaders.

Students who arrive at school late should not be admitted to class until they have signed in with the Attendance Officer. This is important for health and safety as well as safeguarding reasons.

#### Term-Time Authorised Absence

- The school will not sanction family holidays during term time except in the most exceptional circumstances. It should be noted that holidays will not be granted if the attendance is less than 96% for those students in Key Stage 3 and 4.

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- It should be noted that the maximum authorised absence period is 10 days in any one academic year.

### **Staff Roles:**

#### **The Tutor**

The class tutor is seen as the key figure in promoting regular, punctual attendance. The tutor should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual to registration
- carry out registration in the prescribed manner
- offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves
- where students are absent, tutors must check with other students if they know of any reason for absence.
- any concerns about missing students must be flagged with the Attendance Officer immediately. Child Safety concerns should be flagged to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

#### **The Subject Teacher**

Subject teachers should:

- take a register within the first ten minutes of every lesson (and ensure that the students know that a register is being taken)
- follow up any suspected internal truancy by checking with the Attendance Officer immediately
- provide any relevant work for students who are internally/externally excluded

#### **Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer is responsible for monitoring attendance across the school. She will:

- telephone parents after absence is detected if no reason has been given
- monitor attendance weekly, setting targets for improvement as appropriate
- send out standard proforma letters where patterns of absenteeism/ lateness are detected
- monitor the performance of individual tutor groups, following up with individual tutors instances where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed
- alert the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) when there is a problem which has not been solved by the above procedures
- review registers and attendance and punctuality figures on a weekly basis
- regularly put attendance onto the agenda of Pastoral meetings
- ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attenders, supporting the tutor where appropriate in dealing with parents directly
- meet with the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) on a weekly basis in order to discuss students who have not responded to the school's strategies and where it is necessary to make referrals
- follow up internal truancy with appropriate sanctions
- report any suspicious or concerning absence or suspicion of truancy to a member of SLT. If the student is not in school, then parents must be contacted and made aware within 15 minutes of the registers closing i.e. by 9.30 am and 2.00 pm.
- manage the attendance display board and update regularly

The Attendance Officer will check all registers twice daily AM and PM. Discrepancies between AM and PM will be investigated and where the discrepancy indicates a student is not present then this must be escalated as a matter of urgency to the Designated Lead (DSL), Progress Leader, Assistant Headteacher (PDBA) and the Headteacher. Where a student cannot be located after a thorough search of the school premises parents and the Police must be contacted.

The completion of registers will be monitored by the Attendance Officer. In instances of non-compliance, the Attendance Officer will refer the matter to Assistant Headteacher (PDBA).

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### **Attendance Data**

A range of attendance data will be collated each Friday by the Attendance Officer. This data will be presented by the Assistant Headteacher (PDBA) to SLT each Monday morning. The Attendance Officer will be responsible for analysing this data for the Assistant Headteacher (PDBA) As part of this process a Persistent Absentee (PA) register will be maintained and regularly reviewed.

### **Communication**

The Wensleydale School and Sixth Form Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- a précis in the Parents' handbook
- the Home-School Agreement
- regular website items
- guidance and advice in the staff handbook
- on the school website

**Date of Policy:           September 2020**

**Date of Review:         September 2023**