Winchmore School

learning to realise potential

Attendance Policy

Last Reviewed:	September 2026
Next Review Date:	September 2027
Review Committee:	Educational Performance

Attending drives Attainment
Promoting a culture of Attendance

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Deputy Headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance, supported by HOYs

The designated Attendance Lead with the support from HOYs is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Thompson and can be contacted via the school office@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk or noel.thompson@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Record and coding student attendance and absences from school
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Ms Turner Year 7-11 and can be contacted via: attendance@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk

6th Form attendance should be recorded via email to: sinead.patton@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information via our Information Management System (IMS).

3.6 School Attendance Office staff

School Attendance office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence for Years 7-11 on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the head of year and tutors where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents /Carers

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

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- 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/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Head of Year, Pastoral Team or Family Engagement Officer, who can be contacted via 020 8360 7773

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Attend every timetabled session, on time
- Sixth Form parents/carers should call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence
- Sixth Form pupils can also email their absence to the Sixth Form Attendance Team at: sinead.patton@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils 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. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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 3:00pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:20 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:30am and will be kept open until 9:00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 2:00pm and will be kept open until 2:30pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school Attendance Office, who can be contacted via 020 8360 7773 ext 111or via email attendance@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk.

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.

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.

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.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence https://forms.gle/LjV67F2UHGCHng6aA

Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as an unauthorised late, using the appropriate code
- An absence enquiry text and/or email will be sent in the event that a pupil is marked absent
- Our Family Engagement Officer will engage with families where their child is consistently late to enquire the reason. This could lead a meeting with the Family Engagement Officer, HoY and the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss an attendance support plan to improve punctuality

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Text/Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason
- 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 – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call 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 an education welfare officer or other external agencies.
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may notify the police should there be safeguarding concerns around the pupil
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance

- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: the school will liaise with the LA and Educational Welfare Services, who could send notice letters or penalty notice letters or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly record and inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. This can be accessed in a number of ways:

- Through our Sims App which provides live attendance data
- Attendance data is shared on a pupils progress check
- The Attendance Officer will write to parents where attendance is a concern
- Upon request to the attendance team attendance@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk
- Text message and/or email on the day of absence, when a pupil has not arrived in school before the close of the first session at 9:00am and reason has not been given for absence.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils 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 pupil 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 pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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, before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via: **https://forms.gle/LjV67F2UHGCHng6aA**

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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 pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil 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 pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil 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.

5.2 Sanctions

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

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, 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:

- Parent contracts will be offered by the school to support parents and their child in attending school
- The school will work with the Educational Welfare Service to offer and provide further support
- The school will work with the Educational Welfare Service where referrals may be necessary
- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- 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

Each parent who is liable for the pupil'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 pupil, 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.

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 pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

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 pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil'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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Students are rewarded and praised for good attendance. Attendance certificates are sent home every half term to students who have 100% attendance. In our rewards assemblies attendance awards are given to students who have 100% attendance and this is celebrated within the community.

An attendance raffle takes place at the end of each term. Students who have 100% attendance are entered into the raffle with a chance to win an ipad.

Attendance data is shared by heads of year in assemblies. Attendance competitions are run within each year group per half term and the form group with the best attendance will win a prize.

Attendance and punctuality conducts are issued to students who have poor attendance to school. Letters of notification are shared with parents and carers by the Head of Year and they will monitor and support these students in improving their attendance.

Trips are run to promote good attendance and where students have improved their attendance they will be invited to attend a school trip to celebrate this achievement.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Meetings will be held with the attendance team and the school's Family Engagement Officer, Head of Year and SENDCO to offer support and alternative methods of engaging education as necessary. The school will work with parents to identify barriers to learning and support needed. These could include but not limited to:

- wellbeing support
- alternative working spaces
- time out passes
- reduced timetables
- referrals for external support (Early Help, CAMHS, EP, Parent Support)

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Pupils who have been absent for a sustained amount of time will be supported upon their return. This support will be led and facilitated by the Inclusion Faculty, Pastoral Team and Head of Year. Depending on the individual needs and circumstances, the school will make reasonable adjustments with support from outside agencies if appropriate to secure a positive return.

8. Attendance monitoring

Attendance is monitored on a daily basis through the school's teaching staff and attendance team. Attendance is recorded both in AM sessions and PM sessions. When a pupil is marked as absent and there has been no notification from parent to clarify the reason of absence, an absence enquiry text will be sent.

Attendance is monitored daily and where a pupil has been identified as not attending with no reason, contact with parents will be made to assess the reason for absence and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil.

Home visits will be arranged and facilitated by staff to engage with the student and family.

The Headteacher will monitor whole school attendance and will review each case where a pupil is not meeting the expected threshold of attendance.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors/heads of year, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and will be reviewed each year by the Leadership Team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: ● In police detention ● Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or ● Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

APPENDIX 2: Winchmore School Attendance Policy and Protocols 2025-2026

Introduction

Monitoring the attendance of Winchmore School students is the responsibility of all who have contact with our students. Everyone has a role to play. The causes and effects of poor attendance and punctuality seriously undermine student's learning and could place them at risk. There is much we can do to support both students and parents in tackling specific issues. The Education Welfare Service will be asked to get involved in cases where the school has gone down all the avenues possible with parents and pupils, but attendance has not improved.

Attendance figures are shared with the Local Authority (LA), Governing Body, the Leadership Team, Heads of Year and Tutors at the end of every half term. Accurate registers provide a true reflection of attendance issues that are monitored by the Attendance Officer, Heads of Year, the Education Welfare Officer and the Leadership Team.

To ensure that school attendance is the best that it can be, we aim to:

- Support parents and carers to ensure that all students attend school regularly and are on time, which is essential for successful learning and keeping children safe
- Keep correct and up to date registers for all our students
- Ensure that everyone involved understands their responsibilities in recording, monitoring and acting on student attendance issues
- Ensure that everybody is aware of the potential risks and dangers for children who are missing in education
- Make clear to students and parents that regular attendance is the expectation
- Follow-up all unexplained AM and PM absences either by text, telephone or letter
- Respond promptly to issues which may lead to non-attendance
- Be sensitive to the needs of the individual student and parent
- Recognise that some parents have difficulty in understanding written communication
- Recognise that some parents have difficulty with the English language
- Work in partnership with the Education Welfare Service
- Make a referral to Early Help when families may need help with parenting support
- Consider a referral to the Attendance Support Unit for students who present complex needs which prevent them from attending school
- Provide opportunities for home learning where a students can not attend school for whatever reason

Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance

The chart below indicates the standard referral route for improving attendance. The responsibilities for each member of staff, included in the chart, are described below.

The Form Tutor	Head of Year	Attendance Officer	Deputy Head Teacher (Care, Guidance and Support)	Education Welfare Officer

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Carers

- To ensure the regular attendance of their children
- To work in partnership with the school

- Ensure a good attitude to learning
- To meet the social and emotional needs of their children

Pupils
- Go to bed at an appropriate time and come to school on time and ready to Learn
- Listen to parents and the school, and follow through their expectations
- Communicate with parents/carers and the school about any worries or anxieties

The Form Tutor
- Speak to students in the first instance, about their absence, and ensure that all absence notes are returned to the attendance office. If the situation does not improve, keep students back for 10 minutes after registration to pro-actively challenge concerns arising from any aspect of attendance or punctuality. E.g. Repeated absence / lateness to school or lessons, failure to hand in absence notes. Contact home as appropriate.
- Must be punctual to registration. They should arrive at their rooms in advance of students to greet them when they arrive. The 'Minimum Expectations' for behaviour should be reinforced and followed during registration time.
- Must be ready to take the register at the beginning of Tutor Time
- Implement strategies and procedures for improving attendance for their tutor group, including the sixth form (see below)
- Keep monthly attendance print-outs, provided by the attendance office. Monitor and analyse attendance data, on a weekly basis. Identify patterns, highlight, discuss with Head of Year and address concerns
- Inform the Head of Year immediately if tutors suspect that parental signatures on absence notes are not genuine and may be forged
- Inform Head of Year of any causes for concern

Head of Year
- Train and develop the tutor team on the procedures and practices for improving attendance, including sixth form attendance, and ensure that they are clear about the role they play in this
- Monitor and evaluate the effective completion of registration sessions by tutors
- Pass on information about attendance to Form Tutors. Ensure that absence notes are returned to the attendance office, that all tutors challenge absence and lateness (see expectations of tutors above), and tutors contact home when appropriate
- Ensure tutors follow up attendance and absence notes
- Monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality data provided by the attendance officer, on a monthly basis. Identify patterns, highlight, discuss and address concerns
- Implement strategies to improve attendance across the Year which includes identifying six students at risk of becoming poor attenders, and mentor for each half term. Provide interventions and track improvement. (Six new students each half term)
- Raise the profile of awards for excellent and improved attendance for individuals and tutor groups through assemblies, Tutor Time , attendance certificates, letters, phone calls home etc
- Liaise weekly with SWIFT, and at least every half term with the EWO, to identify students with attendance concerns, particularly those students 'missing in education'. Discuss proposed action to agree the way forward
- Interview students and parents about unsatisfactory attendance/behaviour and agree improvement strategies
- Complete Year group attendance review each half term and include in Year Self Review, and ensure that this includes data and information on sixth form attendance
- Ensure that attendance is a regular, positive feature of briefing meetings, Year meetings and assemblies

Deputy Headteacher
- Implement, monitor, review and evaluate the whole school attendance policy

- Ensure that everybody is aware of the potential risks and dangers for children who are missing in education
- Monitor and evaluate the role of Heads of Year in achieving attendance and punctuality targets and hold staff, who have not taken registers, or not updated registers, to account
- Monitor and support the work of the school attendance office
- Provide attendance and punctuality report every half term to the leadership team and governors
- Attend meetings arranged for students whose attendance is a serious concern, and where there may be child protection implications
- Schedule and organise a series of attendance focuses to include assembly with EWO

The School is supported by The Education Welfare Officer who will:

- Liaise fortnightly with Heads of Year and analyse attendance data. Agree action to be taken to ensure attendance targets are met
- Make additional visits to Winchmore to discuss and address urgent cases of attendance problems
- Make home visits for assessment of students who experience attendance problems
- Liaise with other agencies to gather information about students who experience attendance problems and formulate action plans
- Discuss proposed action plans with school staff and parents and carers to agree the way forward
- Liaise with other agencies, school staff and parents / carers in following through the action plans
- Work directly with families and students on agreed plans (this may sometimes involve working with an individual students or group of students within the school setting, on behavioural issues which are affecting school attendance)
- Write reports on individual attendance cases
- Maintain records on school attendance problems
- Prepare evidence for court action including application for education supervision orders

DAILY MONITORING

Daily registers

Registers are taken for AM (tutor time) and for every lesson.

The first register for all students will be at the beginning of period one. It is essential that registers are taken in the first ten minutes. Registers are a legal requirement and are also essential for reasons of health and safety.

Registers are taken using 'SIMS Lesson Monitor' which is part of the school computer network. There is a list of codes that are used to specify the various types of authorised and unauthorised absences. If a student is marked as having an unexplained absence for period 1, then a text is sent to the parent / carer advising them of this. **It is therefore imperative that registers are correct. If a student arrives late to a lesson, the absence mark needs to be changed to a late mark.** The use of registers by the Form Tutor is monitored by the Attendance Officer who will inform the Head of Year of any missing registers.
Class teachers also take registers using 'SIMS Lesson Monitor', and student lateness and truanting is monitored by the Attendance Officer and Heads of Year. Registers taken by supply teachers are passed to the Attendance Officer and are inputted into SIMS Lesson Monitor manually.

Registration using SIMS Lesson Monitor

- **Registering Attendance -** Registering attendance is a legal requirement and it is imperative that registers are accurate at all times
- **Times -** Teachers should be ready to receive pupils into their classrooms at 8.25am, for Period 1 registration which starts at 8.30am. Students who arrive after these times will be marked late. **If a student arrives late to a lesson, it is essential that <u>the absence mark is changed to a late mark</u>.** Students late into Period 1 must have a late slip. See below.
- **Operating SIMS Lesson Monitor -** The Heads of Year will show tutors how to use SIMS Lesson Monitor. A list of Attendance Codes will be made available from the Attendance Officer. The codes can also be accessed by 'right-clicking' on the SIMS register screen. All students must have the appropriate mark by their name, there must be no blanks.
- **The Conduct of registration –** All staff must be punctual to lessons and registration. They should arrive at their rooms in advance of students to greet them when they arrive. The 'Minimum Expectations' for behaviour should be reinforced and followed during registration time.

Automatic Messaging Service

This system is active for students in years 7 - 13. When a child is registered absent, an automatic text is sent out to parents / carers of absent students. **Entering an incorrect mark in the register can lead to false texts going out to parents – please be vigilant in the codes you use.**

Student Lateness to school

Punctuality is measured through SIMS Lesson Monitor and the Attendance Officer. Pupils are expected to arrive no later than 8.30am for their first lesson. **Pupils arriving after 8.30am must sign in at the Attendance Office. The student will be issued with a late slip. Students must not be accepted into Period 1 without a late slip. Lateness is closely monitored by the attendance office. The attendance officer liaises closely with the Behaviour Team and Heads of Year, in relation to sanctions and rewards for attendance and punctuality.**

Daily Absences

Parents / carers should call the school, on every day of their child's absence, to inform us of the reason that their child is not in school. They can either leave a message with the School Office or the Attendance Office, or email: attendance@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk . These absences are recorded daily by the Attendance Officer on SIMS Lesson Monitor. If the absence is unexplained, the Attendance Office will send an absence enquiry text and/or email. If the absence remains unexplained, a note is required on the day of a student's return to school. All notes should be signed, dated and sent to the Attendance Office. If tutors suspect that parental signatures are not genuine and may be forged, tutors must inform the Head of Year and Attendance Office immediately.

When a note has not been provided, a follow up absence enquiry text and/or email will be sent the following day and if absence remains unexplained, the Attendance Officer will send out an Absence Enquiry Note (AEN) the following week. If the absence remains unexplained after two weeks, absence will be unauthorised. Each week a list will be provided to the Heads of Year and Tutors with the absences which are still unexplained. Tutors are expected to speak to students about the absence and ensure that absence notes are returned to the attendance office.

Medical and other Authorised Absences

Absences are permitted for genuine reasons only, for example illness, medical appointments or bereavement. The school can choose not to authorise absences if attendance is poor and will ask to see evidence to support each absence. The Attendance Officer works closely with the Heads of

Year, the Behaviour Team, the Inclusion Faculty and the Education Welfare Service, in order to keep up to date with student issues and amend student records accordingly.

Parents/carers, where possible, should make medical appointments for their child outside of school hours. Appointments which occur during school time will require evidence of the appointment and a letter or email from the parent / carer. This should be shared with the Attendance Office as soon as possible, so that comment can be logged on the class register as to what time the student will need to leave the lesson. Students in Years 7 to 9 will need to be collected. Written permission is required if the parent / carer is unable to collect and needs the child to leave unaccompanied.

Other absences that can be authorised by the school are approved activities and religious observance. Days off for shopping or birthdays are not acceptable reasons, and will not be authorised.

The government and Local Authority (LA) will not authorise extended absences / holidays during term time as this has a serious effect on student's learning. Leave in term time is at the discretion of the Headteacher and can only be given in exceptional circumstances. Parents must complete our Leave of Absence Request Form, which can be found on the school website under the Policies/Attendance section.

Truancy / Children Missing in Education

All suspected cases of truancy must be reported to the Heads of Year and Attendance Officer; Please email the Attendance Office if a child is missing from your lesson but previous registers show that the student has been in school.

We all need to be aware of the potential risks and dangers for children who are missing in education. (See School Policy for Child Protection). It is essential that the protocol for dealing with truancy is followed robustly. In accordance with the school truancy protocol, the Attendance Officer will liaise with the appropriate Behaviour Team member and Head of Year and a phone call will be made home to parents / carers to make it clear that truancy is unacceptable, that we cannot take responsibility for their child's safety while they are out of lesson/school, and that the parents/carers are responsible for getting their children back to school if they have left the premises.

The Education Welfare Officer and Safer Schools Officer are also informed of ongoing cases of truancy and can compliment the school's action with telephone calls and visits home.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

School Attendance Officer

- Monitor attendance and absence to lessons and registration, liaising with key staff, parents and external agencies, and implementing interventions
- Collect daily attendance messages and input data into SIMS
- Identify students for absence enquiry text, and send. Call parents and carers where this is not possible. Pass on information to tutors.
- Share urgent information, on a daily basis, with the Head of Year and Deputy Head teacher (Care, Guidance and Support)
- Follow up unexplained absences with letter (pro-forma) to parents and carers
- Monitor and follow up poor attenders with attendance concern letters (AC1 and AC2). Provide interventions. E.g. meeting with parents and students, arranging and attending attendance clinics
- Inform Head of Year of students who have not returned absence notes and ensure these are followed up
- Attend weekly meetings with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), Head of Year and SWIFT to discuss attendance concerns and implement interventions. Be particularly mindful of the

potential risks and dangers for children who are missing in education. (See School Policy for Child Protection)
- Send out termly attendance and punctuality figures. Discuss at Head of Year, Middle Leaders meetings, and agree action to ensure improvement
- Monitor lesson attendance and liaise with parents and Head of Year re truancy issues

The Attendance Officer produces the following reports:
- Monthly late and absence reports to Heads of Year
- Absence Enquiry Notes (AEN's) sent to parents / carers of students with Unauthorised Absence marks
- Absence Concern Letter 1 (AC1) and Absence Concern Letter 2 (AC2) letters sent to parents / carers whose child's attendance falls below a certain level
- Register audits sent to Form Tutors whose registers have not been taken
- Truancy letters and incidents added on Incident Log

The following meetings are attended by the Attendance Officer:
- Weekly meetings with the EWO to discuss on-going cases and make referrals
- Attendance Team meeting with EWO and Deputy Head Teacher (Care, guidance and support) to identify and discuss attendance issues, share information, and define targets and tasks for each member
- The School Welfare and Inclusion Forum Team (SWIFT) meetings are held each half term by Year Group, which includes a focus on those students with serious attendance concerns with a focus on the potential risks and dangers for children who are missing in education

Monitoring and information sharing
- The Attendance Officer carries out cyclical monitoring of pupils' attendance and punctuality. This monitoring can lead to a referral to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and ultimately court action if the student's attendance does not improve
- All attendance and truancy incidents are included on SIMS to help share information
- EWS referrals recorded on SIMS
- All absence notes to be recorded and stored by the Attendance Office
- Files for students with attendance issues kept in Attendance Office
- Members of Year Team to chase up absence notes
- Weekly publication of attendance and lateness figures and other information in the Student's newsletter and the Staff Bulletin
- Attendance meetings and information sharing are encouraged so that records are accurate and action is effective
- Termly information included in newsletter to parents

There are a number of rewards for attendance and punctuality:
- Special certificates for 100% attendance and punctuality (given termly during assembly). The Attendance Officer provides information to Heads of Year.
- Certificates are awarded to the students with the most improved attendance and punctuality
- Merits can be given for improved attendance and punctuality at Head of Year's discretion or when a student meets their personal attendance targets
- Groups congratulated in staff and student bulletins
- Letters / postcards of congratulations
- School-wide competitions / raffle to reward and encourage excellent attendance and punctuality