



WILMINGTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Statement of Intent

Wilmington Grammar School for Girls is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all of our students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. Wilmington Grammar School for Girls actively promotes 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual rewards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role, and a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and we promise to identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents/carers, students and other agencies to resolve attendance problems.

Attendance and punctuality are recorded electronically and an automatic service is used to keep the school and parents informed. Parents will be notified automatically via a messaging service by the Attendance Officer if a student is absent and the school has not been notified; see parental responsibility below. Parents will also be notified when a student is late for school.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school and arrive on time. Good attendance is essential to the all-round development of children and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. We expect pupils to attend school every day that it is open. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes puts students at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is a parent's responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.

Students are expected to arrive by 8.45 am. All students that arrive late must immediately go to their Form Room unless they arrive after 9.15a.m when they must go to the school reception where the reason for lateness will be recorded.

The Role of the School Staff

At Wilmington Grammar School for Girls there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues.

Form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The form tutor notifies the relevant Head of Year of children whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Year for each year group to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness within their year group is at a minimum
- Monitoring of poor attendance and lateness, which includes parent meetings and the completion of Early Help Notification referrals.
- An up to date action plan is in place to target poor attendance.

Timeline of School Action for Poor Attendance

- 95 - 100% attendance – Form Tutor and Head of Year (HOY) to monitor. Letter sent by Attendance Officer.
- 90 - 95% attendance – Head of Year (HOY) to monitor. Support to be offered through attendance meetings with SLO, school intervention letters/School Attendance Meeting with parents. Letter sent.
- Below 90% - Head of Year and SLT to monitor. School may consider making a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service where the absences have not been authorised and referral criteria are met. Letters sent.

Please refer to *Appendix 1* for guidance on what work should be undertaken by the school prior to referral.

The role of the Teacher/Form Tutor:

Registers should be completed at the beginning of each morning by the Form Tutor and then in the afternoon at the start of lesson 5 by the class teacher. Absences must be identified and recorded by the Attendance Officer.

Frequent absence is also a cause for concern. *If a form tutor/subject teacher notices a pattern of absence or suspects a student is, or has truanted from school they MUST notify the Head of Year and attendance officer by e-mail immediately.*

Students are expected to arrive at school on time, they must be in their form room by 8.45am.

Students will be marked late if they are not in the room when the register is taken. If they arrive after 8.45 am they will be recorded on the late gate prior to attending their morning form time.

Students arriving after 9.15 am must sign in at reception and will automatically be recorded as late. Arrivals after 9:15am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence which may result in an attendance meeting and school attendance monitoring if parents are unable to notify school of a legitimate reason for the lack of punctuality.

It is the responsibility of The Attendance Officer to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by means of a safeguarding text.
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance codes are entered into the registers
- Parents are kept regularly informed of the child's attendance figure

The role of the Attendance Officer:

The Attendance Officer will maintain and analyse all attendance and punctuality data, ensuring all data is accurate and up to date. The Attendance Officer will liaise with Teachers, Tutors, Heads of Year (HOY) and Senior Leadership (SLT) regarding attendance and punctuality, producing any reports required and making referrals to agencies as necessary. The Attendance Officers will send out letters in accordance with Appendix 1.

The Attendance Officer will send a safeguarding text to the parents/carers of absent students where no contact has been made to advise them of their absence. The Officer will liaise with the Head of Year about these students.

The Attendance Officer will keep the Assistant Head (Pastoral), Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher and Head of Year informed of any special circumstances regarding attendance.

The Attendance Officer will monitor unauthorised absences and send notification of further action letters to parent/carers as required.

The Attendance Officer will meet with the HOY and Assistant Head teacher separately in a fortnightly meeting to discuss their year group attendance.

The Attendance Officer will produce and send relevant attendance reports to Heads of Year to enable them to monitor attendance for their year group and to intervene where attendance causes concern. Reports will be sent on both a daily and a weekly basis as requested by the Leadership Team.

The Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor attendance of students with attendance below 95%
- Follow up phone calls and support when additional meetings take place
- Implementation of interventions to raise attendance of students identified as Persistent Absentees (below 90% attendance)

The role of the Head of Year:

The Head of Year will monitor students whose parents have not contacted the school on the first day of a students' absence and, if established, advise the Attendance Officer of reason for absence. If a student is suspected of truanting, the Head of Year will liaise with the Attendance Officer to keep the parents informed.

The Head of Year will keep the Attendance Officer informed of any special circumstances regarding student attendance.

Should a Student's attendance fall below 95%, the Head of Year will inform the Attendance Officer to send an attendance letter indicating that a student's attendance is being monitored. When medical evidence is requested, this should be in the form of an appointment card, a copy of a prescription, prescription medication packaging or a photograph of the medication label indicating the student's name and the date it was prescribed, a copy of an appointment letter detailing the time and date of the appointment. A letter from the Doctor is not requested as this may have a cost attached.

HOY are responsible for liaison with SLO and making any referrals for additional support in conjunction with AHT.

The role of the Subject Teacher:

Registers should be taken within the first 10 minutes of the lesson. Any student arriving late to the lesson should be recorded as 'late' and appropriately reprimanded for their poor punctuality.

Subject teachers should follow up any students that are registered as being in school but not present in the lesson by sending an e-mail to the Attendance Officer immediately, copying in HOY and AHT

Subject teachers should note patterns in poor attendance and punctuality and refer these to the Head of Year.

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below: -

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances: -

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Lateness

At Wilmington Grammar School for Girls, the register is taken at 8.45am and 1.50pm. Students arriving after 8.45am up until 9.05 a.m will enter by the gates at the front of the school. Latecomers will be recorded as late. Any students arriving after 9.05am must report to the school office where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The student will be marked as late until registration has closed (Code 'L').

The registers will close at 9.15am and 2.00pm. Students arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness will be discussed with parents at consultation evenings and/or parents may be invited to a School Attendance Meeting. Such lateness may result in a meeting to discuss ways to support the morning routine and/or the School Liaison Officer (SLO).

Authorising Absence

Only the Head Teacher or Chief Executive Officer can authorise absence. Where there is doubt, the Head Teacher or Chief Executive officer, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Headteacher or Chief Executive Officer is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation, a letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (for example leave for holidays) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments in the school day unless these are for an emergency
- Child's/family birthday

- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings need to be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information.

Local Authority Action may include:-

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Attendance Letters

Appendix 1 The Attendance Flowchart

Appendix 1 – Attendance Flowchart

