



**WOLGARSTON HIGH SCHOOL**  
Staffordshire



# Attendance

## A Statement of Policy

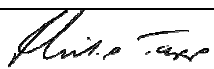
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Date adopted by Governing Body:	<b>July 2006</b>	Date of last Review:	<b>July 2011</b>
Frequency of Review:	<b>Annual</b>	Next Review:	<b>July 2012</b>

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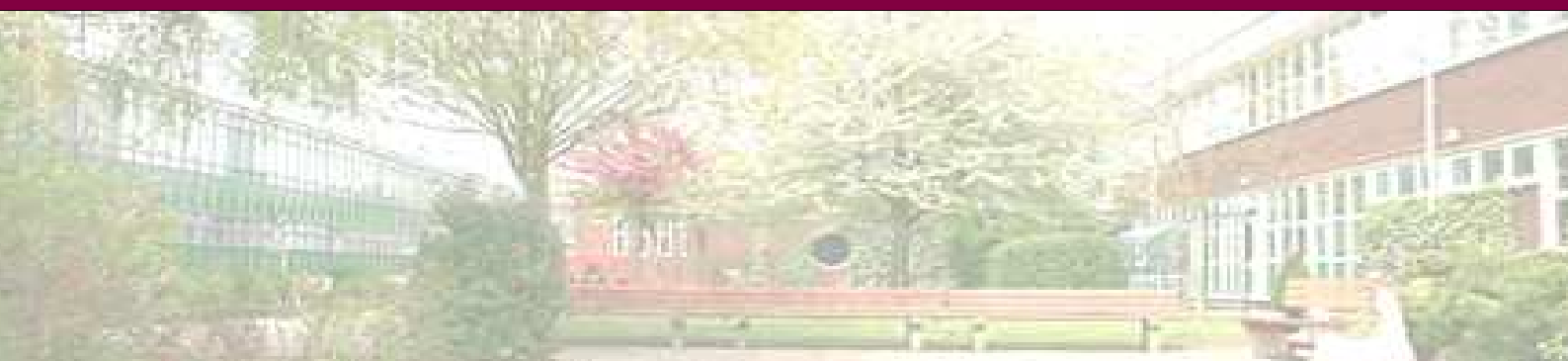
Location:	
Author:	<b>School Inclusion Group, Attendance Officer,</b>
Readability Score:	<b>18-19 Years</b>

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Signature of Headteacher:	 _____
Signature of Chair of Governors:	_____

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*H. Stemp signature is to be inserted here.*



## Statement

We actively promote regular school attendance in order to maximise opportunities for each student to realise his/her potential. Wolgarston High School, Staffordshire Education Authority, parents/carers and the wider community all have a role to play in improving attendance.

## Aim

To meet our statutory duty with respect to a whole school attendance target, while ensuring that we have effective systems and procedures in place to support and encourage regular school attendance from all students.

## Definition

All children of compulsory school age (5-16) should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or through other arrangements. If a student is registered at Wolgarston, parents/carers have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

Attendance procedures for Sixth Form students are laid out in the Sixth Form Learning Agreement. Students must accept this in full in order to study in the Sixth Form at Wolgarston. Essentially, students will agree to:

- Arrive on time for all lessons, tutorials, assemblies and appointments made with external agencies such as Connexions;
- Contact the Sixth Form Attendance Officer before 0900<sup>hrs</sup> if they are unable to attend school for any reason;
- Make written requests for leave of absence for any reason.

Wolgarston has the initial responsibility to monitor, investigate and improve individual students' poor attendance. We must notify Staffordshire Education Authority if a student of compulsory school age attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.

In addition, we monitor, investigate and improve individual students' punctuality. All students are expected to be in school to arrive promptly for their first lesson at 0900 hrs. Any student arriving after 0900 hrs is marked "late" until the registration cut-off period, after which they will be marked with an unauthorised absence. For students living within three miles of Penkridge (ie not reliant on school transport), the cut-off time is 0930<sup>hrs</sup>. The cut-off for students who travel via school transport or who live outside our catchment area is 1030<sup>hrs</sup>.

Staffordshire Education Authority has responsibility under the Education Act 1996 for legal action to enforce attendance at school. This duty is exercised through the Education Welfare Service and its Education Welfare Officers. They can issue parents/carers with a Penalty Notice or prosecute them in the local magistrates' courts.

School, not parents/carers, authorises absence. We must adhere to DfE (Department for Education) Guidelines in authorising absence. Our Home School Agreement also informs you of the criteria for attendance as adopted by all South Staffordshire schools.

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Parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to make sure their child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without parents'/carers' knowledge. They run the risk of being issued with a penalty notice or being prosecuted.

The decision to issue a penalty notice or prosecute a parent/carer is only taken, in most cases, after the Education Welfare Service has carried out extensive support work with the student and their family.

Parents/carers should not expect Wolgarston to agree to an absence for a holiday in term time. Parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school on holiday. The law states that schools have the discretion to grant up to ten days' authorised absence in a school year. Each application is considered individually by us and takes into account a number of factors including the student's attendance record and the dates of both internal and external examinations. Authorisation is unlikely to be given during the lead up to and including examination periods.

Parents/carers may apply formally in writing for authorisation of any absence brought about by exceptional circumstances, which should be fully explained in the application.

If a student is ill or absent for any other reason, a parent/carer should contact us by 0900hrs on the first day of absence.

By law, the current compulsory education for all children in England ends on the last Friday in June in the school year in which the student reaches 16. However, the leaving age for compulsory education (which includes school, college or other further education) was raised to 18 by the Education and Skills Act 2008. The change will take effect in 2013 for 17 year olds and 2015 for 18 year olds

## **Objectives**

- To work closely with our pyramid schools to ensure continuity of policy and procedures for dealing with absence and requests for leave of absence.
- To designate a member of the Senior Management Team and a member of the Governing Body to oversee the management and review of all attendance matters. These are currently our Assistant Headteacher and a nominated school Governor.
- To clarify staff roles and responsibilities for dealing with attendance.
- To recognise the links with our Behaviour for Learning and Anti Bullying Policies.
- To support the close working relationship between our Attendance Officer, Family and Student Services Centre staff and the Education Welfare Service in order to raise everyone's awareness, access support and respond to challenge.
- To ensure that parents/carers understand their responsibilities, are aware of our Attendance Policy and are encouraged to co-operate with the systems and procedures that the Policy describes.
- To publish term dates twelve months in advance of the school year.
- To actively involve parents/carers at Parents' Evenings in encouraging each student to aim for the highest levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To develop, maintain and review effective procedures for :
  - Encouraging high attendance rates through regular, individual target setting between students and their tutors
  - Registering students
  - Categorising absence
  - Collating and analysing attendance data to identify trends and enable action to be taken

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- Determining in which exceptional circumstances leave of absence will be granted for holidays during term-time.
  - Monitoring attendance and punctuality for all lessons using Lesson Monitor.
  - Dealing with late arrivals.
  - Dealing with unauthorised absence (i.e. when contact will be made with parents/carers, how and when standard letter systems will be used, what measures will be taken to re-engage disaffected students, what rewards/incentives will be used to encourage attendance, what sanctions will be taken).
  - Referring cases to the Education Welfare Service (i.e. when, how and by whom).
  - Re-integrating students who have been absent (e.g. providing pastoral support, the role of personalised learning within the Family and Student Services Centre and the use of learning/ peer mentors).
  - Engaging other agencies working with young people (e.g. Social Services, Health, Connexions, the Police, Youth Offending Teams, Victim Support etc.) to embrace the vision for children's services contained in 'Every Child Matters'.
  - Recognising excellent or improved attendance through the school's Rewards and Achievements scheme.
  - Engaging parents/carers in discussions about the Attendance Policy through the Parent Focus group.
  - Engaging students through work with the school councils.

## ***Commitment***

As a school we are committed to making continuous improvement in all aspects of school life. We will strive to raise the level of enjoyment of, and commitment to, learning among all our students and foster a high attendance culture throughout the school through our achievement awards.

## ***Responsibilities***

Ultimate responsibility for this policy's introduction and implementation lies with the Headteacher in consultation with the Governing Body. It is important to recognise that all staff, students and parents/carers have an active part to play in the evolution, development and maintenance of this policy.

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