

# Wellington School



Honesty

Community

Excellence

Fairness

Endeavour

## Attendance Policy

**Updated:** September 2023

**Review Date:** September 2024



# Wellington School



<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Attendance Policy</b>
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<p><b>Attendance policies and procedures</b></p> <p><i>“Attendance is everyone’s business”</i></p>
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<b><i>Member of SLT Responsible</i></b>	<b>L Jaunbocus-Cooper Deputy Headteacher In support: L Vitalis Attendance Manager</b>

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### 1. Aims

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

#### **Parental Responsibility:**

*“Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education<sup>3</sup>. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home)”*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

Wellington School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be.

We are committed to meeting our 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.

## **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:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

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

## **3. Roles and responsibilities – “Attendance is everybody’s business”**

### **The Governing Body**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the School
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Instructing the Local Authority to fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **The Deputy Headteacher**

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Chairing Team Around Student meetings (TAS)
- Attending Trafford BASLM – Behaviour and Attendance Network Meeting
- Line Management of the Attendance Manager

### **The Attendance Manager**

The School's Attendance Manager is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Deputy Headteacher (below 90% (Persistent Absence - PA). Identify and intervene in patterns of PA so they do not become established or entrenched.
- Attending all TAS meetings
- Working with the Pupil Absence Team at the Trafford Local Authority
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- All correspondence pertaining to attendance and absence e.g. letters
- To work with the Deputy Headteacher and Local Authority on PRAB measures (Parental Responsibility Attendance) including warning letters and Attendance Contracts.
- Lead on statutory functions in relation to prosecutions for non-attendance at school; Attendance Order Proceedings for Children Missing Education (CME); Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
- Track and monitor students who access Alternative Provision e.g. Trafford Alternative Education Provisions (TAEP) and Trafford Medical Education Service.
- Co-ordinate and track Trafford Team together meetings and paperwork.
- Co-ordinate strategic use of the Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) tool kit.
- Co-ordinating home visits
- Attending Attendance panels
- Forming positive relationships with families
- Line Management of the Student Support Officer

### **The Student Support Officer**

The Student Support Officer is responsible for:

- Encouraging positive behaviour and set high standards/expectations for all students, including promoting a culture of high expectation around attendance and punctuality

- Signing-in of pupils who are late to School or returning from appointments
- Signing-out of pupils who are going off-site for authorised reasons (ensuring they are authorised)
- Work with the Attendance Manager and Pastoral Managers to adopt a forensic approach to barriers to attendance.
- Contacting home if a student requires collection e.g. because of illness
- Adding internal/external appointments, trips and off-site events to Class Charts registers

### **Pastoral Managers**

Pastoral Managers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this onto Class Charts
- Attend TAS meetings
- Communicating with parents about absence and recording it on the school system
- Analysing attendance data to target their interventions
- Carrying out Home visits
- Forming positive relationships with families
- Attending Attendance panels for their year group
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance

### **Hub Managers**

Hub Managers are responsible for:

- Providing meet and greet to students who find attending school difficult through EBSNA, SEND and medical conditions or who are on approved part-time timetables (see section)

### **Directors of Key Stages (DoKs):**

DoKs are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance and punctuality across their year group
- Analysing attendance data to target interventions
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement

### **Form Tutors:**

Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance and punctuality across their year group

- Taking morning AM registration on Class Charts using the correct codes

### **Class Teachers:**

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Taking morning lesson registers, including PM/P5 lesson registers on Class Charts using the correct codes
- Promoting a School culture where attendance is valued

### **Parents and Carers:**

It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance. We request that parents/carers:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
  - Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment
- Follow the school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school – using the Class Charts Parent app
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- Use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine.
- Do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

### **4 Recording attendance:**

- All registers are taken on Class Charts which records to Sims, which is shared with the Local Authority

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (During Tutor time) and once during the second session (At the start of period 5). It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Using the appropriate DfE attendance codes.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.30am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at **8.35am and will be kept open until 9.10am every day**. The register for the **second session (PM) will be taken at 2pm**.

## **The Hub**

Some students require a calmer start to the school day so may arrive later via our onsite Hub provision, where they will receive a meet and greet and welfare check from the Hub Managers. Registers still close at 9.10am. However, some students may have authorised absence as part of an agreed part-time timetable to support their additional needs.

## **Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

**Parents should report all absence through the Class Charts parent app and upload any supporting evidence.**

Parents must report their child's absence **each day** they are absent

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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 and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers should notify the school about upcoming appointments in advance using the Class Charts Parent App and uploading supporting evidence.

Medical and dental appointments should be made 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## **Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 9.10am, will be marked as absent, using the appropriate U code (unauthorised)
- Students accruing x3 Late marks across a week (to any timetabled sessions), may be added to SLT detention on a Friday so the issue can be discussed and support offered
- Students who arrived in school after registers close at 9.10am (U mark) may be added to the Room 41 detention on the same day (in line with the logical response approach in our Relational Behaviour policy). The member of SLT on



duty will discuss the reason for the lateness and seek to set targets to prevent a repeat. Failure to attend the Room 41 detention may be upscaled to SLT detention on a Friday. This will be monitored by Pastoral Managers for the relevant year group.

### **Following-up absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by telephone and email.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (See Safeguarding policy)
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Request proof e.g. hospital letter

### **Reporting to parents**

All parents are expected to download the Class Charts Parent app (See Parent Code of Conduct and Relational Behaviour Policy). You can monitor your child's attendance here. You will also receive your child's attendance figure in their end of year report.

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

At Wellington School we

- Have a culture that ***“attendance is everyone's business”***
- Have high expectations for every pupil's attendance at school
- Communicate these expectations clearly, strongly and consistently to parents and to pupils
- Set expectations about attendance from the outset
- Explain to parents and pupils why good attendance is important and how it helps pupils to achieve
- Listen to parents carefully to find out why their children are not attending well enough so that they can act accordingly
- Challenge parents who do not make sure that their children attend, but also offer support where needed. Listen, understand, empathise and support but do not tolerate
- Ensure that attendance is always recorded accurately
- Systematically analyse attendance information so that they can see patterns and trends
- Use this analysis to target actions, both for individuals and at a whole-school level

## 6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as, days of religious observance, exceptional family circumstances, e.g. bereavement

Parents have no lawful right to take their children on holiday during school term time. It interrupts the flow of learning for the child. The school will only allow it in very exceptional circumstances. An application must be made at least four weeks prior to the proposed holiday otherwise the school may issue a Penalty Notice.

None of the following reasons is an acceptable excuse for not going to school

- Time off for a minor ailment
- Holiday in term time without authorisation
- Oversleeping
- Taking a 'long weekend'
- Looking after a sibling
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Mental health days (Wellington have the Hub provision to support mental health)

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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
- Bereavement or funerals
- Gypsy, Roma Traveller (GRT) children travelling for occupational purposes
- Study Leave

## 7 Attendance procedures

Every child has the right to an education. To deny this right will cause harm to the child and their life chances.

### Stage 1:

If a child's attendance falls below 96% the Pastoral Manager will write to parents to notify and monitor attendance closely. A conversation will happen with the child to discuss reasons for poor attendance and how this can be improved. This will be followed up with a phone call home or letter to parents/carers.

### Stage 2:

If a child's attendance falls below 90% it is considered "Persistent Absence" (PA) and the School Attendance Manager will take over. Your child's attendance will be monitored for

3 weeks. Home visits may occur if your child is not in school. You will be notified by letter of this monitoring period.

At this stage, the EBSNA toolkit will be used with the pupil and/or parents to identify the barriers to school non-attendance and determine a plan of support. **(Appendix 1)**

<https://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/kb5/trafford/fsd/advice.page?id=W2a4djVQScA>

### **Stage 3**

If there is no improvement after Stage 2 parents/carers will be required to attend an Attendance Panel with the Attendance Manager and the Deputy Headteacher i/c of attendance.

An Attendance contract will be drawn up with an agreed set of targets that will be monitored for an additional 3 weeks

### **Stage 4**

No further improvement- referral to Trafford Pupil Absence Team who may issue a penalty notice

<https://www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/schools/docs/Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct-January-2018.pdf>

**Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996)**

### **Legal sanctions:**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

In Trafford the Local Authority Pupil Absence Team co-ordinate fines and prosecutions. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The 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 or withdraw the notice.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

- The School collects and stores attendance data in order to track the attendance of individual pupils and intervene quickly.
- Attendance is monitored daily through the use of Class Charts and SIMS. SIMS data will be used to create marksheet reports in order for deteriorating attendance and persistent absence to be quickly identified and monitored. Students with deteriorating attendance or those classes as persistently absent will be discussed fortnightly at the Team Around the Child (TAS) meetings.

- The Pastoral Managers at our school monitor pupil absence daily. The Attendance Manager monitors attendance on a fortnightly basis and present this at TAS.
- A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school or report via the Class Charts App in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. Absence must be reported every day the child is off school.
- Parents/carers must contact the school on each day of the absence.
- If a pupil's absence goes above 4 days, the school may request medical evidence and will conduct a home visit.
- If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the Local Authority Pupil Absence Team.
- Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### **9 Students who struggle to attend School (Alternative Provision/Remote Learning/Reduced timetables)**

Wellington School understands that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as they are for any other pupil.

#### **Alternative Provision**

We will do everything we can to work with students and their families to support them when School attendance is difficult.

Wellington has its own on-site provision called The Hub- a suite of rooms that provide a smaller space for pupils with SEMH and sensory issues. (See Hub Policy).

Wellington does not set work at home when a child is absent (unless there is a clear desire to be in School but it is not possible- e.g. post operation where a child is on bed-rest. Setting work when a child is an EBSNA can entrench the issue.

We believe it is important our students continue to have a sense of belonging to our School Community. We feel that the School has the resources and facilities and expertise for an adjusted provision whilst ensuring the highest levels of safeguarding.

We therefore avoid the use of Alternative Provision unless commissioned jointly by The Virtual School (For Looked After Children) or Trafford Local Authority as part of an Education, Health and Care Plan or is on the Trafford Alternative Framework list of providers. [Trafford Directory | Trafford Alternative Provision Toolkit for Schools](#)

We may use online learning platforms to supplement education provision in the Hub.

## **Remote Education**

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including for their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Remote education should not be viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school. For this reason, we will only consider it as a last resort when the alternative would be no education, and only after it has been established that the pupil is, or will be, absent from school.

If a child has not been able to access learning for a long time (weeks), Wellington may decide to provide work or online tuition (via a third-party provider) but only for a period of **6 weeks** and with a view to returning to School via the Hub

Pupils with long-term medical conditions or any other physical or mental health needs affecting attendance may require additional support to continue their education. Where a child is still unable to return to School, Wellington may make a referral to The Trafford Medical Education Service (TMES) and the Local Authority Absence Team Under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (s.19 duty) local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health or other reasons, would otherwise not receive a suitable education.

Wellington is a mainstream School. We do not provide remote learning long-term

## **Part Time/Reduced Timetables**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution.

Further information about the guidance we follow can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

## **10 Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **11 Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies which are published on the School website:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Relational Behaviour policy
- Parent Code of Conduct
- The Hub Policy

## Appendix 1:

### EBSNA Tool Kit

## Trafford Council Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) Early Identification of Needs Tool (EINT)

Name (pupil): \_\_\_\_\_ DoB: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by (names and relationship to pupil): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

In consultation with the parent/caregiver please go through this questionnaire and rate your levels of concern by ticking the corresponding 'level of concern' box and adding additional notes where appropriate in the notes sections.

Level of concern					
Attendance	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Reduced or erratic attendance (please comment on patterns in notes section below)					
Expresses upset/distress to leave home in the morning					
Late for school					
Expresses distress/reluctance to attend certain lesson (any specific triggers and patterns that lead to avoiding partial or full days of absences please note below)					
Missing lessons/truancy					
Expresses upset/distress on return to home					
Reluctance to return to school after a school holiday					
<b>Notes on key items</b>					
<b>Loss and Change</b>					
Loss and Change	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Death of carer, parent, relative, friend					
Death of a pet					
Sudden or traumatic event: could include family member(s) experiencing job redundancy or change and financial pressures.					
Sudden separation from a family member (including family member working away from home/area).					

Moving to a new house, school, Key Stage, area (including international new arrivals), a late start or in-year transfer into a new school					
Came from a smaller primary school and/or outside the catchment area					
Loss of a classmate or sibling e.g., left for college/university					
Changes in after-school care					
Other					

**Notes on key items**

<b>Family Dynamic</b>	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Carer/parents requiring advice and support/finding things hard					
Birth of a new child impacting relations and/or routine					
Family separation					
Family conflict including low level difficulties e.g. working through disagreements and/or different cultural considerations					
Practical problems bringing the child to school and/or problems travelling to school for young person					
Child acting as a carer to family member(s) with medical, mental health and/or substance dependency needs.					
Family member(s) who have had difficult experiences of school or who have avoided school					
Anxious to leave carer/parent (separation anxiety)					

**Notes on key items**

<b>Curriculum/Learning Needs</b>	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Low levels of progress					
PE and/or games issues					
General learning needs					
Specific subject difficulties and low confidence					
Exam or test anxiety					
Difficulties with relationships with school staff and/or particular teacher/adult.					
Negative view of school					
Problems keeping up in lessons					



Fear of failure, making mistakes and not meeting expectations					
Homework challenges					
Passive learning approach					
<b>Notes on key items</b>					
<b>Social and Personal</b>	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Has been or is being bullied and/or expresses worries about the threat of being bullied					
Appears to have few friends/friendship					
Difficulties with communication and language					
Difficulties and issues with play/break times (conflict, socially isolated and or one own)					
Fewer leisure interests in school and/or home					
<b>Notes on key items</b>					
<b>Wellbeing</b>	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
Often appears tired or expresses feeling tired and difficulties with sleep routine.					
Has a medical condition and or previously serious illness/operation(s)					
Low self-esteem and confidence					
Appears and expresses low mood					
Appears anxious and/or expresses feeling worried e.g., tearful, tense face and body posture, sweating, vocal/tics, complains of feeling unwell, stomach-ache etc., needs to visit the toilet frequently, continence needs, self-soothing behaviours e.g., rocking, fiddling with objects, rigid need for order and routine					
Keeps feelings to themselves					
Expresses negative thoughts about self, others and/or life generally					
Has emotional episodes at home and/or school					
<b>Notes on key items</b>					

Other	High	Medium	Low	Not an issue	Not known
<p>Has sensory sensitivities e.g., in response to noisier/crowded times in school smells and tastes in the lunch hall etc.</p> <p>Please see here for a broader understanding of a child/young person's sensory needs: <a href="https://www.mft.nhs.uk/understanding-a-child-young-persons-sensory-needs">sensory-processing-pre-referral-advice-oct18.pdf (mft.nhs.uk)</a></p>					
<p>Has a diagnosis or awaiting a diagnosis/EHCP or undiagnosed needs</p>					
<p>Appears unsettled in school and/or not their first choice of school</p>					
<p>Complex needs e.g., special educational needs effecting capacity to attend school and anxiety when in school (can be hidden anxiety) including those relating to physical and medical needs e.g. displays reluctance or some discomfort with aspects of moving and handling etc.</p>					

**Notes on key items**

**Planning next steps:**

Make comments regarding:

- Any strategies that you have used to support pupil previously
- What has/could work well
- Concerns you have around school's ability to support the pupil at present
- Anything else
- Your initial next steps to support the pupil based on discussions