



Woodside High School

White Hart Lane, Wood Green, London N22 5QJ
Telephone: 020 8889 6761, Fax: 020 8365 8164
Email: mail@woodsidehighschool.co.uk
Website: www.woodsidehighschool.co.uk

16th September 2020

Dear parent/ carer,

We are delighted to welcome your child back to school. It has been a long time and much has changed in order to ensure that we are prepared for students' return to full time education. Our priorities remain unchanged but there have been some changes to ensure the safety and success of our students.

Covid-19 has impacted significantly on young people and their learning. Consequently, there will be a noticeably greater focus on attendance, punctuality and the direct link to student achievement. School success starts with showing up, on time, prepared to learn. Every school day counts. Our new attendance policy is available to view on the school website but for ease of reference the key information pertaining to attendance is summarised below:

Contacting the Attendance Team

To report that a child is ill parents/ carers are asked to call **020 8889 6761** selecting either option 1, to leave a message stating the child's forename and surname, tutor group or option 0 for the operator to ask to be transferred to a member of the attendance team.

Parents/ carers can notify and/or provide supporting evidence for an absence or lateness:
email attendance.team@woodsidehighschool.co.uk

Contacting Parents and Carers

It is essential that we can contact parents/carers without delay. Please inform the attendance team of any changes to your contact details and home address immediately.

What is Good Attendance?

At Woodside, we expect our students to have excellent attendance. There's a clear link between poor attendance and lower academic achievement. Missing school for just a few days a year can seriously affect students' chances of gaining good GCSE results. Good attendance means that students attend at least 97% of school; missing no more than 6 days of learning per year. Please have a look at the enclosed Attend and Achieve dashboard in order to better understand the impact of choices made around a student's attendance. It may be useful to display this at home for your child to see as it can be used to support conversations about the importance of attending school this academic year. In a year there are 365 days, 190 of which are school days. The remaining 175 non-school days provide plenty of time for appointments, household jobs, holidays, etc. We cannot afford to take a single school day for granted this year in particular - it's more lost learning time!

For every day of school missed by a pupil it will reduce their attendance by 0.5%. Ten whole days of school has been missed if your child has 95% attendance. Twenty whole days of school has been missed if a pupils attendance is 90%. By the time a pupil is persistently absent (85% attendance) they have missed 6 weeks or half a term of schooling.

Dealing with Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence - for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health - by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible. This must be followed up by a daily phone call for the duration of the illness unless medical evidence is provided, in which case a reasonable and mutually-agreed contact plan will be arranged.

What Affects Student Attendance?

→ *Appointments*

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible as missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an absence. This does affect a student's overall attendance figure. Advance notice is required for authorising these absences and students should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

→ *Punctuality*

A student who arrives late but before 9.20 am (8.45 -9.20 am) will be marked in as late. A student who arrives after 9.20 will be marked as absent for the morning session. The same applies for the afternoon session, the register for which is taken at 2pm with 2.40pm being the cut-off time.

Any student arriving after registration should enter school via the main entrance reporting to the school office. If accompanied, a parent/carer should give a reason for the lateness.

In the first instance, if a student is marked late they will be required to discuss the reason(s) and complete a late form during their break time. This will be filed and a phone call made home to notify parents/ carers. **Failure or refusal to attend the late form completion session will result in a C4 sanction for the lateness.** If this becomes a persistent issue, a student (Year 7-10) will be issued with a 45 minute after school detention (C4). In Year 11 this sanction will be issued at lunchtime.

Parents/ Carers are asked to call in to inform the attendance team of extenuating circumstances pertaining to lateness that morning.

→ *Sending students home*

A member of SLT can ask a student to go home briefly to remedy a breach of the uniform policy. **This is not an exclusion.** Provided that they return within the agreed timeframe it will be coded as an **authorised absence** if they do not return in time to be marked present when the register is taken. However, it may count as an **unauthorised absence** if the student continues to breach uniform rules persistently so as to be sent home to avoid school or takes longer than is strictly necessary and agreed. Where possible we will provide pieces of spare uniform to wear, including PE kits. In the interests of our *Attend and Achieve* approach, students will only be sent home for uniform breaches that cannot be rectified at school such as false nails or prohibited hair colours or piercings that cannot be removed.

→ *Term-time holidays*

Headteachers will not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance. Parents/Carers do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday. If leave is taken without authorisation it will be recorded as unauthorised absence, and statutory action will be taken: A Penalty Notice may be issued. Similarly, in cases where irregular attendance is a serious concern or not improving, the school will consult with the local authority Education Welfare Service with a view to commencing legal proceedings

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Given the current challenges surrounding coronavirus it is essential that the school's attendance policy reflects the need to support and protect all members of the school community as well as to ensure that no parent/ carer is penalised for following official public health advice. From the start of the autumn term 2020, student attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply in line with our Attend and Achieve approach. Although school attendance is compulsory in the 2020 to 2021 academic year, there are some circumstances where students may be unable to attend school due to coronavirus. Parents/ carers must contact the attendance team to discuss any Covid-related absences.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

a high temperature - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)

a new, continuous cough - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

For full explanation of what to do in instances of self-isolation, symptoms and confirmed cases of coronavirus, please refer to the attendance policy.

Please do not hesitate to make contact should you have any queries regarding your child's attendance. Communication is key.

Best Wishes
The Attendance Team

Co Interim Head Teachers: Holly Hartley & Lynne Hardcastle

