

THE WESTGATE SCHOOL

Hampshire's First 4-16 'All Through' School

*"The Westgate School is a community of learners where partnerships inspire success for all:
learning together – achieving excellence"*

Headteacher: Mrs F A Dean, MA (Ed)

Initial Policy date	March 2018	Next scheduled review	March 2024
Governor approved	March 2023	Key person/people	DHTS
Model Policy	HCC (awaiting update from HCC)	Model localised	Yes
Pupil leadership team review	Y / N N/A		

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY (including register of admissions and attendance)

There is a very strong correlation, nationally and at The Westgate School, between good attendance and positive outcomes in year 6 and year 11.

The School maintains a live register of pupils' admission to school and daily attendance using Sims.

The School considers absence to be a potential matter of safeguarding therefore, The Westgate School will:

Principles

1. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
2. Promote good attendance and address persistent or frequent absence.
3. Ensure every child has access to full-time education.
4. Address patterns of absence and promote good punctuality.
5. Evaluate the attendance of key groups and act proactively to address any concerns.
6. Nationally, persistent absenteeism is defined as 90% and below. At Westgate we use 93% in order to address poor attendance as early as possible.
7. The school will only authorise absences in term time for a period of up to 3 days (6 sessions in any one academic year) in very exceptional circumstances such as for: the funeral of a close relative; to visit a relative/close family friend with a terminal illness; a situation where a family is in difficulty with housing and is temporarily re-located; to support provision for a child looked after (eg in foster care) or where a child has responsibilities as a main carer. In line with DfE and Local Authority expectations The School will not authorise absences for family holidays or to allow for extended periods of travel, holidays or in order to enable families to book cheaper travel options. Authorised absence of up to 3 days (6 sessions) for compassionate reasons will be granted for children of those serving in the Armed Forces where a parent is commencing active service overseas for an extended period of time, or retiring from active service.
8. Authorised absences for compassionate reasons are for up to three days (6 sessions).
9. Any authorised absences from school will be informed partly by the pupil's attendance record.

10. In line with DfE and Local Authority expectations, unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more (5 days or more) will incur a fixed penalty notice.

Parents must:

1. Support the School with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year as per parental legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act).
2. Parents must ensure any absence is clearly accounted for.
3. Parents must inform the School on the first day of absence and every subsequent day, by emailing or phoning the School by 9.30am.
4. Only request an absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance by completing an Absence Request Form.
5. Avoid taking their child out of School for non-urgent medical or dental appointments. (these absences still have a negative impact on children's attendance record).
6. Parents and Carers should contact the child's Year Leader/Class Teacher (Lower School) or tutor immediately and openly discuss with the School anything that affects attendance at School.
7. Contact the School if their child is leaving, stating new address, contact number and education provider.

Practice (attendance)

- Good attendance will be celebrated.
- The School will report attendance to parents within the 3 termly progress reports each academic year.
- The School will call or text on the first day of absence if we have not heard from parents. If contact has not been established after three days of absence, the School is obliged to either start a 'child missing in education procedure', contact the Police or conduct a home visit.
- Only the School can authorise absence and only the Headteacher can grant leave of absence.
- Year Leaders and Assistant Year Leaders will contact parents when there is an initial concern with attendance and may subsequently invite them into School for a meeting, in order to proactively improve the child's attendance.
- If, following this consultation, attendance does not improve, parents will receive a Penalty Notice warning.
- If a child is absent for a further 10 or more half-day sessions (five School days) (during any 100 possible School sessions), a penalty notice will be issued or a referral to the Attendance Legal Panel (ALP) made.
- Parents may also receive a penalty notice if a pupil is absent during a public examination or, formal School assessments, where the dates have been published in advance.
- If a pupil is absent for 10 or more sessions (5 days) over 100 possible sessions, following a non-approved absence request or holiday without permission, a Penalty Notice can be issued.
- The School has a legal duty to report pupil absence without an explanation for 10 consecutive days to Children's Services (at risk of missing).
- Study leave will not automatically be granted in year 11; therefore, pupils will be expected to attend School in the usual way until told otherwise by their Year Leader. This will be communicated to parents.
- Attendance advice and guidance on Gypsy Roma Traveller and Showman families, can be found in the appendices.

- The School will ensure legal compliance with attendance regulations by keeping electronic attendance records.

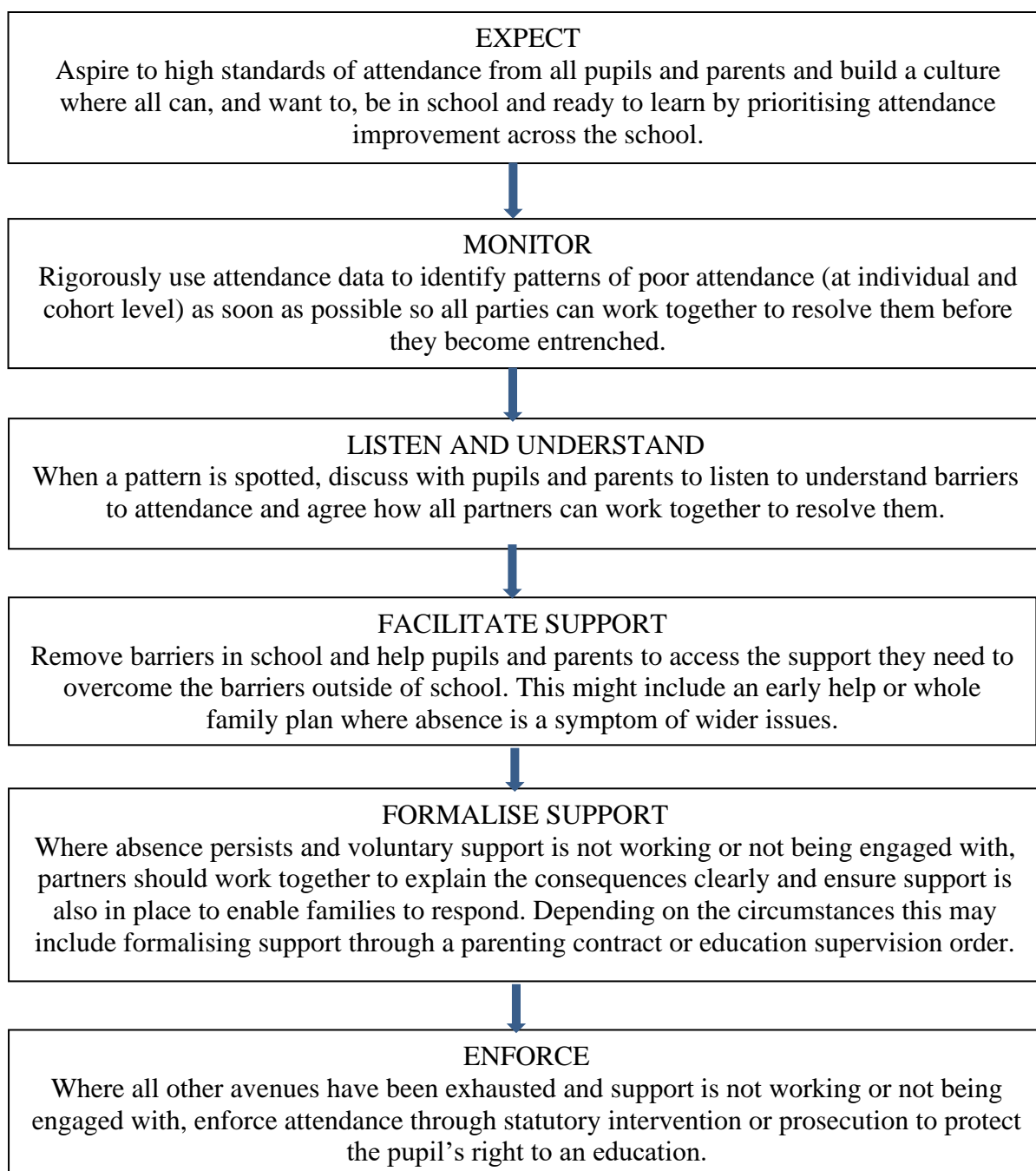
Practice (Punctuality)

- School begins at 8.30am in the Upper School and 8.50 in the Lower School. If a pupil arrives at tutor time between 8.35am and 8.40am in the Upper School, or between 8.50 and 9am in the Lower School, their attendance will be registered as L (late before register closes). A pupil arriving after 8.50am in the Upper School or after 9am in the Lower School should report to Upper or Lower School reception as appropriate, where they will be registered as U (late after register closes).
- Year Leaders and Assistant Year Leaders will contact parents when punctuality becomes a concern. If punctuality does not improve, all further lateness will be unauthorised. If a child then has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the School will issue Parents/Carers with a Penalty Notice.
- Year Leaders and Assistant Year Leaders will contact parents when pupils are 'late after the register closes' 3 or more times. If a child is late for 10 sessions, parents can be issued a Penalty Notice.
- Pupils are required to be punctual to every lesson and formal session. Lateness in the Upper School will be recorded with a code in the pupil's Handbook and followed up with parents where it becomes a regular occurrence.

Appendix 1

Source: Working together to improve school attendance (DoE published May 2022)

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Appendix 2

Further guidance and supporting documents for parents and Schools:

- a) HCC Attendance and Punctuality guidance for parents/carers:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>
- b) Code of conduct – issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from Schools:
<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-issuing-penalty-notices-for-unauthorised-absence-from-schools.pdf>
- c) Effective practice document for School attendance procedures and admissions for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children:
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-Section6.pdf>
- d) HCC Promoting pupil attendance and recording absence:
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-maindocument.pdf>
- e) School attendance: guidance for Schools:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/School-attendance>
- f) Guidance for Schools on support and procedures for pursuing legal action for non-attendance:
<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/guidance-on-pursuing-legal-action-for-non-attendance.pdf>
- g) Guidance for children on School roll but absent and at risk of missing in education:
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/childrenatriskofmissingeducation.pdf>
- h) Information on Penalty Notices for non-attendance at School:
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/InformationonPenaltyNoticesfornon-attendanceatSchool-advicetoparentsandcarersleaflet-Nov2015revised.pdf>
- i) School attendance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/School-attendance>
- j) Possible penalties for non-attendance:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>
- k) DfE attendance guidance and documents:
<https://www.gov.uk/education/pupil-wellbeing-behaviour-and-attendance#/education/School-attendance-and-absence>
- l) HCC guidance on elective home education:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/educationinclusion/service/electivehomeeducation>
- m) HCC guidance on alternative provision:
<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/education/HCC-Medical-Policy-2019.pdf>

Footnote:

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states: The parent of every child of compulsory School age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable [a] to his age, ability and aptitude and [b] to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at School or otherwise. For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that pertains to children who are of compulsory School age and are registered at School is contained within this Act. Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend School.