

Attendance Policy



WILMSLOW HIGH SCHOOL

Managed by: Assistant Headteacher Student Services

Policy approval: Headteacher

Governor link committee: Student Success and Wellbeing

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1 Aims

At Wilmslow High School great emphasis is placed on the importance of good attendance. Our school culture promotes the benefits of high attendance. Students need to be present in school to maximise their individual opportunities for fulfilling their potential. Regular school attendance enables students to become resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to make a positive contribution to our community.

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

Our Attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying and Special Educational Needs.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

See Appendix 1 Legislation and Guidance

2 Attendance and punctuality expectations

100% attendance is the expectation

Wilmslow High School requires every pupil to attend punctually every school day.

It is the parent's responsibility, as set out in the [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#), to ensure that their children are organised for school in good time the night before. Lateness and / or non-attendance are extremely damaging to students' progress and disruptive to the progress of others.

Our procedures and processes are designed to supportively and proactively enquire into possible issues at home, at school or elsewhere, which may be related to lateness or non-attendance.

External agencies (e.g. Social Care, the Police, CAMHS) or Internal agents (e.g. Safeguarding Staff) may be involved and / or referrals made for intervention.

Punctuality is particularly important to learning and to the school's safeguarding protocols.

3 The governing board responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff and parents. It monitors attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis and holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. They are responsible for

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across Wilmslow High School's policies and ethos
- Agreeing school attendance targets
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Supporting the school leadership to ensure that staff receive regular training on attendance as part of the CPD offer and that the importance of good attendance is communicated
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

4 Headteacher responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality
- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Monitor the impact of any intervention strategies
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Supporting staff to work with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND

5 Additional roles and responsibilities

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader Mr Jones djones@wilmslowhigh.com is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents
- Forming positive relationships with students and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance. For example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage students to attend and achieve
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- The oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Developing a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Ensuring the coding of registers is implemented correctly

The Attendance Officers

The Wilmslow High school attendance officers:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher Student Services, the House teams and the Headteacher
- Works with Student Managers, pastoral staff and education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Are expected to access the student absence reporting online form, take calls and emails from parents about absence and record it on the school system
- Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Are the designated staff who can input attendance codes

Form Tutors and Class teachers

- Class teachers and Form tutors are responsible for recording lesson attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on the school management information system office. They have limited access to codes.
- Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. They have limited access to codes.
- Form tutors have regular conversations with students to promote a culture of good attendance. Where appropriate these are recorded on SIMS.

- Form tutors display attendance posters which outline Wilmslow High School attendance procedures

Student Services staff

Wilmslow High School Student Services teamwork alongside the Attendance Officer to arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

Student managers will utilise the following processes and protocols

- Attendance Every day calling
- Heads of House weekly checklist in relation to student manager attendance
- Attendance Target Setting
- Monitoring sheets
- EWO penalty notice request
- Prosecution flowchart and monitoring sheets (Appendix 5)
- Escalation of letters and support mechanisms according to prosecution flowchart (Appendix 5)

Parents and Carers

We encourage all parents and carers to talk to their child positively about school and education and take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress. Parents and carers should

- Ensure that their child attends school every day on time
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to become involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the Headteacher in good time.

Students

Students are expected to:

- arrive for school on time with the correct equipment
- Attend all Timetabled lessons on time

6 Absence protocols and procedures

Day to day processes to record and follow up absence also See Appendix 3 (Reporting absence)

Attendance register

Wilmslow High school will keep an 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 (registration) and once during the second session. It will mark 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 2 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Basic attendance information is held on the student record until the student turns 25 years.

Punctuality

The register for the first session (start of the day) will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am.

The register for the second session will be taken during PM registration. All students must be present in PM registration in their Form Rooms at 15.05 to receive an attendance mark for the afternoon session. The School day ends at 3.15pm.

A pupil who arrives late:

- All students must be present in AM registration in their form rooms at 08.45 to receive an attendance mark for the morning session.
- Any student arriving after 09.05 must sign in at Student Services.
- Any student arriving after 08.45, but before 09.15, without a good reason, will receive a late mark (L) – which can lead to a referral.
- Any student arriving after 09.15, without a good reason, will receive a late after registration (U) has closed mark – which can lead to a referral.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

- If a student is to be absent from school a Parent/Carer should contact school each day of the absence (or in advance) to advise the reason. The Student Services team aims to follow up all parental contact (Every Day Calling).
- If a student is absent without reason, a truancy text seeking explanation will be sent out daily.
- On returning to school after any period of absence, the student must provide confirmation as to the reason for non-attendance
- Special instructions after medical operations must be sent in writing.
- Any absence which remains unaccounted for will be recorded as unauthorised.
- The Education Welfare Officer carefully monitors unauthorised absences, any accumulation of which can lead to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Permission from the Headteacher will not be given for students to go on holiday during term time.

Planned absence

We encourage all appointments to take place outside school hours, however attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

- Any student leaving school during the hours of 08.45 and 15.15 (close of day) must sign out at Student Services and provide written evidence for the reason.

- Any student returning to school on the same day, must sign back in at Student Services.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by contacting home by telephone. Where specific risk assessments are in place the protocols within these will be followed by the appropriate pastoral staff. Where appropriate school may contact the Education Welfare Officer or arrange a home visit with appropriate staff. In certain circumstances additional guidance may be sought from other external agencies.
- If a student is to be absent from school a Parent/Carer should contact school each day of the absence (or in advance) to advise the reason.
- If a student is absent without reason, a truancy text or email, seeking explanation will be sent out daily.
- On returning to school after any period of absence, the student must provide confirmation as to the reason for non-attendance if this has not already been obtained.
- Special instructions after medical operations must be sent in writing.
- Any absence which remains unaccounted for will be recorded as unauthorised.
- The Education Welfare Officer carefully monitors unauthorised absences, any accumulation of which can lead to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Reporting to parents

- A termly message will be sent to parents/ carers via email indicating the students current attendance.
- Attendance will also be reported on the Mid year/ end of year assessment certificates.
- Parents can contact school at any point to request up to date attendance information.
- Live attendance is available for parents via Firefly

7 Authorised and unauthorised absence

Granting leaves of absence - Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as something which you could not have foreseen and over which you have no control.

Parents/Carers have no entitlement to take their child out of school for holiday in term time and the Headteacher and Governing body are required to determine whether a circumstance is 'exceptional' or not.

Parents/ Carers are requested to submit any requests for leave during term time in writing to the Headteacher, whose decision will be final.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see Unplanned and Planned absence sections for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils 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
- Experiencing a bereavement.
- Being a victim of a crime
- The sudden significant illness of a close family member.
- Exceptional circumstances – one off events that are unavoidable, for example:
 - Sudden housing crisis
 - Respite care of a looked after child

Advice may be sought from the local authority.

Reducing persistent absence

Wilmslow high school works to establish a culture of high attendance that is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. Where students are absent without reason the following steps are taken.

Attendance Every Day Calling Protocol

Protocol	
1	Check N codes report for unauthorised absence on live registers
2	Priority 1 Check students of concern (LAC/ PP/ Risk Assessment) and contact if absent
3	Priority 2 Contact N Code Students
4	Ensure that register codes are updated and correct
5	Liaise with attendance officer - Text issued in agreement with attendance officer
6	Attendance officer identifies list of absent students from google form
7	Priority 3 Contact all authorised absent students (remove barriers to learning)
8	Consider and employ appropriate strategies (Home Visit)
9	Log Serious attendance concerns on SIMS OR communication log
10	Contact staff member to clarify any issues relating to NON REGISTER completion
11	Employ strategies in order to ensure student attends school
12	Inform parent that attendance will be unauthorised (potential fine)
13	Head of House/ Student Manager to speak to CTL regarding persistent non taking of register
14	Weekly discussion with HOH/ Senior Student Manager to identify next steps or progression to pathway

In addition school may

- Convene an Attendance Panel
- Complete individual attendance SMART target setting form

Enforcing attendance

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Wilmslow will consider the use of legal sanctions. The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Prosecution flow chart – see appendix 5

8 Promoting and incentivising good attendance

Examples of strategies

Wilmslow High School will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used could include:

- Discussion and meetings with parents and students
- Attendance panels
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Student Manager Support
- Student Voice activities
- Friendship groups
- The Wider Curriculum program of lessons
- Incentives
- Time limited part time curriculum modifications (On approval by the Headteacher) in exceptional circumstances
- Additional learning support
- Hub referrals
- Zumos support
- Referral to school health/ school nurse services
- Behaviour support or referral to the Progress House
- Reintegration support packages Support offered to families will be solution focused and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Listening and understanding: building strong relationships with families

Staff at Wilmslow High school will foster good relationships and effective communication in order to:

- Build respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicate openly and honestly with staff, students and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.

- Model respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture.
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding about how students with specific needs can have specific barriers to attendance and that these should be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

All staff members should:

- Treat pupils with dignity, build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
- Take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively
- Understand the importance of school as a place of safety where students can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and students particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
- Communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Support good attendance with proactive attendance initiatives.
- Regularly seek the views of students and parents/carers

Formalising Support and attendance monitoring

The attendance officer and student managers at our school monitor pupil absence on a daily basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to use the online form (on school website) call or email the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2). Parents/ carers are expected to contact school each day their child is ill.

If a Student's absence falls below 95%, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this. School will also discuss attendance with students at this point.

If a pupil's absence declines after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

The severe absence threshold is 50%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 50%, the pupil will be classified as a serious absentee.

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

Collecting data

Wilmslow High School collects attendance data twice daily via school registers and this data is used for the following internal purposes:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- To identify patterns in attendance data, or particular groups of students or individual students whose absences may be a cause for concern
- To monitor and evaluate those students identified as being in need of intervention and support

Data is used at a strategic level to identify patterns of absenteeism in key sub groups and is then used to inform intervention and allocation of resources.

9 Monitoring arrangements

The school will use its data to monitor and target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or cohorts who need it most.

Data will:

- Be compared to national data
- Used to inform interventions
- Used to produce reports for governors and school leaders

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Director Student Services. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Student Success and Wellbeing committee of the governing board.

Appendix

Appendix 1

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](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents> [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made> It also refers to:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [School census guidance](#),

which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Appendix 2: 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 3: Reporting Attendance/ Absence

Years 7 – 11 Mrs A Acton-Drummond/ Mrs R Charlton – Secretaries to Student Services/Attendance

Online reporting form -

https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=Fwb8BFt74kWsc_xH4nqlQp7GfXquz_ROtDxUvnlijpttUQ0Y2Nk5WNIA0TIRWWjM3R0NYVVVGWIQ2MS4u

Email: attendance@wilmslowhigh.com

Years 12 – 13 Mrs Karen Flannery – Sixth Form Administrator

Email: kflannery@wilmslowhigh.com

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the we have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the we may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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 we is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

The Table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures

Appendix 4: Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- [Child protection and safeguarding policy](#)
- [Behaviour and Discipline policy](#)
- [Access to the Curriculum Policy](#)

Appendix 5 Prosecution Flowchart



