

The Wings' CE Trust

Attendance Policy



Committee:	
Approved on:	
Next review date:	

Psalm 36:7

How precious is Your loving devotion, O God, that the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

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5.2 1. Aims

Our Trust aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

5.2 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

5.2 3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Doors open in school at 8.40 am. Pupils must arrive in school by on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50. Any pupil arriving after 9.15 will be recorded as 'Late'. Any pupil arriving after 10am will be recorded as 'U'.

First Day Response:

- When a child is absent without explanation, the school office will contact the parents/carers on the first day of absence.
- If no contact has been possible with the family and the child has been absent for one day without an explanation, the pastoral team and a member of staff will visit the home. If no contact has been made via a home visit then a standard letter will be posted through the letterbox. (see appendix 1). If no contact has been made after 3 days other agencies will be involved.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents 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 9.15 am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (U) and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents on a termly basis via RAG reports. A report on attendance is also enclosed with the annual written report to parents in July.

5.2 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a family wedding. We expect parents to contact the school at least six weeks in advance, giving as much information as possible so that a decision may be made. Forms are available from the school office.

We prefer parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holidays periods, but if this is not possible the school will consider a leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances**. The following circumstances will **not** normally be granted an authorised absence:-

Within transition periods (home/school/primary/secondary)

Immediately before and during NC assessments

When the pupils attendance records are already at or below 96.1% or will fall to or below that level if the leave is granted

The headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave:-

The child's previous attendance history

The age of the pupil

The child's stage of education

Time of Year (SATs)

The nature/reasons for absence

Holidays taken for the following reasons will not normally be authorised:-

Availability of a cheap holiday

Availability of desired accommodation

Poor weather experience in school holiday period

Overlap with beginning or end of term

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5.2 5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Each school in our trust has:

- an annual award for those pupils who have 100% attendance.
- an annual end of year 'attendance treat' for those pupils who achieve a 'green' RAG rating
- an annual treat for the pupils with most improved attendance compared to the previous year
- a weekly award for each class for attendance
- attendance contracts run by the centrally based pastoral manager (via Early Help framework) that monitors and support families to improve attendance
- termly RAG letters

5.2 6. Attendance monitoring

The pastoral manager in charge of attendance monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2)

If a pupil's absence goes below 95% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider implementing an Early Help for attendance

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. This may necessitate the implementation of a parenting contract.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

5.2 7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the CEO and other leaders to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The head of school also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Reports concerns about attendance to the CEO/ Head of School/ Pastoral Manager
- Works with the LA to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises and supports the Head of School to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Ensure all staff keep accurate registers.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the procedures for reporting/recording absences.
- Monitor daily the attendance of all children.
- Report attendance to parents/carers on annual reports and via RAG letters termly.
- Ensure First Day Absence Calls take place by the office staff or in their absence a member of the school's pastoral team.
- Ensure all absences are chased up re: reasons why they are absent from school.
- Monitor attendance weekly for any patterns, declining frequency and patterns of lateness.
- Monitor children whose attendance falls under 96.1% (red) monthly with attendance trackers for each class and pastoral staff meet monthly to discuss these children.
- Take structured steps to address any of the above; the monitoring of persistent and frequent absence (96.1% or below at any given point in the year) and the use of education penalty notices.
- Reward and praise children for prompt arrival and good attendance.
- Ensure the attendance trophy is presented each week to the class with the highest attendance during Celebration Worship.
- Ensure any child with 100% attendance receives the school's attendance certificates every term.
- Ensure that staff have accurate information with regard to attendance and punctuality for progress meetings.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher or member of staff should take immediate action by notifying one of the School's Pastoral managers, the pastoral lead or the one of the leadership team.

5.2 Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day