WANDSWORTH
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy applies to all age groups in the school, including the EYFS

Date of last review: July 2026
Date for next review: July 2027

This policy outlines the shared responsibility between the school, students, parents, and the broader community in promoting regular attendance. The goal is to ensure that every student reaches their full potential through consistent and punctual attendance, fostering a supportive and collaborative approach to addressing attendance challenges. This policy should be read in line with the attendance section in the Safeguarding Policy.

The person with overall responsibility for this policy, including the monitoring and promotion of attendance is Jo Pache in their role as Headteacher and DDSL and they can be contacted on jo.pache@wandsworthprep.com.

Rationale

Regular attendance is essential for students' academic achievement and social development. This policy promotes a culture of high expectations where attendance is prioritised and supported by the entire school community.

Principles

- **Shared Responsibility**: Attendance improvement requires collaboration between the school, students, parents/guardians, and external partners.
- **Positive School Environment**: The school will provide a welcoming and engaging environment that motivates students to attend regularly.
- **Clear Communication**: Open and transparent communication between the school, parents, and students about attendance expectations and procedures.
- **Early Intervention**: Timely identification and intervention for students at risk of poor attendance to prevent long-term absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

School's Responsibilities

- **Promote Attendance**: The school will actively promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through assemblies, newsletters, and meetings with families, this is also outlined in the Parent Handbook.
- **Monitoring**: Attendance will be recorded twice daily, and regular reviews will be conducted to identify patterns of absence.
- **Intervention**: Early intervention strategies will be employed for students with declining attendance. These may include letters home, parent meetings, and individualised support plans.
- **Support for Families**: The school will offer guidance and support to families facing barriers to regular attendance, including pastoral care, counselling, and referral to external agencies if necessary.
- **Recognition of Good Attendance**: Positive reinforcement, such as certificates, awards, and special privileges, may be used to reward excellent and improved attendance.
- **Inform Governance:** The Assistant Head Pastoral will keep governance informed of severe cases and attendance trends across the school, patterns and interventions

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities

- **Ensure Regular Attendance**: Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- **Report Absences**: Notify the school on the first day of an absence and provide a reason. For extended absences further information will be needed, including medical information
- **Engagement**: Work collaboratively with the school if attendance issues arise and attend meetings when required.
- **Requesting a leave of absence:** Notify Jo Pache in writing
- **Avoid Term-Time Holidays**: Family holidays should be scheduled during school holidays. Requests for term-time absences will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Students' Responsibilities

- **Attendance**: Attend school regularly, arrive on time, and be prepared for learning.
- **Engage with Support**: If facing challenges affecting attendance, students should seek support from teachers, Pastoral Lead or DSL.
- **Positive Attitude**: Contribute to a positive school culture that values regular attendance.

Safeguarding and Attendance

Patterns of children missing education, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse, neglect and exploitation, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children absent from education procedures. It is essential that they are assiduous in their prompt completion of attendance registers, liaise closely with the school office to resolve any unexplained absences, and report any concerns about absence to the DSL. A relatively short length of time a child is missing does not reduce risk of harm to that child, and all absence or non-attendance is considered with other known factors or concerns.

On a day-to-day basis administrative staff monitor registers for patterns of absence and the DSL, alongside the admin team, undertakes a regular review of attendance records to analyse for patterns and trends. Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: Children Missing in Education

Attendance Procedures

Daily Attendance Monitoring

- **Recording**: Teachers will take attendance daily. All absences will be recorded, categorised as either authorised (with a valid reason, such as illness) or unauthorised (without a valid reason). Within this codes for attendance and absence are listed in p76-92 of Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2026
- The school day is between 8.15 - 3.30 in Lower School and 8.15 - 3.50 in Upper School. The morning the register closing time is 8.25. The afternoon register closing time is 1:40.

- **Late Arrival**: Students arriving after the official start time will be marked late and required to sign in at reception.
- Appendix A includes a series of questions schools will ask themselves in monitoring attendance

Reporting Absences

- Parents/guardians must report their child's absence on the first day by phone or email, explaining the reason for the absence. If the school is not notified, the absence will be followed up promptly by the school.
- Parents/guardians should contact the school office on 020 8870 4133 or via email office@wandsworthprep.com for day to day matters
- If Parents/guardians have wider concerns about attendance they should contact
    - The class teacher
    - The Assistant Head, Pastoral
    - Jo Pache as the person with overall responsibility for attendance

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

- **Authorised Absences**: Illness, medical appointments, family emergencies.
- **Unauthorised Absences**: Holidays during term time, unexplained absences, or absences for reasons not accepted by the school.

Addressing Attendance

Early Intervention

95%-90% Attendance: When a student's attendance falls between 95%-90%, parents will be advised of attendance issues, either by email or invited in for a meeting.

Persistent Absence

If a student's attendance drops below 90%, they will be classified as a "persistent absentee." The school will initiate a formal process, which may include:

Escalation

In cases where attendance does not improve despite intervention, the school may consider further action, including the involvement of external agencies.

Rewards and Recognition

The school will promote the importance of high levels of attendance amongst its community. This may include awards for 100% attendance and other incentives where appropriate.

Inclusion

In monitoring attendance and awards the school will ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged as a consequence of a disability, including a medical condition that causes regular absences from school for appointments and reasonable rest.

Working with External Agencies

The school will collaborate with external agencies, including educational welfare services, healthcare professionals, and MK MASH, to address the underlying issues that may affect a student's attendance.

Appendix - Missing Education

The DSLs and staff consider the following, as appropriate:
Children missing, or being absent from, lessons:

- Are there patterns in the lessons that are being missed?
- Is this more than avoidance of a subject or a teacher?
- Does the child remain on the school site?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this time?
- Is the child late because of a caring responsibility?
- Has he or she been directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse?
- Are other pupils routinely missing the same lessons, and does this raise other risks or concerns?
- Is the lesson being missed one that would cause bruising or injuries to become visible?
- can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse,
- sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation

Children missing single days:

- Is there a pattern in the day missed?
- Is it before or after the weekend suggesting the child is away from the area?
- Are there specific lessons or members of staff on these days?
- Is the parent informing the school of the absence on the day?
- Are missing days reported back to parents to confirm their awareness?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this day?
- Do the parents appear to be aware?
- Are the pupil's peers making comments or suggestions as to the whereabouts of the pupil?

Children with continuous days of absence:

- Has the school been able to make contact with the parent?
- Is medical evidence being provided?
- Are siblings attending school (either our or local schools)?
- Did we have any concerns about radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, honour based violence, sexual exploitation?
- Have we had any concerns about physical or sexual abuse?