

Bedford High School

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

To Care To Learn To Achieve



Attendance Policy

School Address	Manchester Road Leigh WN7 2LU
School Contact Number	01942 909009

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Changes History

Date	Description	Page
September 2024	Additional points to policy aims	3
	Changes to school contacts	4
	Changes to staff and governor responsibilities	5-7
	Additional information added to student and parent responsibilities	7-8
	Amendments to daily processes and procedures in line with updated guidance	8-12
	Penalty notice information updated in line with guidance	14-15
	Additional point added to students considered as 'vulnerable'	16
	Appendices	19-25

Contents

1. Aims:	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	4
4. School Commitment	5
5. Expectations and Daily Routines	8
5.1 Punctuality.....	9
5.2 Communication with parents.....	9
5.3 Absence monitoring	12
6. Attendance Barrier Identification and Intervention: Assess, plan, do, review	13
6.1 How we promote excellent attendance	13
6.2 Education Penalty notices	15
6.3 Notices to improve	16
7. Children Missing in Education (CME)	17
8. Monitoring arrangements.....	18
9. Links with other policies.....	18
Appendices.....	19
Appendix 1: Holiday in term time request form	
Appendix 2: Attendance codes	
Appendix 3: Attendance and absence data	
Appendix 4: CME Checklist and Referral Form	
Appendix 5: Attendance pathways	

1. Aims:

Bedford High School recognises the importance of excellent attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. Excellent attendance helps children to realise their potential and ensures they are motivated, confident, and able to enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Children must attend school every day during term time unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our school policy promotes excellent attendance, which is recognised and rewarded as an achievement. The school monitors attendance to ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting the children's wellbeing and attendance.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, students, and parents, and is published on our school website. Please find a copy via the website (www.bedfordhighschool.co.uk). Parents/Carers will be informed if any updates are made to this policy.

The school recognises that barriers to attendance evolve quickly and as such this policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

This Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 7 of the Education Act 1996 ('The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.)
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that 'if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence'
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 stipulates that for the purposes of Education Law, parent includes:
 - All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative.
 - any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carers.
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

Key Personnel			
Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Assistant Headteacher: DSL & Attendance Champion	Rebecca Ramsden		R.Ramsden@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Attendance & Safeguarding Officer	Nikkie Quinn		N.Quinn@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Attendance Manager			Attendance@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Pastoral Guidance Officers	D. Marshall M. Marsh M. Smith C. Smith L. Mayers		year7team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year8team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year9team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year10team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk year11team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Learning Managers	R.Lowe (Y7) Z. Anders (Y8) S. Lycett (Y9) B. Abbott (Y10) T. Rowe (Y11)		
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (DT) & SENDCO	Kerry Canning		K.Canning@bedford.wigan.sch.uk
Nominated Governor	Mrs J Coop	N/A	

4. School Commitment

We are committed to promoting the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality. We will support students and parents to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality, and we will work closely with families where absence is a cause for concern.

Bedford High School strives for 100% attendance for all students. The whole school attendance target is 96%.

We are committed to promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which all students feel safe, secure, and valued. We will ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

We will work with all students and their parents to maximise attendance and where necessary, we will arrange additional support and adjustments. If required we will engage additional support from wider services and external partners.

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all stakeholders and providing support and challenge to school leaders.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for students who need it most, by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting students needs.
- Where areas for improvement are identified, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Identified governor for attendance, safeguarding and inclusion: Mrs J Coop

Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- The implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring there is named member of SLT overseeing the management of attendance and delegates of responsibility of whole school attendance to the assistant headteacher.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Ensuring staff work with the parents of students with SEND to develop supportive approaches for attendance, where students with SEND face attendance barriers.
- Ensuring staff communicate with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to families through all available channels

Assistant Headteacher for Safeguarding, Attendance and Inclusion (Attendance Champion): Mrs R Ramsden

The designated Assistant Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school.
- Implementing the attendance policy, procedures and attendance improvement strategy.
- Contributing to the school development plan
- Reporting attendance data analysis to the headteacher and governors.
- Having a comprehensive understanding of attendance data and areas for improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students and cohorts.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through the data, and overseeing the delivery of such strategies.
- Ensuring appropriate levels of support are offered and impact is measured.
- Building strong professional relationships with students, families and external agencies.
- The management of alternative provision, off-site directions and reduced timetables.
- Oversight for CME procedures.
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed consistently.
- Leading the school Early Help provision and overseeing its delivery
- Ensuring adequate staff supervision and CPD

The Attendance Manager

The Attendance Manager is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to all stakeholders.
- Tracking and Monitoring attendance data across the school.
- Collating attendance data and producing attendance reports.
- Supporting the pastoral team in line with the school attendance strategy.
- Leading attendance and punctuality strategies, including attendance support and improvement plans and attendance rewards/incentives.
- Leading individual Early Helps and communicating with external agencies where appropriate
- Coordinating parental engagement interventions
- Implementing escalation processes in line with local authority procedures

The Attendance and Safeguarding Officer

The Attendance and Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Leading individual Early Helps and communicating with external agencies.
- Contributing to multi-agency interventions for students with complex needs.
- Promoting the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to all stakeholders
- Tracking and Monitoring attendance data at an individual student level
- Supporting the wider pastoral and safeguarding team.
- Coordinating parental engagement interventions.

The Pastoral Team

The pastoral team are responsible for promoting the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to all stakeholders and ensuring has a high profile within each year group.

Pastoral Managers

- Monitoring attendance, identifying trends/concerns
- Management and coordination of form teacher interventions
- Managing Individual and group intervention.
- Communicating with parents to overcome barriers to school attendance.
- Communicating with staff and external agencies in relation to attendance strategies.
- Facilitating assemblies.

- Form time education about the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- Rewards and sanctions linked to attendance and punctuality.
- Supporting the management of punctuality interventions.

Form teachers are responsible for:

- Recording registration attendance accurately and promptly, using the correct codes.
- Following the correct procedure when a student is unexpectedly absent.
- Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality
- Delivering form time attendance education.
- Liaising with parents to overcome barriers to school attendance and improve punctuality.
- Supporting the management of punctuality interventions.
- *Appendix: Attendance Codes

Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers are responsible for:

- Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality to all lessons.
- Modeling expected behaviours around punctuality to lessons.
- Recording attendance to lessons, accurately and promptly using the correct codes.

Attendance Admin Staff

Attendance admin staff are responsible for:

- Monitoring student attendance on a daily basis.
- Communicating with parents of absent students
- Being the first point of contact for parent of students with attendance/illness issues
- Recording / monitoring student attendance data to ensure accuracy.
- Recording all relevant information accurately on the student database (e.g. SIMS).
- Supporting interventions to improve attendance.
- Completing safeguarding checks and home visits.
- Communicating with external agencies, alternative provisions and schools

Students

Students are educated on the importance of excellent attendance (see Appendix 3). Students are responsible for:

- The implementation and review of their attendance action plan.
- Ensuring they take reasonable steps to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Arriving promptly to school (before 8.25am) and being well prepared for learning.
- Arriving promptly to all timetabled lessons and scheduled activities.

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, regardless of marital status
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of excellent attendance (see Appendix). Parents are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to their child.
- Ensuring their child attends school on time every day.
- Ensuring their child has the means to travel safely to school and arrive on time
- Ensuring their child leaves for school wearing their full school uniform correctly
- Contacting the school before 8.00am on the first day of absence. Where possible, parents should also inform school of the expected return date. Parents must remain in contact and be contactable, throughout the student's period of absence.
- Working in partnership with the school and/or local authority, to overcome barriers and

- comply with attendance interventions and/or attendance contracts.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining excellent/improving attendance by contacting the student's pastoral manager in the first instance.
- Supplying at least 2 accurate and up to date named contacts (with accurate phone numbers) for school liaison.
- Ensuring where possible, medical (or other) appointments are avoided during the school day. If this is unavoidable, medical evidence may be required.
- Ensuring holidays are arranged out of term time only.

5. Expectations and Daily Routines

We want all students to reach their full potential. Students who attend regularly (every day) are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes, are safer from risks in the community, such as exploitation and crime, as well as successfully transitioning from primary to secondary school, secondary school to further education, and the world of work.

Our Daily Attendance Procedures

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. During both the first and second session we will record whether each student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity.
- Absent; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's register.
- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention, and support processes that may need to be implemented.

The register is marked using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities), for further information, please visit - [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.05pm (Wednesday Week 2, 2.15pm) We expect all students to arrive ahead of time by 8.25am.

The AM register will be taken during form time at 8.30am and will be kept open until the end of form time at 9.00am The register for the PM session will be taken at the start of period and will be kept open until the end of period 4 (Full timings of the school day are available on the school website).

Year 11 students are expected to attend additional support sessions at the end of each day.

5.1 Punctuality

Students are welcomed into school from 8.00am, but must arrive before 8.30am. Breakfast items are available from the Bistro from 8.00am.

All students are expected to be in their form rooms by 8.30am. Students arriving after 8.30am will be expected to sign in at the 'late' entrance in L Block and will be recorded as late (including their time of arrival). Students arriving after the register has closed and reasonable checks have been made, will be marked as 'unauthorised absence' for the AM session.

Children who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of other children. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

Punctuality is monitored closely by the attendance manager and pastoral managers. Punctuality / behaviour interventions take place at the end of the school day. Parents are expected to support such interventions and will be notified via a Class Charts notification and/or text message if their child is expected to remain in school.

5.2 Communication with parents

Communication between parents/carers and the school is extremely important as this enables us to ensure that children are supported and feel settled in school. If your child is absent, you must inform the school immediately in line with the procedure as outlined above.

As a school we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children/young people. We require all parents to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents to make contact if they have concerns about their child.

In the event there is a persistent lack of engagement by parents, we may seek to secure engagement and school attendance through formal legal procedures.

Unplanned absence

We have a duty to safeguard all students.

Parents must notify the school of the reason for their child's absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.00am or as soon as practically possible. They do this by calling the school attendance office, who can be contacted via 01942 909009 (option 1).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, in which case further details may be required. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

At times, the attendance team may need to contact home to clarify the reasons for absence. Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

- Should contact be established later with parent and a reason for absence is provided, the school may amend this to authorised if they are satisfied with the reason given.

Planned absence

We ask parents to schedule medical and dental appointments beyond the school day in order to minimise lost learning time.

If this is unavoidable, attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as we are notified in advance of the appointment. Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary (i.e. not the full day).

Parents should notify the school of all planned absences by calling **01942 909009 (option 1)**. The student's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

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 to ascertain the reason. In addition to this, the school will:

- Send an automated text each morning to inform parents of unexpected absences
- Call the student's parent if there has been no contact and no response from the automated text. If we cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, we will ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. This may include measures such as additional calls to SIMS contacts, home visits and/or liaising with safeguarding partners (e.g. Children's Social Care and/or the Police)
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained
- Follow up with the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving external agencies.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or family to improve attendance
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention, as appropriate. **Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 1 week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, (accessible via the school website). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, **a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parent belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent 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 student is attending educational provision
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a student to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Medical absence

Absence due to sickness must be reported to the school by phone on the first day of absence. The school must be kept informed during longer periods of absence. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received.

It is usually appropriate for parents to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. Please read this link for further information [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/when-should-i-keep-my-child-at-home-if-theyre-ill/)

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, we will offer support in accordance with the school’s and Local Authority’s policies relating to children with health needs. As a school we need to plan how children can access education during periods of long-term absence and how and when the child will return to school. School will make reasonable adjustments for students where necessary and appropriate.

To ensure we have the appropriate pathway of support we will follow our ‘Early identification’ model and implement an individual plan tailored to a child’s medical needs to enable access to suitable education.

As a school we will adhere to the Local Authority policy [Education of students with medical needs \(wigan.gov.uk\)](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/education/education-of-students-with-medical-needs/) This policy includes a graduated response, supporting inclusive practice across all settings to ensure children’s continued links to their education provider when their health needs may impact their access to education.



Absences due to Medical Appointments

We request that where possible, any dental, GP and other medical appointments are made outside of school time. If it is imperative that such an appointment must be arranged to take

place in school time, we request that details of the same are provided to us as soon as possible.

Application for holiday in term time

The headteacher will not grant any holiday during term time unless it is deemed that there are exceptional circumstances.

The headteacher will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request a holiday in term time, they must complete the application form for holidays in term time (see appendix) and send this to the headteacher. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for an Education Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carer.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member
- Change of holiday dates

A child's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

Religious observance

We recognise that some students may need to participate in days of religious observance.

Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and;
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs

We ask that parents/carers notify the headteacher in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

Enforced school closure

If Bedford High School was forced to close for a period, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. In such circumstances, children are expected to engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

5.3 Absence monitoring

School robustly monitors and analyses attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns. This allows for early interventions to support the child/family's underlying needs.

This monitoring will include:

- Weekly attendance code analysis
- Weekly analysis of types of persistent absence
- Specific cohort and group monitoring – particularly for vulnerable groups i.e. children with a social worker

Absence monitoring allows the school to use data to identify individuals who need support and to work towards reducing persistent and severe absence. In doing so we will consider the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

6. Attendance Barrier Identification and Intervention: Assess, plan, do, review

6.1 How we promote excellent attendance

Expect & Monitor

We use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward attendance and address absences. To do this, we implement interventions such as:

- Universal offer of education, advice guidance and support
- The delivery of clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new and existing students and families through admission/transition events and our regular channels of communication
- Rewards for excellent attendance and punctuality and interventions for unauthorised absence and poor punctuality

The attendance team monitor student absence on a daily basis and appropriate action is taken. This will include contact with the parent to discuss the reasons for the absence and support the student's return to school.

Data analysis ensures that interventions are delivered quickly to address absence.

We use attendance, pastoral and SEND staff who are skilled in supporting students and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance.

We monitor the impact of any interventions, adjusting arrangements if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy.

Robust school systems provide useful data at group and individual student level to provide an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst more vulnerable groups, such as:

- Students who have a social worker, including looked-after children
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for free school meals
- Students who speak English as a second language
- Students who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Students who are known to youth offending teams and/or other external agencies

Listen, Understand & Facilitate Support

We recognise that attendance barriers can be complex and welcome an open dialogue with parents in order to address these barriers.

A range of strategies are employed to address barriers to school attendance. Sample strategies are located on the Attendance Pathways document (Appendix).



Formalised Support & Enforcement

Where attendance continues to be a cause for concern and the school has attempted to address barriers but there has been a lack of engagement from the student and family,

escalation procedures will be considered. Sample strategies are located on the Attendance Pathways document (Appendix).



Every student has a right to a full-time education and Bedford High School sets high attendance expectations for all students. We will consider the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

For any student who is absent from school, it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted interventions and support can be put into place. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the student and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed, utilising a range of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, where required.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the individual child's needs and will include the views of the child/young person as well as parents/carers and identify strengths and needs.

Assessments undertaken may identify that a child/young person is experiencing underlying emotional based needs that are contributing to non-attendance. As a school we will access appropriate guidance developed by Wigan Local Authority in respect of this: Emotionally Based School Attendance – best practice tool. This is a whole school framework with a graduated approach to support the early identification and intervention of children/young people who may struggle to cope in school/attend school.

Information from assessments will inform a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Targets) action plan, developed in partnership with families, and other services. SMART plans should be personalised to effectively meet a child / young person's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, specialist teaching and education services.

Our school will make use of the full range of potential interventions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

- Attendance Education (universal)
- Pastoral meetings
- Attendance Action Plans
- SEND meetings / reviews
- Early Helps
- Multi-agency support
- LA formalised support

6.2 Education Penalty notices

➤ The headteacher (or Attendance Champion), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the student must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same student, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

6.3 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the student attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the student's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period



7. Children Missing in Education (CME)

Responsibilities for Children Missing from Education (CME):

The school will enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the setting has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend. If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the education setting should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

As part of our duty, we will investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, the expectation is that the school and the local authority will have in place procedures designed to carry out reasonable enquiries. The type of procedures may include the appropriate person checking with relatives, neighbours, landlords – private or social housing providers – and other local stakeholders who are involved. We also record that we have completed these procedures. If there is reason to believe a young person is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate).

Staff have a responsibility to report immediately to the DSL, if they know of any child who may be:

- Missing – whereabouts unknown and unable to make contact (as a result of making reasonable enquiries)
- Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated)

The Local Authority requires Education Settings to complete the '**Children Missing Education**' referral form. (Appendix) This form should be completed once the setting has completed reasonable enquires, but failed to locate the child following 10 days of absence. The first part should be completed by school and submitted to CME@wigan.gov.uk. Further checks will be completed to ensure all lines of enquiry have been exhausted, before it is agreed the child is removed from roll.

Making these enquiries may not always lead to establishing the location of the child, but will provide a steer on what action should be taken next, for example, to contact the police, children's social care and, in cases where there may be concerns for the safety of a child who has travelled abroad, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Where a student has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days they can only be removed from the admission register under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraph (f)(iii) or (h)(iii) if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the student's whereabouts after **jointly** making reasonable enquiries. Local authorities and

education settings should agree roles and responsibilities locally in relation to making joint enquiries. This only applies if the setting does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum by Rebecca Ramsden. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing board.

In the occurrence of an unprecedented situation, temporary changes of this attendance policy may be implemented. The changes may be influenced by scientific guidance, government policy or school risk assessments which may take one of many forms. The plan for school attendance will be shared with parents when required. This will be communicated via social media, letters and emails or other methods that will be deemed appropriate at the time.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Section 19 Access to Education Policy
- Elective Home Education Policy
- Children Looked After Policy
- Young Carers Policy
- Children Missing Education (CME) and Public Mobility Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: Holiday in term time request form

Guidance Notes:

- Please ensure this form is completed at least 1 month prior to requesting leave. Completing this form **does not** mean your request has been approved.
- The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2024 states that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.
- If your leave of absence request is not approved, then the absence will be marked as ‘unauthorised’ on the attendance register.
- For such ‘unauthorised’ absence, you may be liable to be issued with a penalty notice (fine). The fine is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 per parent per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. If one or both parents fail to pay the penalty notice in full, then you may be prosecuted. The school also reserves the right to remove your child from the roll of the school. Where this happens, please be aware that it may not always be possible to re-admit your child to the school.

Exceptional Circumstances: In considering whether any ‘exceptional circumstances’ apply, the Principal / Headteacher will consider if the reasons are **rare, significant, unavoidable,** and **short**. The Principal / Headteacher will also take into consideration the factors listed below:

- can the event for which the absence requested can be reasonably taken during school holidays?
- levels of attendance and unauthorised absence over the last 12 months
- any leave of absence taken previously
- whether the leave is during the exam period, controlled exam periods or will result in not meeting assessment deadlines
- age and year group of the student

Student Details			
Surname		First Name	
Date of Birth		Year Group	
Address			
Parent / Guardian Details			
Surname		First Name	
Relationship to child			
Address (if different)			
Telephone number		Mobile Number	
Email			
Details of request of leave			
Date of departure		Date of return	

No. of school days absent		Destination	
Local emergency contact name		Emergency contact number	
Address resident at whilst on leave			
<p>Please provide details and reasons for requesting this leave of absence and in particular any 'exceptional circumstances'. If necessary, please provide any documentary evidence in support of your request.</p>			
<p>I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the school reserves the right to issue a penalty notice or remove my child from the school register for unauthorised leave.</p>			
Parent Signature		Date	

**- FOR COMPLETION BY THE
SCHOOL -**

Authorised	Y / N
Exceptional Circumstances	
Signature	
Name / Position	
Date	

Appendix 2: Attendance codes

Code	Definition
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
K	Attending Education provision arranged the LA
B	Attending any other approved educational activity (approved by the LA)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registered
E	Excluded
G	Unauthorised holiday
H	Authorised holiday
I	Unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).
J1	Interview
L	Late arrival
M	Medical/Dental appointment
N	No reason of absence yet provided
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Sporting Activity
Q	Unable to attend school because of lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registration has closed)
V	Educational trip or visit
X	Not compulsory
W	Work Experience
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not been available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed unexpectedly
Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
Z	Student not on roll
-	All students should attend

Appendix 3: Attendance and absence data

The tables below equate percentage attendance to time missed from school.

Table 1: Attendance over one whole school year for each student

Attendance	Missed Days
100%	0
98%	Less than 4 days / 8 sessions
97%	Less than 5 days / 10 sessions (school target)
95%	Less than 10 days / 20 sessions
90%	20 days / 40 sessions
85%	27 ½ days / 55 sessions
80%	37 ½ days / 75 sessions

Table 2: Attendance over 5 years for each student

Attendance	Missed Weeks
85-90%	19 weeks – ½ year absence from school
80%	38 weeks = 1 full year absence from school

What does ‘percentage attendance’ mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that the Government have categorised those students who have attendance of 90% and below as ‘Persistent Absent’ students (PA). The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days Missed	Equivalent Sessions Missed	Equivalent Weeks missed	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 days	18 sessions	1.4 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	38 sessions	3.4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	58 sessions	5.4 weeks	145 lessons
80%	36 days	72 sessions	7.1 weeks	180 lessons
75%	48 days	96 sessions	9.3 weeks	240 lessons

As of May 2022, the Department for Education have categorised those students who have attendance of 50% and below as ‘Severely Absent’ students. The Department for Education advise for all students who fall within this category to have a robust multi-agency plan and approach in place to support.

Appendix 4: CME referral form



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION REFERRAL & CHECKLIST

As outlined in the statutory guidance for Local Authorities 'Children Missing from Education' are children of compulsory school age who are not a registered student at a school or are not receiving suitable education other if they are not registered at a school.

Where a student has not returned to school for ten days without authorisation the school and the local authority have a responsibility to jointly make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. The appropriate completion of this checklist ensures that the Local Authority and school have fulfilled this responsibility.

It is school's responsibility to follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner and every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. If you require advice and guidance, please contact the Children Missing Education inbox CME@wigan.gov.uk. Where there are concerns in relation to safeguarding or child protection issues contact the Children First Partnership Hub on 01942 828300.

It is important that one checklist is completed for each child within the family, please do not include all children on one.

During the first 10 days of absence (reason unknown), school must complete this referral form and checklist. Once completed if the child's whereabouts remains unknown, please make a referral to the Children Missing Education CME@wigan.gov.uk within 5 days or earlier if all checks have been completed.

At any point if you feel a child is at risk of significant harm, FGM, human trafficking or sexual exploitation refer immediately to social care please contact 01942 828300

Please note that if the child is residing or located in the Wigan Borough, they are not a CME and should not be removed from school roll. Policies in relation to school attendance should be followed in these cases.

CHILD'S INFORMATION:

Child's Name:		DOB:
Child's Address:		
Previous Address: (if known)		
School:		
Parent/carer's names:		
Parent/carer's address:		
Contact names & numbers: (include emergency)		
Any known siblings & school:		

<u>Name of Member of staff completing form</u>			
<u>School checklist</u>	<u>Dates/Times</u>	<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>Name</u>
School to attempt to contact parent on first day of absence. This includes Truancy Call, First Day calling, Text, Email, all emergency contacts. Please detail all contact methods - whether a message was left, if the phone is working, is there an international dialling tone.			
School to check possible whereabouts with staff and students? This should include checking with family friends, all staff members, the child's friends, social media Contact all emergency contact numbers you hold in school.			
Visit to address(es) by school. Leave card if no answer Does the property look empty? Is someone at home but not answering the door? NB if school policy does not permit home visit a police welfare check to be requested			
Contact made with involved agencies within 5 working days (Social Care, EMAS team, School Nurse etc)			
Contact made with agencies to understand when they last had contact/saw the child (no consent needed) - Social care - school nurse (when did health have any			

contact with the child)			
School to contact the new school or Local Authority the child is believed to have moved to? What were the outcomes? https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council			
NB – Has the child been seen? State when & by whom If not seen, what further action has been taken? (Refer to CME Policy Doc for advice)			

Reason for CME checks:	
Any other agencies involved:	
Known vulnerability/risk factors Do you feel this child is at risk of harm or neglect Y/N please provide detail:	
Is this child Gypsy Roma Traveller? Y/N	
Is this child parents service personnel? Y/N	
Has this child had any Missing from home episodes? Y/N	
Is this child known to the Youth Justice System? Y/N	
Does this child have any SEN/learning needs? Y/N	
Are there any other vulnerabilities you are aware of? Please provide detail;	
Date:	

All boxes must be completed, of not relevant please enter N/A

ALL BOXES MUST BE COMPLETED, IF NOT RELEVANT PLEASE ENTER N/A

Please submit this referral to CME@wigan.gov.uk

Appendix 5: Addressing Attendance Barriers: Attendance Pathways

Consider levels of engagement from parents/carers

Cycle of Assessment - Assess/plan/do /Review

EXPECT – High standards of attendance for all. Building a culture where all children can and want to be in school.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND Voice of Child/Parent. Meeting with the pastoral team and parents to outline concerns. Reasonable adjustments to be made to try to resolve the problem easily and quickly.

EBSA/SEMH

School level Intervention L1
 AC Intervention – Appendix
 Voice of child – Signs of Safety
 Daily Check In
 Communication with staff
 TATC
 Adaptions to timetable
 Regular KIT with parents
 MHST
 EBSA Resources - Appendix
 RESET Room
 Young Minds NSPCC
 (resource)

SEND

School level Intervention L1
 Discussion with SENCO/Assistant
 SENCO
 Consider Pre-send register
 Assess through QFT
 Voice of child
 Understand barriers
 Make reasonable adjustment
 Gather student/parent voice
 Internal TAC
 Gather baseline assessments
 Internal referrals
 AS/SEND/RESET
 Implement plan of support
 Consider EHCP/Review

CLA

School level Intervention L1
 Partnership Working
 PEP plan
 Additional Funding
 Consideration PGO/PM support
 Extra Tuition
 External agency support
 SENCO support
 Adaptions to timetable
 Home Visits
 CLA review
 Voice of the child

Home Circumstances

School level Intervention L1
 Sign post parents – appendix
 Young Carers referral
 Signpost YP - Online support
 Free bus pass/Food Vouchers
 Home visits/support
 Adaptions to timetable
 Voice of the child/family
 Partnership working
 Citizens advice
 Talk, Listen, Change referral
 Family Transition Parenting
 Wigan wellbeing & Resilience
 (housing)

Medical

School level Intervention L1
 NHS Guidance on
 absence
 School Nurse drop in
 Liaise with medical
 professional
 Medication on site
 Adaptions to timetable
 Time out Pass
 Safe place in school
 Voice of Child
 Reasonable Adjustments
 Time out pass.
 Access RESET room

FACILITATE SUPPORT – Removing the barriers and help students and parent access the support they need to overcome the barriers. Framework of support – Multi-Agency approach. Early Help Referral/CIN/CP

School level Intervention L2

Graduated approach
 Engagement Centre
 Alternative Provision
 Add to SEND Register
 Learning Plan (SEND)
 CAMHS referral

School level Intervention L2

Consider adding to SEND reg
 Discuss in RDP meeting
 Advice from external agency
 EP/TESS/SALT support
 Big Picture meeting/EH
 Specialist Teacher assess
 Consider EHCP request
 Blended offer
 Alternative Provisions

School level Intervention L2

Extra Tuition
 Virtual School Support
 Alternative Provision
 Psychological Assessments
 BASE (ASC)
 CSC/Social worker support
 PEP Reviews
 CLA reviews

School level Intervention L2

EH drop in
 School based EH L 2 or 3
 Or refer Startwell/CSC
 CSE/CCE referral
 STEER/TYSS
 We are with you referral
 Community Resilience ref
 Wigan Family Welfare
 Aspiration Centre

School level Intervention L2

Health Care Plan
 Specialist Training of staff
 RTT
 Three Towers provision
 Specialist Nurse involvement
 Asthma/Epilepsy/Diabetes
 etc
 Involve Primary Health
 Care sector in meetings

FORMALISED SUPPORT – Where absence persist and support not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place so that families can respond

ENFORCE – Where support is not working or being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution (case by case discussion with LA)

