WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy for Parents

2025-2026

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Approved By:	**Head Teacher**

WEXHAM COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PARENTS

Preparing every child to become a successful individual in an ever evolving world.

Build belonging, Strive for excellence and Do the right thing.

At Wexham Court Primary School we are proud of the diversity of our students and staff and are committed to promoting a positive and inclusive culture in which all are valued and supported to fulfil their potential irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion, beliefs, sex or sexual orientation. We acknowledge that we are all influenced by implicit bias, or the stereotypes that unconsciously affect our decisions and that this can negatively impact traditionally marginalised and disenfranchised students. In all areas of our school, we strive to understand and appreciate all aspects of diversity, equality and inclusion and proactively adapt our school policies and procedures accordingly.

Values

At Wexham Court we recognise that attendance and punctuality are of the utmost importance during the pupils' time at school and later as a functioning member of society. We expect pupil's attendance to be 100% and for pupils to arrive at school before it starts. This is a basic and uncompromisable expectation. We understand that occasionally pupils may be absent for good reason or very occasionally they may be late. Our expectations are underpinned by the school vision, which aims to support the development of pupils for education to employment. Our aim is to do this is an supportive manner together.

Daily attendance ensures that pupils cover the whole national curriculum in depth. Wexham Court's curriculum builds up incrementally throughout the week, therefore a missed session, will have an impact on the learning for the next day. Our values support this:

Do the right thing – pupils must be taught the value of education such as attendance and punctuality, this must be modelled by parents/carers.

Build belonging – the longer pupils are away from school, the more they will struggle to return. This is because they become anxious about what they have missed and about friendship groups.

Strive for excellence – we encourage pupils to do their very best they can and use the knowledge they acquire in school to challenge their learning further.

The Governors and school believe, that to achieve this target we need to work as a three-way partnership with parents, the school and the children working together and communicating.

In order for all children to achieve their full potential we expect children to make the right choices and choose to:

- be ready
- be safe
- be respectful

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education and due to this we firmly believe that children should be in school every day. We aim:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To monitor attendance and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
- To acknowledge and celebrate a successful record of attendance.
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school from all staff
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parent and pupils
- To ensure that all stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To work effectively with other services and agencies to support these objectives

1. Procedures

Class registers are recorded using sims. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. (See appendix 1 for the school timings). Once the register has been submitted by the teacher, SIMs is closed down. Register closes at 8:55 Any child who arrives between 8:45 and 8:55 is classed as late and has to go to the school office so they can be marked as present in the register. Afternoon registers are also submitted in the same way.

We understand that if your child is unwell they will not be able to attend school. If your child is absent as a result of illness, you should phone the school on 01753 524 989 on the first day of

the absence, and leave a message on the pupil absence line. When your child is well enough to return to school you must provide an explanation for the absence.

Absences due to illness, religious observation and certain medical appointments, for which we receive an explanation, are given an authorisation code in the registers. Although we strongly advise any medical and dental appointments to be made outside of school hours, we also assume that on the odd occasion when this is not possible, the child is only taken out of school for the appointment and then returned to continue their lessons as soon as possible. Absences, for which we receive no explanation, remain as unauthorised absences in the registers. It is the school's policy to phone/text parents to discuss any unexplained absences.

Should a parent wish to take their children out of school for any reason during term time, the request must be placed in writing by our 'Request for absence in term time application form'. You can obtain a copy from either the school office or download it from the school website. This is highly discouraged and often not granted because pupils miss far too much learning, which cannot be made up. Some requests for very exceptional reasons may be authorised however these requests may be analysed, and parents/carers will be asked to provide supporting documents.

Parents occasionally request the Head Teacher to authorise absences for family holidays. In line with the Local and National Government guidance, the Governing body and Head teacher at Wexham Court Primary School have instructed **that no holiday absence be authorised**. School is closed for sufficient weeks each year for families to make arrangements to take holidays that do not impact on their child's education.

Any absences either side of the school holidays will result in a thorough investigation and medical evidence may be required. Any unauthorised absences may also result in a fixed Penalty Notice being issued, whereby each parent is fined £160.00 per child, but if paid within 21 days is reduced to £80.00 per child per parent, which takes effect on the fifth day of absence. (See appendix 3 for Penalty Notice Charges)

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Wexham Court has a vibrant community who have family in many other parts of the world. Therefore, we receive many requests to go abroad for family emergencies. The school is not unsympathetic to such requests. However, before agreeing to such a request, we may ask for further information regarding the visit. Please do not be offended as we must follow this

procedure for all such requests. If you are requesting time off near a holiday period, we may ask that you move the dates requested to the holiday period.

2. Monitoring

All absences are monitored. High levels of unauthorised absences, regular days off or long periods of absences will be investigated by the school's Attendance Officer. Parents may be requested to come to an Attendance Panel to discuss how together we can improve the child's absence record.

The school defines anything below 96% as a concern and therefore a member of SLT may approach parents to discuss the child's attendance, including Nursery classes. Whilst it is not statutory to attend nursery, once you have enrolled in the school, it is mandatory that pupils attend in line with our policy.

Our internal monitoring may also identify one or more specific groups of pupils at the school who have a level of absence higher than the national average for that group, which will result in the school taking appropriate action. Our internal monitoring focuses on, amongst others, the following groups:

- Looked after children
- Free school meal eligibility
- Gender
- Year groups
- First language
- Ethnicity
- SEN

3. Persistent Absence definition absence

A pupil will be considered to be persistently absent if he/she is away for over 10% of school sessions in an academic year. When our internal monitoring identifies any pupils who breach the annual threshold defining persistence absence, then their parents will be asked to attend a meeting with a member of SLT, in order that the attendance can be improved. If the schools feels it necessary or where there are other areas of concern, we may contact external agencies, such as the Early Help services or Child Protection services. The Governing body may also be advised to set a target to reduce the percentage of persistent absence at the school the following

academic year. We firmly believe that persistent absence has a negative effect on a child's educational welfare and impacts adversely on their later life. Attendance is to be reported daily to the LA, to the DFE and termly to governors.

If a child is absent for more than 20 days, on the 21st day the school will complete a CME form (Children Missing Education) which will then be forwarded to the LA. The parent will be contact via written communication (letter or email) to advise when their child will be removed from our registers and advised that the parent will need to contact LA to be placed back on the waiting list for that year group. A school cannot retrospectively delete a pupil's name from the admission register or attendance register. The admission register and attendance register must be an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. A pupil's attendance must be recorded up until the date that the pupil's name is deleted from the admission register.

A school can only remove a child's name from the school roll in particular circumstances, as set out in Regulation 9 of Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted. A pupil's name must not be removed for any other reason and doing so could constitute off-rolling. In accordance with regulation 13(4) to (6), a school must make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register (a Deletion Return). This does not apply where the pupil's name is deleted at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the school's most senior class.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Parents:

A "Parent" is defined as:

Any natural parent, whether married or not, any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their child receives their entitlement to their education by:

- Ensuring that their child comes to school on time, every day.
- To take on board advice around improving attendance
- Engage with agencies around attendance

- Calling the school on the first day's absence to explain absence.
- Providing a written explanation for the absence.
- Promoting a good attitude towards school and attendance.
- Converse with their children, preparing them for the day
- Working in partnership with the school to improve their child's attendance, when necessary.
- Ensure their children enter the school safely in the morning. If in Upper Primary, they may walk to school alone, if the parent feels their child is cognitively able to. Only pupils from Years 5- 6 can walk home alone, but only if agreed by the class teacher upon receiving a written request from the parent/carer.
- Ensure their child is picked up by an adult, or if in Years 1 – 6 a sibling aged 14 or above.
- Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that a child registered at a school between the ages of 5-16 (compulsory school age) should attend school regularly. If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.

This policy promotes attendance of 96+% so that children access their full learning in school. A lack of attendance impacts staffing, particularly teachers who then must make efforts to help these children catch up school. This also leads to learning gaps in data from the sessions missed on that day. We encourage you to work with us and send your child to school every day that they are well.

4.2 Class teacher:

- To ensure the daily registers are taken, effectively and efficiently twice a day.
- To look at attendance outcomes each week and act quickly in order to avoid it getting worse. This means talking to parents about it.
- To discuss individual attendance and punctuality targets at parent's evenings.
- To ensure any communication from parents is passed to the school attendance officer, Lyn Goddard, promptly.
- To ensure quality first teaching every day, with lessons that are well planned, scaffolded and resourced so that children are challenged and inspired.

- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To establish good and effective communication links with parent/carers and discuss regular lateness or absence without delay and keep discussing it until it is resolved.
- To promptly inform the Head of Year and Senior Leadership Team of pupils who persist with poor attendance.
- Note what the children have missed in terms of their learning and act on this.

4.3 Attendance Champion: Mrs Andrea Whitfield. Attendance Officer: Mrs Lyn Goddard

The Attendance Officer will:

- To carry out and record the outcome of the first day's calls.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents.
- To implement daily checking of Sims.
- To promptly inform the Attendance Champion and Head teacher, if there are any concerns.
- To record holiday requests.

The Attendance Champion will:

- To monitor and record weekly/half-termly class attendance and inform Heads of Years of this data.
- To promptly inform the Head teacher, if there are any concerns.
- To work with teachers to ensure that all relevant information is shared and that they are promoting good attendance.
- To carry out monthly individual attendance for each pupil and give information to the Head teacher
- To undertake monthly meetings with the Head Teacher to discuss any concerns, which may result in sending out letters.
- To report to the Local Authority as requested.

4.4 Head Teacher:

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- The attendance work is delegated to the school attendance officer Lyn Goddard and the Attendance Champion Mrs Andrea Whitfield
- To meet with School Attendance Officer and Attendance Champion to discuss concerns.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave.
- To consider the use of penalty notices.
- To lead on responsibility for attendance and punctuality.
- To oversee the analysis of the weekly, monthly, termly, yearly data and respond to findings.
- To liaise with external agencies such as Attendance and Children Missing in Education Officer where necessary.
- To work with teachers to ensure that all relevant information is shared and that they are promoting good attendance.
- To revise and amend the policy as required.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.

To meet with parents of persistent absences.

4.5 Strategies for promoting /rewarding excellent attendance

- Attendance certificate for 100% attendance and for most improved in assembly
- Weekly school newsletter
- Breakfast club
- The school learning environment
- Staff promoting good attendance
- Termly attendance letters
- End of term attendance certificates

- End of year attendance rewards
- Developing healthy competition between classes/ Year groups
- Parent/ teacher consultations
- School clubs

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following DFE Guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve Attendance

Please note:

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

This is a true version signed by

Miss N Mehat Headteacher

Signed: Date:

Review date: Summer 2026

Appendix 1 Start and Finish Times

Listed below are the official start and finish times for both Lower and Upper Primary, Nursery and Reception classes.

NURSERY:

- Morning session: 8.45am to 11.45am (the gate will close 15 minutes after the start time and 15 minutes before the finish time)
- Register closes at 9:05am
- Afternoon session: 12.30pm to 3.30pm (the gate will close 15 minutes after the start time and 15 minutes before the finish time)

RECEPTION TO YEAR 6

There is a soft open and close

- Start of school - 8.30 to 8.45am
- Register closes at 8:55
- End of day - 3.15 – 3.30pm

It is advisable to come a bit after 3.15pm as congestion clears by then

Appendix 2 Penalty Notice Charges

Penalty Notice Changes

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following will come into force for absences that start after 19th August 2024. This is nationwide and also across borders if you move school or house.

Term Time Leave is only allowed in exceptional circumstances communicated in advance with evidence provided as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days

Second Offence

Within 3 years of the first offence
The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
No reduction for early payment.

Third Offence onwards
Within 3 years of the first offence

The third time an offence is commited for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Fines can be around £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found to be guilty in Magistrates' Court can show as a criminal record and also on the parent's future DBS certificates due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education.

Don't Forget

Penalty Notices are issued **Per Parent, Per Child.**
For example 3 siblings absent would result in each parent receiving 3 fines.
This could amount to £960

Please ensure you communicate with your child's school.

Term Time Leave is only allowed in exceptional circumstances communicated in advance with evidence provided as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

10 sessions in 10 weeks - Penalty Notices will be considered for any 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks.
5 Consecutive days of term time leave can trigger a Penalty Notice

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