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# Wadeley Academy

## OPERATIONAL STANDARD/POLICY

### Daily Attendance


	NAME	POSITION	SIGNATURE	DATE
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	G Petzer	Consultant		
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	C Wadeley	Principal		
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>		Deputy Principal		
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>		Teacher		
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Gregory Petzer	Director		
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	C Wadeley	Director		

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## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote punctual and regular attendance at Wadeley Academy
- Provide Wadeley Academy with procedures for recording, managing, monitoring learner attendance and punctuality.
- To give guidelines to the P, SGB, SMT, Staff and parents on the procedures and regulations related to school attendance, absenteeism and late arrival.

## 2 Scope

This procedure applies to all Wadeley Academy staff, parents and students

## 3 Definitions, Acronyms and Abbreviations


Parent' means:

- The biological parent or guardian of a learner.
- The person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or
- The person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs and towards the learner's education at school.

Abbreviation	Explanation
Wadeley Academy	Wadeley Academy
PR	Principal
VPR	Vice Principal
CT	Class Teacher
P/S	Policy/Standard

## 4 Responsible for Implementation

HM, VHM and CT

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## 5 Policy

### 5.1 School Attendance

According to Legislation (SASA sec3,1), parents are legally obligated to ensure that their children attend school if they are of 'compulsory school-going age' meaning the age range contemplated in section 3(1) of SASA, namely "from the first school day of the year in which a learner turns seven until the last school day of the year in which the learner turns 15 or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first".

Enrolment at a school places a learner and his/her parents/guardians under an obligation to attend school punctually and regularly unless there is a valid reason for absence.

It is the aim of the Government that principals, teachers, and district officials show zero tolerance for absence from school without a valid reason. Any learner who absences himself/herself from school without a satisfactory reason will be deemed to be playing truant (bunking), which is strictly forbidden.

### 5.2 Stakeholder Responsibility

District Responsibilities:

- District offices must support schools by promoting and monitoring learner attendance and following up where there is evidence that a school has a problem of learner absence.
- Provincial and national education departments must raise public awareness of the importance of regular and punctual school attendance.

SGB's Responsibilities:


- Rules dealing with punctuality and regular attendance should be part of an SGB's code of conduct for learners or a Policy specifically adopted to address these issues.
- An SGB is expected to take an active interest in the rate of attendance of learners at its school

Learner's responsibilities:

- A learner has a responsibility to attend school punctually and regularly.
- The government depends on parents, SGBs, school management teams (SMTs), teachers and PEDs to play their part in ensuring that learners accept and act on this responsibility.
- The example set by parents, SMTs and teachers is of decisive importance in building the culture of punctual and regular attendance.

Parent's responsibilities:

- ensure that the learner attends school daily, on time and for the whole school day unless there is

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a valid reason for absence.

- ensure that the learner is not taken out of school without approval and valid reason (family holidays are not a valid reason).
- inform the principal or class teacher, in writing, if the learner is absent or expected to be absent or to be late for school with valid reason.
- cooperate with the school in resolving the problem if the learner is absent from school without valid reason; and
- encourage and if possible, assist the learner to make up for time lost for absence from school.

#### Principal's responsibilities

- A principal, working with the SMT and the SGB, is responsible for developing a culture of punctual and regular attendance at a school.
- Principal is responsible for fostering a caring school environment in which the SMT and educators take an interest in each learner's well-being and are alert to problems that might affect a learner's attendance.
- A principal, together with the SMT and SGB must develop and implement Policies and Systems to record and promote learner attendance and punctuality.
- A Principal must make it clear that absence without valid reason is unacceptable and will be followed up promptly.


#### Class teacher's responsibilities:

- A class teacher is responsible for compiling and marking the class register in the class registration period on each school day, maintaining it accurately and taking it to the school office for capturing in the electronic system.
- A class teacher must ensure that a letter for absence is received from the parents when the child returns to school.
- A class teacher must enquire and then inform the principal when a learner is absent without explanation for three consecutive school days and must draw the principal's attention to cases of repeated absence so that the matter may be followed up with the parents in an appropriate manner.

### 5.3 Absenteeism

A learner is deemed to be absent from school when the learner is not present in class or not participating in a school activity when the register is marked.

School day will start in the morning at 07:45. The bell will ring and learners are expected to be at their

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class ready to start the day.

The teacher will take register in the first 10min during register period and send the information to the office for capturing.

Learners who were absent the previous day must hand in letters of absence to the teacher during this period. (to be kept on file) Should a letter not be handed in the class teacher must follow up. If child/parents refuse to hand in a letter it must be reported to the SMT for action.

Learners who were absent must collect all work missed and catch it up within two days of returning to school.


It is the child's responsibility to collect and catch-up work missed together with their parent. Should help be required the child should approach the teacher concerned at a convenient time.

Absence for more than 3 (three) consecutive days (except in the case of bereavement or trauma concerning the learner's family or in connection with an activity sanctioned by the principal) can be explained only in terms of a note from a registered medical practitioner.

Absence during a scheduled test or exam fall under point (g) above and require the same proof of absence for the learner to be given the opportunity to write the test (Refer to assessment policy)

#### 5.4 Principals' responsibility regarding Absenteeism

- If a learner is absent without valid reason for three consecutive school days, or there is a repeated pattern of absence the principal must
- Inform the parent of the importance of regular attendance.
- Emphasis the learner's duty to attend punctually and regularly in terms of the school's code of conduct for learners.
- If the learner is of compulsory school-going age, inform the parent of the legal implications of section 3 of SASA.
- Inform the parent of the risk of the learner's record in the class register being cancelled for continuous absence.
- Request the learner's return to school.
- Where necessary, elicit the support of the district office; and
- Where necessary, elicit intervention from government or non-government social development agencies.

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- If despite the intervention of the principal, a learner persists in being absent without valid reason:
  - The learner must be charged with breach of the school's code of conduct for learners; or
  - The learner's record in the class register must be cancelled if the learner is absent for 10 consecutive school days.

If a learner is absent from school for 10 consecutive school days a principal must make reasonable attempts to ascertain from the learner's parent whether the learner has been withdrawn from the school. If the learner has been withdrawn, or if no valid reason for absence is given, or if the principal is unable to make contact with the parent or the learner, the principal must cancel the learner's record in the class register on grounds of 'continuous absence'

When a learner's record is cancelled, the principal must, in writing:


- Inform the parent and class teacher of the date of and reason for the cancellation; and
- If the learner is of compulsory school-going age, inform the district office of the date of and reason for the cancellation.

## 5.5 Valid Reason for Absence

- Physical or psychological illness, for which a principal may require communication from the parent that the learner is unable to attend school, or written confirmation by a registered medical practitioner if the illness lasts longer than three days
- Religious or cultural observances approved by the School Governing Body (SGB) in terms of the National School Calendar Policy.
- Death of a family member.
- Appointment at court, social services or another official agency, for which a principal may require documentary proof.
- Suspension by the SGB.
- Acts of nature (that is, events that are outside of human control);
- Exceptional circumstances for which, in the view of the principal, a temporary absence from school:
  - Is in the best interest of the learner; or
  - Was unavoidable.
- Vacation, long weekends, or family related functions are not regarded as valid reasons according to Government Gazette 33150 / 2010

## 5.6 Late Arrivals

Late arrivals cause undesirable disruption of the teaching process, as well as other School activities.

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Learners who arrive at school after the bell rang (07:45) must report at the office and be signed in by their parent/ transport.

If a learner is signed in they will be handed a late pass (green) that has to be handed to the teacher in order to avoid further action taken.

Children who arrive late and are not signed in will be sent to class with:

- Late Arrival note (red). The teacher will place the child in isolation for both breaks by sending his/her name to the isolation control teacher.
- Children who are continually late (whether signed in or not) will be sent to the SMT for further action to be taken.

Continued absence will lead to a parental interview, final written warning issued, possible disciplinary hearing and referral to GDE.

## 5.7 Collection

Learners may not leave the school grounds for any reason without written permission from the Principal or Deputy Principal and only if requested by the guardian or parent.

Children collected during school hours must be collected from the office where a register must be signed by the person collecting the child as well as the Principal or Deputy Principal authorizing the collection. (Proof of identification may be requested)

Children who have not been collected by 14:15 must report to a staff member.

Parents are to ensure that children are collected at times stipulated in order to ensure the safety of their children.


Staff cannot be held responsible for children not collected on time as they have other duties to fulfil.

## 5.8 Permission for Non-Attendance

Temporary closure of school

- A school may be closed temporarily by the HOD in case of emergency in terms of section 16(4)(b) of SASA.
- An SGB may apply to the HOD in terms of paragraphs 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 of the National School Calendar Policy for permission to close a school temporarily for religious commemorations (if a



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majority of learners in the school are members of the faith in question), or for sporting or cultural events. In either case, the school may be temporarily closed for no more than two school days per year

- A learner may not be marked absent in the class register on a day when a school is temporarily closed.
- Permission for nonattendance may not be granted for vacation, long weekends, or family related functions as these are not regarded as valid reasons according to Government Gazette 33150 / 2010

## 5.9 Register and Record keeping

The school timetable includes a daily registration period of 10 minutes at the start of each day (07:45) to enable the class teacher to mark the class register.

Wadeley Academy keeps learner attendance data in an manual administration system

A printed class list from the school's electronic administration system is used by the class teacher for recording learner attendance.

The attendance data is captured on the manual administration system at least once a week.

A hard copy of the attendance record of each class is generated weekly for the previous week, signed by the principal, and filed for audit purposes;

Monthly and quarterly attendance returns are generated, filed and a copy sent to district office.


Any attendance record or return generated by an electronic administration system is an official document of the PED.

Cancellation of a learner's record in a class register

Cancellation of a learner's record in a class register is an administrative action, not a disciplinary action. It is not the same as suspension or expulsion in terms of section 9 of SASA.

A learner's record in a class register may be cancelled for one of the following reasons:

- Exemption from compulsory school attendance.

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- Expulsion.
- Transfer to another school.
- Registration for home education.
- Continuous absence.
- Notification by the parent that the learner will not return to school; or
- Death of the learner.

If a learner's record has been cancelled and the learner is later readmitted to the school, the class teacher must make a new entry for the learner in the class register.

## 6 Implementation of Attendance Policy

### 6.1 Absenteeism

See teacher, parent and child's responsibilities.

Letter of excuse

- Teacher to ask for letter upon return.
- If no letter is received- warning and demand letter next day.
- No letter after warning- offence issued.
- If letter still not provided- phone (SMS) parent.
- If still no response- Refer to Deputy or Principal.

Repeated absence

- Absent 5 times per term- parent interview
- Absent 10 times per term- SMT interview
- No improvement in attendance- Principal/ Deputy Principal, SGB or GDE intervention.


### 6.2 Late Arrival

See teacher, parent and child's responsibilities.

Parent/transport sign child in at office

Green late slip provided by office and kept in register pocket.

Late 5 times- phone parent.

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Late 10 times- SMT interview.

Further action- Principal/ Deputy Principal, SGB or GDE intervention.

## 7 Deviations or Contraventions

Any staff of students that do not comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.