

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

GREAT WYRLEY PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL

Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The school has a behaviour code which is described in a separate document.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Our arrangements are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. We have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

We take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. When a student of compulsory school age is absent every half-day has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause. This includes illness, family bereavement and medical reasons.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes parents keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy before or during the school day, absences which have never been properly explained, children who arrive at school too late to get a mark and things like sleeping late, missing the bus, having no uniform or looking after family.

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer. She will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed. She can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children can contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Parents are required to ring school on the first day of a child's absence when the details can be passed to form tutors. A note is made of the person who called in to report the absence.

- In periods of extended absence we ask parents to keep in contact with school to coordinate any school work that can be set and collected to be done at home.
- On returning to school parents should record a brief description of why the child was absent in the student's personal organiser. Failure to do this will result in the child being noted as having a period of unauthorised absence.
- Data on times late, authorised and unauthorised absences is collated on a weekly basis by the Attendance Administrator and analysed on a monthly basis by the EWO.

When an individual student's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the EWS will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444

Attendance Administration

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

- The DFES has targets for attendance. In 2009-10 Great Wyrley Performing Arts High School aims to improve on the 93.18% overall target. In September 2008 this was 92.1%
- The Attendance Administrator and Administration staff will contact parents of absent students who have not reported the absence by lunchtime.
- Parents will also be contacted when students fail to attend lessons having been reported present at morning or afternoon registration.

Key personnel responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs J Bowater-Attendance Administrator

Mrs J Hughes-Behaviour Support Coordinator-

Student Support Mentors

Year 7 Mrs L Lloyd

Year 8 Mrs L Wood

Year 9 Mrs J Williams

Year 10 Mrs L Matthews

Year 11 Ms E Rutter

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.