Attendance Policy

Aims of the Policy

This policy has been written to ensure that **WiEducate** is compliant with the guidelines established by the government relating to school attendance. This policy is intended to:

- foster a shared understanding of the importance of good attendance across the whole-school community;
- promote good attendance and punctuality;
- reduce unnecessary absences;
- address persistent absenteeism;
- establish protocols to ensure that attendance issues are addressed early and effectively;
- build effective working relationships with parents and carers to ensure that every child is accessing education.

Related Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of Working together to improve school attendance outlined by the Department for Education (DfE).

It is also based on the following legislation and guidance:

- Statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (with subsequent amendments)
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Part 7)
- The Education Act 2002 (Part 3)
- The Education Act 1996 (Part 6)

When applying this policy, our school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is the responsibility of all members of the school community. However, we have allocated specific roles and responsibilities to named individuals to ensure that we are meeting statutory requirements.

Directors

Those responsible for governance at the school will:

- ensure that the school fulfils statutory attendance requirements;
- work with leaders to establish policies, protocols and expectations relating to attendance;
- reinforce the importance of attendance in documentation and communications as appropriate;
- ensure that key staff receive relevant training relating to attendance;
- review and analyse attendance data and support leaders to address any issues that become apparent;
- offer appropriate challenge regarding attendance data;
- keep up to date with changes in guidance and legislation and ensure that leaders are aware of any changes;
- hold the headteacher to account for the effective implementation of this policy.

Tutor

The Tutor will:

- take responsibility for the implementation of this policy;
- monitor school-level attendance and absence data and communicate key information and data to those responsible for governance;
- monitor the impact of any attendance strategies and systems that are in place, identifying new approaches where relevant;
- ensure that there are systems in place so that when a pupil has a social worker, they are informed about any unexplained absences;
- liaise with attendance staff to identify when it would be appropriate to issue fixed penalty notices;
- decide whether requests for leave should be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Designated senior leader for attendance

It is expected that schools will have a designated senior leader for attendance. At WiEducate, this person is **Steph Horne (Director)**. The senior leader will:

- oversee attendance across WiEducate;
- retain an oversight of attendance data across WiEducate;
- foster a clear vision and expectations throughout WiEducate;
- identify and/or devise systems and interventions to improve attendance;
- arrange meetings with parents/carers to address attendance issues;

The contact details for our designated senior leader are:

Steph Horne

steph@wieducate.com

07925757333

Staff

Those responsible for the day-to-day oversight of attendance at the school will:

- monitor individual and group attendance on a day-to-day basis;
- gather information and produce reports relating to attendance (as required by leaders);
- work with education welfare officers and any other external partners to tackle attendance issues;
- deliver targeted interventions where a need has been identified;
- provide additional support for attendance in line with the school's policy on this.
- **carry out home visits where appropriate.**

Staff

Staff will:

- complete attendance registers at the times specified by the school using the school's agreed systems;
- use accurate attendance and absence codes as set out in Working together to improve school attendance.

Admin staff

Admin staff will:

- answer and record attendance-related phone calls from parents/carers;
- ensure that any safeguarding concerns are reported using the school's agreed safeguarding systems and protocols.

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Parents and carers

Parents and carers will:

- ensure that their child is in session each day, except for when a statutory reason applies;
- notify WiEducate of their child's/young person's absence as soon as possible using WiEducate's agreed systems;
- ensure that leave of absence is only requested in exceptional circumstances and, where possible, advance notice is given;
- book any non-emergency medical and dental appointments outside of the school day, where possible;
- engage with any support offered to address any barriers to their child's attendance.

Learners

Learners will:

- attend planned sessions;

- engage with any support offered WiEducate to help them overcome any barriers to attendance.

Protocols and Procedures

Recording attendance

In line with statutory requirements, we will keep a register of attendance and ensure that the name of every learner is entered onto the register, irrespective of whether they are of statutory school age or not.

WiEducate will add pupils to the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which it has agreed with (or been notified by) the parent that the learner will attend WiEducate. If a learner is unable to attend WiEducate on the agreed starting day, WiEducate will follow this up and establish the reason for absence.

Once a learner is added to the admissions register, their attendance or absence will be recorded for each session. The register will take place at the start of the session.

Codes recorded in the register will be in line with the guidelines set out in Section 8 of Working together to improve school attendance.

WiEducate will also record:

- whether the absence is authorised or not (if the learner is of compulsory school age);
- the nature of any off-site activity;
- any exceptional circumstances that have resulted in an absence.

Amendments to the attendance register

Clear and accurate records of amendments made to the attendance register will be kept. These will note:

- the original entry;
- the amendment that is being made;
- the reason for this amendment;
- the date that the amendment is being made;
- the name and position of the individual making the amendment.

Monitoring and analysing attendance

We monitor the attendance of our pupils so that we can identify any issues, concerns and patterns of absence. We use a range of systems to monitor absence on a daily, weekly, termly, half-termly and annual basis. We monitor the attendance of individuals, groups and cohorts, as well as looking at attendance patterns across the whole of WiEducate.

We will use our monitoring data to identify any individuals, groups or patterns that are a cause for concern and then take measures to address these. This data will be used in discussions with families/carers and when evaluating the impact of any attendance strategies that we implement.

Reporting to parents and carers

We understand the importance of keeping parents and carers informed about their child's/ young person's attendance, as well as reminding them of the implications of poor attendance. Our systems for reporting attendance and absence to parents and carers are as follows:

If a learner is 10 minutes late for session a phone call will be made to the learner, then parent/carer. Conversations will take place to determine the reason for absence and arrangements will be made to ensure learning isn't missed.

Strategies for promoting good attendance

We recognise the importance of promoting good attendance and making sure that learners and their families understand the effect of poor attendance on their life chances.

The systems we use at **WiEducate** for promoting attendance are:

- **Celebrating the small successes**

- **Removing barriers to education/ attendance**

- **Creating small, achievable targets related to attendance**

Authorised and unauthorised absences

We recognise that every absence is unique so WiEducate will consider whether to authorise an absence on a case-by-case basis.

The following will give a guide as to whether the absence is likely to be authorised.

Typical scenarios for authorised absences include:

- illness;
- emergency medical and dental appointments;
- religious observance for recognised religious holidays/festivals;
- a pupil taking part in a performance if the local authority has granted a licence for this;
- a pupil on maternity leave;
- a pupil being suspended or excluded;
- a traveller absence where this is for occupational reasons;
- pupils on a temporary, part-time timetable, where this has been arranged by the school;
- bereavement (close friend or family member);
- study leave (where this has been approved by the school);

In the examples listed above, the school will still usually need to grant permission for the absence to be authorised.

Unauthorised absence is where a pupil's absence is for a reason that is deemed to be unacceptable by the school or where the reason for a pupil's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

In the case of illness, the absence will usually be authorised unless there are grounds for concern that the illness may not be authentic. In these instances, the school may ask for supplementary evidence, such as a doctor's note, appointment card, medical report, etc. The school will not ask for this additional evidence unnecessarily.

If, after requesting evidence, the school is still not satisfied that the reason given is genuine, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents or carers will be informed of this.

Non-emergency appointments

We request that non-emergency medical and dental appointments are booked outside of the school day to minimise lost learning time. Where this is not possible, permission for absence should be sought in advance.

Punctuality

Learners must arrive at school on time each day.

The session register will open at **9:00** and will be kept open until **9:45**

Learners arriving after the register opened but before the register is closed will be marked as late using the appropriate code. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as absent using the appropriate code; however, the arrival time will be noted to ensure that there is a clear record that the pupil is on site.

The session ends at 3:45 or agreed time for outreach work

Reporting absences

If a parent or carer needs to report an absence to WiEducate, they should follow the agreed procedures as set out below:

Call or text Steph on 0792575733 before 9:30 for sessions or at least an hour before agreed outreach session

These systems should be used to report day-to-day absence and attendance issues. For more detailed support with attendance, parents should contact:

Steph Horne

steph@wieducate.com

07925757333

Managing persistent and severe absence

We will identify and address instances of persistent and severe absence.

Persistent absence is defined as a pupil who is absent for 10% or more of scheduled sessions.

Severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of scheduled sessions.

We will identify persistent and severe absence using the systems for monitoring and analysis as outlined above.

To respond to persistent and severe absence, the school will seek to identify and address root causes. As there are a wide range of reasons for this occurring, the response will be determined on a case-by-case basis. However, typical strategies will include:

- supporting the learner and their family to understand the reasons that attendance is important and the possible implications of repeated absences;
- enhanced monitoring of individual learners where attendance is (or could be) an issue;
- holding meetings with parents or carers to discuss concerns;
- offering specific pastoral support using the resources and staffing already available within the school **such as home visits and outreach work**
- working with external partners to address the underlying factors that are causing the absence;

Handling unexplained absences

If a pupil is absent from session without an explanation, WiEducate will take the following steps to determine the whereabouts of the child/young person and the reason for their absence:

Within 10 minutes of being late

- **call learner to seek explanation and check safety/welfare**

- **call parent/carer to seek explanation and check safety/welfare**

if there is no contact made, follow missing person policy and safeguarding policy.

Issue	Date	Reason for change	Approved by
1.0	October 2023	Creation of policy	Steph Horne
2.0	October 2024	Review of policy	Steph Horne