



**Wingfield Academy**

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Reviewed By  
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Reviewed  
October 2019

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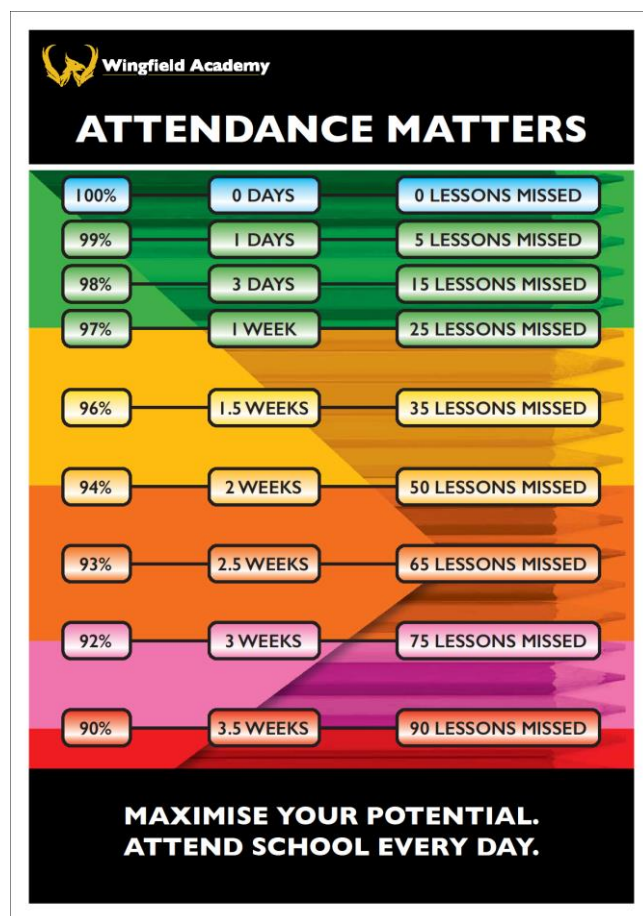
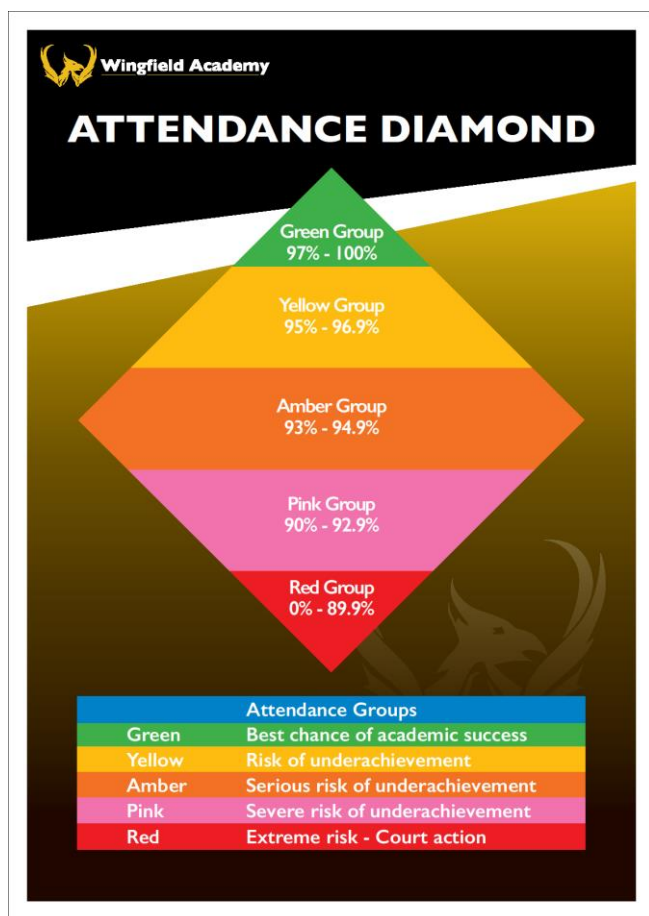
Governor Ratification Date  
December 2019

This policy has been developed in conjunction with Department for Education (DfE) and Local Authority (LA) Guidance.

Reference to Parent/Carer throughout this document also includes any person who has parental responsibility or who cares for children.

### Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- The Academy is committed to maximising the achievement and attainment of all students.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the Academy.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the Academy and encouraging students to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the Academy.
- The Academy will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- The Academy expects all students to achieve or exceed 97% attendance.



## Statement of Expectations

### What the Academy expects of the students:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to the attendance office when late.
- To track and be aware of their own attendance (during tutor time)

### What the Academy expects of the parents/carers:

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend Academy regularly and on time.
- For parents to inform the Academy any reason that will prevent their children from attending.
- To ensure that they contact the Academy on each day their child is unable to attend and that their child returns to the Academy with a valid reason for absence.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the Academy day.
- To contact the Academy in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from Academy.
- To inform the Academy of any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the Academy day.

**Did you know that time off for medical appointments are still classed as an absence from school and will affect your child's attendance? This will have a negative impact on learning and progress.**

- Always attend school BEFORE the appointment to get your morning mark. School is open from 8.00am. Come in and inform your Year Team Leader that you have an appointment. When you leave, do so via the attendance office. Staff will ensure that this is recorded, (together with signing back in upon their return) to comply with Health and Safety Regulations.
- Always return AFTER your appointment via the attendance office, even if it is for the last half hour of school, you can still engage in learning and collect any missed work.
- Try and ensure regular appointments eg orthodontist, are arranged during the school holidays if possible. Half term holidays are every 5-8 weeks so this can sometimes be possible.
- We do understand that some appointments cannot be changed, however always question if there is an alternative or later appointment that day- eg after school.
- Talk to the school Health Support Worker or Attendance Officer with regards to medical help offered in school. Did you know that medication can be administered/stored securely at school?
- Always obtain proof of medical appointments.

There are some misconceptions about illnesses. For example in Secondary Schools, students with conjunctivitis are expected to attend. If in doubt, check with the Academy Health Support Worker. **Please refer to Attendance Matters: Guidelines for parents/carers (this can be found on the Academy website).**

## **Leave of Absence requests**

Section 7 of the Education Act states that:

*'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable...to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and... to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise'*

In line with amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2007, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013

- To ensure the continuity of all children's education, family holidays should be taken during school holiday periods
- Requests for family holidays in term time will be refused. Should parents choose to take their child out of the Academy, they are required to complete a 'Request for Leave of Absence' form. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued. If a FPN is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer if the payment is made within 21 days. After that time it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the Academy. Please note that separate FPN will be issued to each parent for each child. All monies are payable to the Local Authority.
- Leave of absence forms are available from reception or the attendance office.
- Please contact RMBC for further information or refer to the Early Help and Family Engagement Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) Code of Conduct for further information
- Home visits may be undertaken

## What Parents and students can expect of the Academy

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at Academy.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
- Efficient and accurate recordings of attendances and punctuality.
- First day contact with parents when a student fails to attend Academy.
- Any barriers to attendance, dealt with efficiently.
- Close liaison with the attendance team to assist and support families where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of attendance through reports and letters home.
- When a student's attendance raises a cause for concern (usually below 95%) parents/carers will be notified of this concern by letter (initial cause for concern – absence)
- Where students attendance continues to raise cause for concern parents/carers will receive a letter inviting them to meet with appropriate professionals in the Academy to plan for improvement (on-going cause for concern – absence)
- Where absence continues to be an issue parents/carers and students will be notified by letter of the expectation that they attend an attendance panel. This will include the Attendance and Welfare Officer, Early Help Team representative, a senior leader and other professionals that may support improvement.
- Following this if no significant improvement is made the Academy will request the local authority to consider further intervention.
- When attendance is consistently good, students will be rewarded. This can include postcards certificates, events in the Academy and visits out of the Academy. Students with 97% and above will also be entered termly into a prize draw.

## Understanding Different Types of Absence

Only the Academy can authorise absence as authorised or unauthorised, not parents. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required to ensure a student's attendance is correctly categorised.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for an acceptable reason, for example: illness and/or medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in the Academy day, emergencies or other unavoidable reasons.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the Academy does not consider to be reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents keeping children away from the Academy unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the Academy day
- Absence that has never been properly explained
- Students who arrive in the Academy too late to receive their mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed

Where a child's attendance level gives cause for significant concern, the Academy may choose not to authorise any further absence, whatever the reason, and parents will be informed of this in advance.

Whilst most students will be away from the Academy because of illness, some individuals can be reluctant to attend. Any such problems with irregular attendance are best resolved between the Academy and the family. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend the Academy then we encourage the family to work with all involved to understand the root problem. When necessary we engage the support of other agencies such as the School Nurse and Local Authority Early Help Team.

- Each day counts for two (am/pm) marks of attendance or absence.
- Pupils who are late at Wingfield Academy will attend a detention session at the end of the school day. A text will be sent informing parent/carer of this. Students are expected in the Academy by 8.25am (and can enter the building from 8.00am)
- Registers are then taken electronically by tutors before 8.45am. A mark is added for every pupil present (/) Students who are absent are recorded as (N) no reason yet provided for absence. The attendance team will then proceed to investigate any absence.
- Once a reason for absence is established, appropriate absence codes are recorded in the register. These codes may be pre-entered where the Academy has received prior information from parents/carers (see appendix I for codes)
- Registers are taken each lesson throughout the day at the start of each lesson, including 12.45-1.00pm to record the afternoon attendance session.
- If a student arrives between 8.45-9.15am, they will have to report to the attendance office and are marked as late (L) Arrival after this time will result in an unauthorised absence (U) unless parents/carers have advised the Academy of reasonable circumstances for this.
- Sanctions, including detentions, operate for late arrivals. Parents will receive texts, phone calls, letters regarding punctuality and may even be invited into the Academy for a meeting if punctuality remains an issue.

## Response to Attendance Issues

- The Academy action plan to improve attendance will be reviewed constantly.
- The Academy will identify and monitor students whose attendance gives cause for concern. This being 95% or below.
- Returns on persistent absences will be made to the Local Authority each half term.
- Appropriate strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual students.
- After long periods of absence reintegration procedures will be followed.
- Attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The Academy will respond to any areas of concern identified.