



#equippedforlife

The  
Westgate School

## **The Westgate School's Sixth Form Attendance Policy**

**Date Approved by HT:**

**Date for Revision:**

## **1. Statement of Principles**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is designed to ensure that students attending The Westgate School's Sixth Form strive to achieve consistently good attendance because this will positively impact their attainment and achievements. Attendance figures are included in student's academic reports issued and could be reported in any reference written by The Westgate School relating to a student's progression. It is crucial that our students have a high level of attendance to ensure that they are best placed when applying for employment, training, or university.

## **2. Statement of Intent**

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is:
- 2.1.1 *to ensure that students at The Westgate School's Sixth Form have an attendance record of at least 96%.*
  - 2.1.2 *to make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with The Westgate School's Sixth Form; including students, parents, staff, and Governors.*
  - 2.1.3 *to provide support, advice, and guidance to students and parents.*
  - 2.1.4 *to develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data.*
  - 2.1.5 *to establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping.*
  - 2.1.6 *to challenge students and parents if low priority to attendance is given by implementing a system of sanctions and deterrents.*
  - 2.1.7 *to recognise the needs of individual students by providing support in the event of significant periods of absence.*

## **3. Legislation**

- 3.1 Attendance at The Westgate School's Sixth Form is currently not covered by the law relating to attendance (Section 7 of the Education Act, 1996) but is covered by the law relating to safeguarding (Section 175 of the Education Act, 2002).

## **4 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 4.1 This section of Sixth Form Attendance Policy outlines the specific roles and responsibilities regarding attendance within our Sixth Form.

### **4.2 Students:**

- 4.2.1 Students are responsible for:
- 4.2.1.1 *attending The Westgate School's Sixth Form regularly, on-time and ready to learn.*
  - 4.2.1.2 *when in school, attend all timetabled sessions published on their programme of study.*
  - 4.2.1.3 *register with a teacher of biometrically for Independent Study on time and stay within the Sixth Form Study Centre for the entire duration of the Independent Study session.*
  - 4.2.1.4 *attend Tutor Time, assemblies, and any other nominated activities on time.*
  - 4.2.1.5 *sign-in at Reception if students arrive at The Westgate School when the gate is closed and inform the relevant members of staff.*
  - 4.2.1.6 *inform the Sixth Form Leadership Team/member of staff if there are any problems which may affect attendance.*
  - 4.2.1.7 *make every effort to make any appointments – dental/medical – outside of school hours and will provide a written request if students need to arrive late or leave early for an appointment.*
  - 4.2.1.8 *provide a written request if students will be absent for school that should be written and signed by a parent/carer and communicated to the Sixth Form Leadership Team/member of staff as soon as possible.*

#### 4.3 **Parents/Carers:**

##### 4.3.1 Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- 4.3.1.1 *fulfilling their legal responsibility to ensure that their son/daughter attends The Westgate School's Sixth Form regular, on time and prepare for the day.*
- 4.3.1.2 *contacting The Westgate School on the first day that their son/daughter is absent for any reason before 08:30 and then on all subsequent days before 08:30.*
- 4.3.1.3 *ensuring that any holidays are not taken during term-time.*
- 4.3.1.4 *liaising with the Sixth Form Leadership Team/member of staff if any problems or issues arise which prevent their son/daughter from attending The Westgate School.*
- 4.3.1.5 *providing evidence to support any absence, such an appointment card/letter, that is signed by the parent/carer explaining the reason for the absence and dated.*
- 4.3.1.6 *requesting an exceptional leave of absence due to extenuating circumstances with the Sixth Form Leadership Team.*

#### 5 **Absences**

##### 5.1 Acceptable reasons for being absent from school as set by the Department for Education include:

- 5.1.1 *the student is too ill to leave the house.*
- 5.1.2 *the student has a hospital appointment.*
- 5.1.3 *the student has a toothache and has an emergency appointment.*
- 5.1.4 *a day of religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent/carer belongs.*
- 5.1.5 *the student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.*
- 5.1.6 *there is a close family bereavement.*
- 5.1.7 *interviews for courses/employment that will begin after the end of their time at The Westgate School's Sixth Form. Students should not miss lessons to attend interviews, shifts and inductions for part-time work.*
- 5.1.8 *university and employer open days – students may attend no more than two of these events in an academic year.*
- 5.1.9 *requests for term-time leave for essential work experience i.e., medicine, law etc. that will be resolved on a case-by-case basis. These requests should be submitted at least one month in advance, although students/parents/carers may wish to note that there is a scheduled week of work experience at the end of Year 12.*

##### 5.2 Unacceptable reasons for being absent from school include, although this is not an inclusive or extensive list and other circumstances may occur are:

- 5.2.1 *to look after a house.*
- 5.2.2 *to look after siblings.*
- 5.2.3 *to go shopping.*
- 5.2.4 *to celebrate a birthday.*
- 5.2.5 *to pick-up or drop-off at an airport.*
- 5.2.6 *waking-up too late/sleeping ill.*
- 5.2.7 *a child in the house is ill, so all children are kept off school.*
- 5.2.8 *minor ailments such as a stomachache or a headache.*
- 5.2.9 *it is the end of the week or half-term.*
- 5.2.10 *driving lessons.*
- 5.2.11 *adverse weather conditions.*

##### 5.3 If a student is absent from The Westgate School longer than a period of five days due to illness, parents/carers must provide medical evidence to support the student's absence. Parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence if a student is absent frequently.

##### 5.4 Absence will not be authorised for students to undertake employment during school hours.

## **6 Signing-In and Signing-Out**

- 6.1 It is a legal requirement that The Westgate School knows who is always on-site.
- 6.2 Students within The Westgate School' Sixth Form must register with their Form Tutor in the AM of each day and sign-in via Reception if they are late to school. If students have to sign-out because they need to leave the building, they must do so through Reception.
- 6.3 Students must make sure that they register with a member of staff or biometrically for each Independent Study session within the Sixth Form Study Centre.
- 6.4 In some instances, students may be permitted to be off-site within their directed study time in agreement with the Sixth Form Leadership Team. In this instance, students should follow the signing-in/signing-out process as dictated by this policy.

## **7 In-School Procedures**

- 7.1 The Sixth Form Leadership Team are keen to identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity to give students, parents/carers and the school the ability to intervene early and prevent further decline. We will do this by following a systematic and robust process:

## **8 Unexplained Absence Process**

- 8.1 If a student is absent from The Westgate School or from a lesson and we have received no communication from either the student or a parent/carers, communication will be sent to the nominated student contact on the morning of students' absence requesting a reason.
- 8.2 A reply is required stating the reason for the students' absence to enable attendance records to be updated; if no reply is received, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 8.3 If notification has not been received by the third day of absence, a home visit will be carried out by the Safeguarding Team. If contact cannot be made during the visit, and there is a safeguarding concern, the school will make a 101 (Police) welfare call.

## **9 Attendance Monitoring**

- 9.1 Attendance and lesson attendance are monitored each day and daily contact will be made with home where there are immediate concerns. This might include a phone call, text message or email.
- 9.2 Attendance and punctuality data will inform interventions and support that is put in place to support each student within The Westgate School's Sixth Form.

## **10 Holidays**

- 10.1 Holidays will not be authorised during term-time. Parents/carers wishing to apply for exceptional circumstances need to complete the relevant documentation at least 20 school days prior to the absence and submit this to the Headteacher. Upon receipt, a decision will be made. Parents/carers will be notified in writing of our decision, course of action and how the absence will be recorded on our system. The Headteacher's decision is final.

## **11 Lesson Attendance Concerns**

11.1 Students are expected to achieve an attendance record of 96% or above for all lessons whilst at The Westgate School's Sixth Form. Where there are concerns around lesson attendance, the student will be placed on a monitoring report. The Sixth Form Leadership Team will inform home, monitor the report, and maintain close contact with the student's parent/carers. Where there are persistent concerns, the student's parent/carers will be invited into The Westgate School for a meeting.

### **11.2 Stage One:**

11.2.1 *should the attendance of a student decline to 90% or below or there are concerns raised about the attendance/punctuality of a student i.e., patterns of non-attendance/poor punctuality to a specific lesson, a verbal warning will be given to the student.*

### **11.3 Stage Two:**

11.3.1 *should the attendance of a student continue to be 90% or below or there are continue concerns raised about the attendance/punctuality of a student i.e., patterns of non-attendance/poor punctuality to a specific lesson, a letter will be sent to their parent/carers.*

11.3.2 *an attendance contract/monitoring report will be issued by the Sixth Form Leadership Team that will be co-signed by the student and their parent/carers.*

### **11.4 Stage Three:**

11.4.1 *should the student fail to meet the targets set on their attendance contract/monitoring report, their parent/carers will be invited into The Westgate School for a meeting. This will involve the Sixth Form Leadership Team and Attendance Officer.*

11.4.2 *a written warning will be issued if appropriate and the attendance contract/monitoring report re-issued.*

### **11.5 Stage Four:**

11.5.1 *should the student continue to fail to meet the targets set on their attendance contract/monitoring report, their parent/carers will be invited into The Westgate School for a meeting. This will involve the Sixth Form Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Team to discuss reasons for persistent absence from The Westgate School and/or lessons and refusal to engage in the intervention process.*

11.5.2 *a CEIAG interview will be offered to the student.*

11.5.3 *should there be no genuine reason or circumstance to explain the level of absence, the school reserves the right to withdraw the student's Sixth Form place permanently.*

11.5.4 *students may not be entered for examinations. If students are entered but do leave, The Westgate School's Sixth Form could ask the students to pay for their examination entries.*

### **11.6 Attendance or Attendance to Lessons below 85%:**

11.6.1 Any student whose attendance or attendance to lessons drops below 85% might be invited to an immediate meeting with the Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Headteacher. The parent/carers will also be expected to attend the meeting. Should there be no genuine reason or circumstances to explain this level of absence, the school reserves the right to withdraw the Sixth Form place permanently.

## **11.7 Examination Fees and Attendance below 90%:**

11.7.1 Examination fees will be charged to students as per the Department for Education's 'Funding Guidance for Young People 2023 to 2024' who are aged 16 to 18 in full time or part time education in the following circumstances:

11.7.1.1 *Where the student has not met the reasonable conditions of attendance to qualify for free examination entry, specifically where the required attendance of 90% or completion of work has not been achieved as per the Sixth Form Attendance Policy.*

11.7.1.2 *Where the student fails without good reason to sit the examination for which The Westgate School has paid.*

## **12 Withdrawing a Student's Course of Study:**

12.1 Funding regulations dictate that a student must be withdrawn from their course of study if they are absent for 20 consecutive school days. The Education and Skills Funding Agency does not distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence for this purpose.

## **13 Safeguarding Arrangements**

13.1 The law in England states students must stay in a form of education until they are 18. Under English law, 17 to 18-year-old students must either be in full-time education, or in part-time education, and they can also be in training whilst spending 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering.

13.2 If a student leaves The Westgate School's Sixth Form either by their own accord, or have their place withdrawn, the Sixth Form Leadership Team will support the students and their families by ensuring that provision and alternative arrangements are secure so that they are not NEET. This will include:

13.2.1 *getting written confirmation, when and where possible, from the student and/or the student's parents/carers of securing alternative full-time education, part-time education, training, working, or volunteering as per the law.*

13.2.2 *a CEIAG interview will be offered to the student.*

## **14 Monitoring Arrangements**

14.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher who is responsible for The Westgate School's Sixth Form in conjunction with the Sixth Form Leadership Team at the beginning of each academic year. At every review, it will be shared with the Governors and approved by the Headteacher.

## **15 Links with Policies**

15.1 This policy is linked to, but not exclusively or extensively, to The Westgate School's:

15.1.1 *Parent's Handbook*

15.1.2 *Staff Handbook*

15.1.3 *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*

15.1.4 *Behaviour Policy*

15.1.5 *Attendance and Admissions Policy*