



Putting young people first

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WHEELS VLS CENTRE

Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Policy

Adopted September 2012

Date of Last Review: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Company Registration No. 06608327

Registered Charity No. 1157795

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Introduction:

Wheels Vocational and Life Skills Centre is a successful provision for education and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at our provision, on time, every day the Centre is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Wheels VLS Centre is committed to the provision of a full, rich and appropriate education for all of its students and acknowledges that education is vital to raising the aspirations of all students.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a student's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at our Centre is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from any education setting without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend the Centre regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this Centre, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (December 2023) Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) and Centre's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

Protecting children from maltreatment.

Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.

Detecting early support through Early Help Assessment.

Aims and Objectives

- Wheels VLS Centre aim's and objectives drive our commitment to establish and maintain levels of attendance at a rate comparable and above the national average.
- You and your child have an important part to play in ensuring that we achieve our targets and remain a provision that ensure our students take full advantage of their educational opportunities by regular, punctual attendance.
- We will ensure that our policy and procedures on attendance and punctuality are regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective and applied consistently in practice.
- We will ensure that registers are completed accurately, to provide reliable data, which will be used to identify those students whose attendance level is likely to impact on their ability to fulfil their potential and achieve their predicted attainment level. The Home School will be informed.
- We will ensure that any student, who has reached or is at risk of moving towards the national Persistent Absence level of 90% and below, is given priority. We will target our resources to identify barriers to these students' attendance with ourselves, the

Home School and ensure students and Parents/Carers are supported to find a resolution.

- We will ensure that we promote a whole-Centre approach to the management of attendance, with all members of our Centre community committed to their role and confident of their ability to make an effective and positive contribution to all students.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - Parents/Carers, pupils, the Home School and all members of the Centre community.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Report to the Parents/Carers and the Home School at least half-termly on how your child is performing in Centre, and weekly with their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment;

The Law relating to attendance;

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *'the parent of every child of compulsory Centre age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to safeguarding;

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from Centre has to be classified by the Centre (**not by the Parents/Carers**), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from Centre for a good reason, like illness or medical/dental appointments and emergencies which unavoidably fall in Centre time.

Unauthorised absences are those which the Centre does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. The Home School will be informed daily and can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or enforcement proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/Carers keeping children off away from the provision unnecessarily
- truancy during the agreed timetable
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at the provision after their specified start time
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time.
- Absence from individual lessons – should your child be present for registration but then fail to attend subsequent lessons (without permission) Centre reserve the right to amend the register code for that Centre session to unauthorised to reflect lesson absence. In the event of this happening Parents/Carers would be notified by telephone and/or email/letter

by 1st class post on the same Centre day.

Whilst any student may be absent from Centre due to illness, we recognize that sometimes they can be reluctant to attend their education setting for a variety of reasons.

Any problems with regular attendance are best addressed between Wheels VLS Centre, the Home School, the Parents/Carers and the student. If your 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 will nearly always make the situation worse.

Any student at Wheels VLS Centre identified as having **attendance below 90%** will have all further absence **unauthorised** on Centre's register and Home School will be informed.

However, should parent(s)/Carers provide evidence from a medical practitioner advising that the period of absence was necessary, the absence for the evidenced period will be authorised.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	not covered by another appropriate code/description	Authorized absence
C1	Leave of absence due to regulated employment/performance	Authorized absence
C2	Leave of absence, part time timetable for school age pupil	Authorized absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Suspended or permanently excluded (no alternative provision made up to and including 5 th day)	Authorized absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorized absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorized absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorized absence
J1	Interview (employment / education)	Approved Education Activity
K	Attending provision arranged by local authority	Authorized absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorized absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorized absence
O	Unauthorized absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorized absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorized absence
Q	Unable to attend, no access arrangements, no travel arranged	Authorized absence
S	Study leave	Authorized absence
T	Traveler absence	Authorized absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorized absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory Centre-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Normal transport not available	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	No transport, widespread disruption	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	Part of school closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4	Whole school closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Attending criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	No attendance due to public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	No attendance due to any other unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned Centre closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more education across the Centre year, for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need Parents/Carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Your child is valued within this provision and our commitment and desire to ensure your child achieves their full potential can only be accomplished with your assistance.

We monitor all absence thoroughly and any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority, the Parents/Carers and the Home School will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through weekly attendance reports, forwarded to the Home School and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

We will ensure that programmes individual to students needs are developed and implemented where specific issues are identified as a barrier to learning.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence; **at least 15 minutes before your child's agreed start time.**
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.
- Or, you can call into Wheels VLS Centre and speak to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Telephone you again on each subsequent day if the absence persists. If we are unable to contact you by telephone we will write/email where appropriate and inform the Home School.
- The Home School will be informed and will act accordingly to establish the reason for absence.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact Parents/Carers about varying issues, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed or in a medical emergency we may fail to notify you.

There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year, please ensure yours remains up to date.

The Attendance Staff:

Parents/Carers are expected to contact Centre at an early stage and to assist the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the Home School may refer the child to the Education Support Service (ESS), a statutory intervention service. This Service was formerly the Education Investigation Service and where they may previously have tried to resolve the situation, their primary role is now Enforcement Proceedings. Therefore, should the Centre staff and the Home School fail to reach a resolution with Parents/Carers, and a referral is made for intervention from the Education Investigation Service, the new Service will consider sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court, based on the evidence provided by the ourselves and the Home School.

Parents/Carers can contact the ESS themselves to ask for guidance on their new procedures. Their telephone number is 01384 814317, email address is ess.cs@dudley.gov.uk

Punctuality:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and is also an offence in law if your child attends their specified education setting after the close of register. If your child is late at the start of the day they can miss valuable learning time. They are prevented from spending time with their class tutor which can result in vital information and news for the day not being received. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the student and can in our experience also encourage absence.

Good routines within the home are essential to assist students in establishing and maintaining punctuality, we rely on Parents/Carers to assist their children in formulating routines and any difficulties that Parents/Carers have should be brought to Centre's attention.

How we manage lateness:

The Centre's day starts at 9.30am and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers will be completed at 9.30am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

15 minutes after your child's agreed start time, the register will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice payable up to £160 or prosecution in the Magistrates court if the problem persists if your Home School decides on this action. The Centre's day finishes at 3pm

If your child has a persistent late record (2-3 occasions of late on a weekly basis in a 4 week period) you will be asked to meet with a member of the Centre staff who will inform the Home School to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to the Centre on time.

If unable to resolve a persistent late issue, the Home School reserve the right to bring forward the close of register.

This could result in the Local Authority considering enforcement proceedings against you. Should this course of action be necessary the Home School will inform you verbally (where possible) and in writing.

Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect Parents/Carers to help us by not taking children away in Centre time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in Centre time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in Centre time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Managing illness during the Centre day

If a student is unwell or has an accident and is considered unfit to continue in lessons, they will be asked to report to the reception area for their condition to be assessed. Where necessary Parents/Carers will be contacted and asked to make arrangements to collect their child.

Education off Centre site

On occasion students may be involved in educational activities off the Centre site. Any provision agreed that requires attendance at another site will still be reflected within Centre's register.

Failure to attend any other educational activity will result in an absence on the Centre register. The coding of the absence will depend on the explanation provided by Parents/Carers

Summary:

The Centre has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to the Home School and to promote attendance. Equally, Parents/Carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All Centre staff remain committed to working with Parents/Carers, the Home School and pupils, and will strive to ensure that as high a level of attendance is achieved for each individual student, to ensure that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Date of Policy/Review: September 2026

Signed
(Centre Attendance Staff)

(Please complete and return to Wheels VLS Centre)

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the Attendance & Punctuality policy at Wheels VLS Centre.

Parent:
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Child's Name:
.....

Date: