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1. Statement of intent

Wider Ambition acknowledges the importance of consistent attendance for students to access the curriculum and therapy provided by the school. We support students to attend as much as possible but recognise that, due to the complex needs of our students, their attendance levels may fluctuate. Strategies to improve attendance will be individualised for each student.

2. About our policies

- 2.1. Our policies have been developed to comply with all relevant legislation and associated guidance. Policies will be updated periodically as necessary.
- 2.2. Our policies are inter-related and are intended to be read, understood and used collectively.
- 2.3. All staff and governors are expected to be familiar with and abide by our policies.
- 2.4. The School Administrator is responsible for ensuring volunteers and visitors are familiar with any policies which are relevant to their involvement and for taking reasonable steps to ensure compliance.
- 2.5. By accepting and maintaining a placement at a Wider Ambition setting, parents agree to support the ethos and policies. Parents are able to access these documents via the website, or by emailing the School Administrator.
- 2.6. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring policies are implemented fairly, effectively, and consistently.

- 2.7. The Headteacher is responsible for identifying any training needs in relation to our policies. The School Administrator is responsible for arranging the required training. All staff are expected to engage in continuous learning and ongoing training appropriate to their roles.
- 2.8. The effectiveness of our policies and their implementation is monitored by the Governing Body. Unless otherwise stated, the Governing Body reviews each policy annually.
- 2.9. The Governing Bodies for Wider Ambition settings are provided by Governing for Ambition, an independent community interest company. The Governing Body uses its expertise to monitor the performance of each setting and to advise the Proprietor of any recommended actions. Responsibilities assigned to the Governing Body are limited to these advisory and accountability functions.
- 2.10. Wider Ambition Ltd is a subsidiary of Wider Plan Ltd. References to the Proprietor mean a Director of Wider Ambition or a senior representative from Wider Plan with delegated authority.
- 2.11. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) includes the Headteacher, Proprietor, Pastoral Lead, Curriculum and Assessment Lead, and any member of staff to whom responsibility is temporarily delegated by the Headteacher or Proprietor.
- 2.12. All references to parents within our policies should be interpreted to include parent carers.

3. Monitoring Attendance

- 3.1. Wider Ambition uses daily registration on its Management Information System (MIS) to record and monitor students' attendance.
- 3.2. Attendance at a Wider Ambition setting is regarded as the time during which a student is in the care of Wider Ambition staff, whether on the premises or an educational visit.
- 3.3. Although students' presence is recorded as they arrive at the setting between 9.00 and 9.30am, official attendance registers are taken at 9.30 am and 1.10 pm each day.
- 3.4. Each half day absence from the setting will be classified in line with Department for Education guidance.
- 3.5. Registers will be kept open for 15 minutes.
- 3.6. Any student who arrives at A setting between 9.30 and 9.45 am or 1.10 and 1.25 pm will be marked as late unless alternative individual arrangements have been made.
- 3.7. Students arriving after 9.45am or 1.25 pm will be recorded as having arrived after the register has closed for that session unless alternative individual arrangements have been made.

- 3.8. Where a student is late, the time at which the student arrived will be recorded to monitor progress, and all attendance, regardless of arrival time, will be given appropriate recognition.
- 3.9. Amendments to registers will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for making the amendment, the name of the person making the amendment, and the date on which the register was amended.
- 3.10. All attendance registers are kept for at least 3 years from the date of completion.

4. Absence Notification Procedure

- 4.1. Parents are asked to notify The School Administrator of absence due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances by telephone or email to the office as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- 4.2. If a student has not arrived by 9.45am and the school has not been notified of a reason for their absence, they will be marked as absent (reason not yet provided), and the Office Manager will contact their parents by their preferred method of communication. Once they have arrived or a reason for their absence has been established, the register will be amended.
- 4.3. It is the responsibility of their parents to notify transport services if a student will not need transporting to or from the setting on a particular day.

5. Managing Absences

- 5.1. Due to the complex needs of students at Wider Ambition settings, there may be periods during which it is necessary for a student to attend part-time. During these periods, Wider Ambition will commission or provide teaching through an online platform to ensure that students have full time access to education.
- 5.2. Where it has been agreed that a student will attend the setting part time, all absences for sessions they are not expected to attend will be recorded as authorised.
- 5.3. Wider Ambition recognises that, for some students, rewards for attendance may present a barrier to education. In light of this and the above points, Wider Ambition will not sanction or promote tangible rewards for students based on their attendance figures or set attendance targets for students. However, strategies to improve attendance, working towards full time, will be carefully planned, and implemented in ways that meet the needs of each student and could genuinely be expected to achieve their aim.

- 5.4. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless Wider Ambition has genuine cause for concern about the authenticity of the illness. Where a student is absent due to illness for more than 15 days, their parents are expected to provide evidence from a relevant medical professional.
- 5.5. Wider Ambition will provide support to students who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the student's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the student is able to cope with it or part-time education at school. Wider Ambition will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the student, their family and relevant members of staff.
- 5.6. For periods of absence due to illness that are expected to last for 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of an academic year, Wider Ambition will offer a bespoke education package on a case-by-case basis. Wider Ambition will inform all relevant agencies and lead a team around the child meeting which will allow a personal education plan (PEP) to be written to meet the ongoing needs of the student.
- 5.7. Towards the end of a long-term absence, a reintegration plan will be co-produced with the student and their parents to support the student to successfully settle back in.
- 5.8. In the case of persistent unexplained absences, Wider Ambition staff will contact the student and/or their parents as appropriate to establish whether the student requires additional support and carry out a review of their Ambition Pathway and/or EHCP.
- 5.9. Where families do not engage with 5.8, or a student's attendance does not improve, the matter will be managed in line with the Wider Ambition Safeguarding policy and a review of the student's EHCP may be arranged at short notice.
- 5.10. Where a student has been absent without authorisation for a continuous period of 10 or more days, Wider Ambition will inform the appropriate local authority of the full name and address of said student. Wider Ambition will inform the appropriate local authority sooner if the absence constitutes a safeguarding concern.

6. Absence Requests

- 6.1. The Headteacher is responsible for authorising absence requests.
- 6.2. Parents should submit absence request forms to the office 4 weeks in advance of the requested absence date(s) wherever possible.
- 6.3. Wider Ambition recognises the benefits of family holidays and day trips for our students. Family holidays and day trips should ordinarily be organised during the school holidays or

weekends. However, where it is deemed that a family trip would be beneficial for a student's wellbeing or the development of their social and life skills and, due to their disability, the student would not be able to access the destination outside school time, a request for absence will be viewed sympathetically. Authorisation is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

- 6.4. Requests for absence for family holidays may also be authorised, at the discretion of the Headteacher, in other exceptional circumstances.
- 6.5. Requests for absence due to religious observance will be authorised where the date is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- 6.6. Wherever possible, medical appointments should be made outside school hours. However, Wider Ambition recognises that this is not always feasible and will authorise absences for appointments within school hours if necessary.
- 6.7. Requests for absence will not be authorised for students while they are undertaking public examinations.

Appendix A: Attendance Codes

/: Present for morning registration

\: Present for afternoon registration

B: Off-site educational activity. This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing schoolwork.

C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment. The law allows for dual registration of students at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

H: Holiday authorised by the school

I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

This code should be used where a student is unable to attend due to mental or physical ill-health.

J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment. This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment.

L: Late arrival before the register has closed

M: Medical or dental appointments

N: Reason for absence not yet provided. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O.

O: Absent from school without authorisation. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence.

P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity. This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

R: Religious observance

S: Study leave

T: Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

U: Arrived after the register has closed.

V: Educational visit or trip. This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

W: Work experience. Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education.

X: Not required to be in school. This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because the pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities, then they can record those sessions as code B.

Z: Pupil not on admission register. This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Attendance Policy



#: Planned whole or partial school closure. This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.