



Attendance Policy

This policy was approved and ratified by
Wadebridge School on Friday 1st December 2023

Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review
V1	Mr L Bateman	January 2019	January 2019	November 2023
V2	Mr S Simmonds	November 2023	December 2023	September 2024



Principles

We strive to provide a welcome, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels valued and safe.

Policy statement

We are committed to providing excellent education for every child, every day, and aim to strengthen and work with our community to continue to improve attendance in our school.

Scope and purpose

This policy applies to all school leaders, staff, parents and pupils.

The purpose of the policy is to outline the specific roles, responsibilities and actions required by everyone in order to continue to improve the attendance of all pupils in all of our school.

Legal framework

This Policy will be published on the school's website and as a statutory policy will be regularly reviewed by SLT and Trustees at Wadebridge School.

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- a. The Education Act (1996)
- b. The Education Act (2002)
- c. The Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- d. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)
- e. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2010)
- f. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2011)
- g. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- h. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2016)
- i. The Education (Penalty Notices) England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- j. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.



Introduction

The Attendance Policy operates within the context of the school's culture. It is the aim of leaders to support every pupil to attend school each day in order to fulfil their academic and social potential.

To realise this aim, the school will work in partnership with parents / carers, the local authority, and outside agencies to offer pupils support in maintaining excellent attendance. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Improving attendance is everyone's business: effective communication and joined up working are paramount.

Excellent attendance is a pre-requisite of academic success. The school will ensure that parents are kept well-informed about the link between attendance and attainment and that when academic progress is jeopardised, this message is clearly reiterated, and support is offered to remove any existing or emerging barriers to attendance.

School leaders will ensure there is a calm, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment where pupils want to be present and are eager and ready to learn.

The policy should be implemented alongside the Department for Education guidance document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote a welcoming atmosphere that makes students feel safe and valued.
- Establish, develop and maintain good relationships between the school and parents/carers.
- To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and absence followed up quickly.
- To ensure all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, in order to strive to attain them.

Who is responsible for this policy?

The Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership Team have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for fulfilling their roles and supporting to ensure its success.



Responsibilities

All children aged 5 - 16 years must receive suitable education. (Section 7, *Education Act (1996)*). A pupil of compulsory school age who is registered at a school must, by law, attend regularly.

By law, parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, *Education Act (1996)*).

The Local Authority (LA) must offer educational provision for all children of school age.

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 from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil will attend the school.

By law, all schools must keep an admissions' register, the contents of which includes all pupils, their personal details, (including parent/carer and emergency contact telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.

Pupils will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils from roll and notifying the local authority.

There is a clear link between attainment and attendance. Under **section 444 (1)** of the **Education Act 1996** (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered. We therefore enforce the use of statutory action to encourage and promote attendance, this is done to ensure that all pupils can benefit from their legal right to receive an education.

The school will communicate attendance concerns to the pupil's social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the pupil is a looked after child. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and Virtual School Head, where relevant.



Definitions

A pupil is classed as absent if they arrive after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.

An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:

- a. an absence for illness for which we have granted leave,
- b. medical or dental appointments may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency,
- c. religious or cultural observances for which we have granted leave. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

An unauthorised absence is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:

- a. parents keeping children from attending unnecessarily or without reason,
- b. missing sessions during the school day,
- c. arrival after the register has closed,
- d. day trips and holidays in term time and
- e. leaving school without authorisation during the school day.

Persistent absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised. 10% absence equates to **19 school days lost** over the school year.

Severe absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised. 50% absence equates to **95 school days lost** over the school year.

Monitoring and Reviewing Attendance

We recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality, daily and weekly throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of pupils may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.

We set challenging attendance targets for the whole school.

Pupil-level absence data is collected regularly and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. We regularly compare our attendance data to the National, Southwest and Local Authority averages.

Specific measures are taken to monitor attendance. These processes are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the effective safeguarding of all pupils. Fortnightly meetings are held to monitor attendance. These meetings are embedded to ensure effective safeguarding of all pupils. The following trends are identified and acted upon:



- a. Patterns of absence
- b. Patterns of lateness
- c. Patterns of medical appointments
- d. Correct and consistent use of absence codes
- e. Trends in reasons for absence, for example, use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions
- f. Trends in particular groups of children for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Attendance data informs action planning and supports the identification of key priorities in the SIP & SEF documents and future revisions of this policy.

The attendance data is shared regularly with trustees, SLT and all other relevant staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.

Data will also be used by the school to monitor the impact of any interventions put in place to improve attendance and to modify them and inform future strategies.

Reviewing this policy

Following the review of Wadebridge School Attendance Policy dated January 2019, this current policy (V2) will next be reviewed September 2024.