

Dear parent/carer,

Maintaining positive attendance is absolutely crucial for every young person, and you will I am sure be aware that research shows even small absences can impact seriously on GCSE grades. I am sure that you have noticed through recent communication that attendance is a key priority for improvement for some of our students at Werneth School. This is a message for all parents as we feel that our expectations around attendance and punctuality should be highlighted to everyone.

Why bother worrying about attendance?

Being in school is the only way to ensure that progress is maximised towards those crucial exam results in Year 11. Colleges, apprenticeship providers and employers all ask school for records of attendance, and it makes a real difference when choosing who to employ.

How do absence marks work?

Students are expected to be on site by 8.40am to receive their morning mark. If a student arrives in school after registration, a reason for the late arrival will be recorded and a detention may be given. When a student arrives in school after 10am, a late absent mark will be recorded in the register and this will contribute to a student's overall absence.

What action will school take if attendance is a concern?

If your child has unsatisfactory attendance or punctuality you will have received letters from your child's Year Inclusion Manager or been visited at home by the Attendance Team to raise this issue with you. If attendance does not improve, absences will not be authorised without medical evidence and ultimately a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service to consider issuing an Education Penalty Notice or to start the Parenting Contract process. This can lead to prosecution. The pastoral staff at school will work with you to try to improve attendance but if this is not successful, we will take action. All of this is in line with the legal requirements for schools.

What do you do if your child is unable to attend school?

If your child is unable to attend school you must ring school before 8.40am to register a reason for absence. It is important that you phone school on every day of absence so that we know your child will not be attending and you do not receive text messages asking about his or her whereabouts. These are sent for safeguarding reasons and so that you know that your child has not registered at school.

Can my child have leave of absence during term time?

School will not grant leave of absence during school term time unless exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the harm caused to a pupil's education by missing

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school. If the leave of absence is taken without permission, school will request an Education Penalty Notice which may result in a fine of £60. This will rise to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. This is per parent, per child.

What happens if my child comes to school and feels unwell?

If a student is feeling unwell in school they must inform their teacher in the first instance. If it is not teaching time, a student can inform the main office where first aid is coordinated and trained staff will complete an assessment. School staff will ring parents or carers if a student needs to go home. It is essential the procedures are followed and students must not use their own mobile phones to contact parents or carers and asked to be collected during the day.

I hope this shows you the crucial steps we are taking as a school to ensure that attendance is not a barrier to students' learning and achievement. If school and home work closely together, we can provide the very best opportunities for young people to succeed.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Conroy
Headteacher

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