

Attendance & Punctuality 2021/22

SWHS Attendance Policy

Our aim is for every student to attend school every day of the academic year however we understand that ill health can sometimes hinder a student's attendance. We know that every day at school is valuable and as such believe that no student should miss school unnecessarily.

Persistent absenteeism is defined as having less than 90% attendance, which is equivalent to 19 days of absence per year. This is equal to 6 days of absence per term or 3 per half term. As such these thresholds are used to help make decisions on suitable interventions.

Sporadic absence

For many students their attendance is a real achievement and it is important that all achievements are recognised and celebrated.

Aims of the policy

1. To support the aims of the School Improvement Plan.
2. To comply with all the relevant legislation regarding attendance.
3. To promote good attendance & punctuality.
4. To ensure that students and parents understand the procedures for attendance.
5. To ensure that all staff and governors are well informed about attendance issues.
6. To improve school attendance to the current school target of 96%
7. To reduce persistent absenteeism to below the nation average of 13.5%
8. To improve punctuality to 98.5%

Procedures for marking registers and further guidance on attendance codes (suspended for 20/21) see page 6 for update

1. Students' morning session mark is given during period 1. It is our expectation that the register is taken and saved by 9.00am. Students arriving after 8.45am must report to the school office to be given their late mark.
2. Students arriving up to 9.59am will be marked 'L'. Those arriving after 10.00am will be marked 'U'.
3. The afternoon session mark is given during afternoon registration, either at 12.00pm or 12.30pm. It is our expectation that the register is taken at the start of the registration session.
4. Registers must be accurate and use the appropriate codes. Where a tutor is unclear about an entry they should consult their House Progress Leader in the first instance.
5. Where possible we request parents/carers make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is unavoidable students should attend school before the appointment and return to school as soon as possible after the appointment, signing back in at reception where they will receive an 'M' code for the sessions and lessons missed.
6. During the school day if a teacher notices a student has been marked present in a previous lesson or registration period but fails to arrive to their scheduled lesson the teacher should report that student as missing to Senior Cover who will begin the missing student procedure.

Students educated off-site

1. B code can be used to indicate a student is present at an off-site educational activity approved by the school. This should not be used if a student is completing school work from home or at an unsupervised activity (for example a dance exam, sports trial under the supervision of a person or organisation not approved by the school).
2. Students' attendance at off-site activities needs to be confirmed each day by direct communication, either e-mail or telephone call, with the coordinator of the off-site activity. Where attendance either cannot be confirmed, or when a student is confirmed as absent, the register should be marked accordingly and truancy call sent out as usual.
3. D code can only be used to indicate that a student is dual registered AND attending another school; for example if they are attending another school as part of a managed move.

Students on a part time or reduced timetable.

Please read guidance from the Local Authority and complete a Part-time agreement form.

Register checks and SIMS

Checking registers Assistant House Progress Leaders should examine their House's registers each day. Where they have concerns or where staff have expressed concern, the root of the problem should be identified and appropriate action taken.

SIMS Home Page – Staff will have an attendance summary on their homepage that is relevant to them. E.g. tutors have their own tutor group's summary.

Holidays in term time and Education Penalty Notices

In line with Government guidelines, holidays during term time are not allowed. However parents who feel that their circumstances are exceptional may make a special request to the Headteacher. Each case will be judged on its individual merits by the Headteacher.

Please note the following:

1. No holiday absence will be authorised Years 10 – 13
2. Absence for a request to attend a wedding will be limited to one day, the wedding day, authorised absence
3. The government define a student as a persistent absentee if attendance is below 90%. Any holiday absence risks that your son / daughter will fall into that category, with a subsequent risk of fixed term penalty fines
4. If you choose to take your son / daughter on holiday, there will be a fixed term penalty for each parent, regardless of whether the student resides with both parents, of £60, rising to £120 per parent if not paid within 21 days
5. In addition to the fixed term penalty, the student's attendance record shows unauthorised absence (truancy) if the holiday is taken without authorisation
6. Any student taking an unauthorised holiday will not be eligible for school trips for an academic year.

If you choose to take the holiday during term time we will refer the case to the Education Social Welfare Service who may issue an Education Penalty Notice of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents who do not pay the Education Penalty Notice may be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, Section 444 or the Local Authority may also apply for an Education Supervision.

Strategies for improving attendance

Good attendance is vital to ensure students make the best possible progress. We understand that there may sometimes be legitimate reasons for short term, long term and continued sporadic absences. The interventions listed below, and the guide percentage attendance figures, are not exhaustive and will be applied on a case by case basis by the pastoral team.

Between 100%-96%

Those students meeting their attendance targets are regularly celebrated on an individual, tutor group, House and year group level. Further information on rewards can be found below.

Every Gold Friday the following winners are announced:

- Most improved House
- Most improved tutor group
- House with highest overall attendance

Students with 100% at the end of each term will also receive an attendance award and special recognition will be given to students with one or more full year's attendance in the end of year assembly.

Between 92%-95%: Stage 1

HLPs and AHPLs will work closely with students, and their families, who are approaching the threshold for persistent absenteeism to identify barriers to regular school attendance. Intervention strategies will include:

- AHPL calls parents/carers to explain concerns, discuss reasons for absence, explain support available and explain the next steps in our attendance policy.
- AHPL meeting with student
- Meeting with HPL, AHPL parent and carer.
- Referrals to internal support; SEN, careers, House study support.
- Referrals to external support; Young Carers liaison, CAMHS, doctors.
- House Progress Leader will consider; access to curriculum, fixed term modifications to timetables, appropriate settings & groupings, participation in extra-curricular activities financial travel support.
- Parents/carers will be informed in writing that further absences will not be authorised without medical evidence being provided.

Between 89-91%: Stage 2

- House Progress liaises with Student Welfare Officer for support.
- Stage 2 attendance meeting will be called; parents/carers will be invited in writing to meet with the House Progress Leader/ Assistant House and Progress Leader and Student Welfare for a minuted meeting.
- House Progress Leader will consider; access to curriculum, fixed term modifications to timetables, appropriate settings & groupings, participation in extra-curricular activities.

Below 89%: Stage 3

- Attendance panel meeting will be called; parents/carers will be invited in writing to meet with Student Welfare and Attendance Officer and Wirral Locality Attendance Officer (optional House Progress Leader/Assistant House Progress Leader)
- Student Welfare Officer Interventions which may include; daily morning phone calls, home visits, a fixed series of minibus AM collections.

Continued absenteeism

- Education Penalty Notices, EPNs, (formerly Fixed Penalty Notices) can be issued by the school when other interventions have not been successful or when parents/carers have removed students for unauthorised holidays.
- EPNs can be issued after 5 days or 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.
- In the most extreme cases the local authority may also decide to bring a prosecution against parents/carers who do not ensure their child attends regularly.

First day calls - Parents are encouraged to telephone school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and are regularly reminded to do so. After the registers have been returned AHPL will telephone parents of students where no explanation of absence is known. Where successful a mark will be entered in the register.

SWHS Punctuality Policy

Arriving punctually to school ensures students start each day in the best possible frame of mind for learning. Arriving late disrupts learning and teaching. Persistent lateness can quickly escalate into absenteeism*.

Procedure and Sanctions

Lesson 1 starts promptly at 8.45am. Students who arrive after this time must be marked 'L' on SIMS by either the teacher or reception (if the student has arrived after the student entrance has been locked).

Students who arrive after 8.45am must sign in at reception. Those arriving after 9.59am, without a valid medical reason, will be marked with a 'U'.

All latecomers will sit a same day break time detention.

In addition to this:

- 3 lates in one half term: APL calls home; and HPL detention
- 6 lates in one half term: punctuality meeting with HPL and an SLT detention
- 9 lates in one half term: panel meeting with ELT and a HT detention

All of the above phone calls and meetings must be recorded on SIMs as an initiative.

Truancy Call System

Text messages are sent to parents of absent students. Procedures must be followed prior to the messages being sent to ensure the student is absent.

Education Penalty Notice

The parents/carers of students who arrive after the register has closed 10 times or more may be issued with an Education Penalty Notice.

Reports to be circulated:

At the end of each week the office will circulate a report to tutors (& HPLs, AHPLs) with the total lates for each student for the half term so far.

At the end of each half term report the office will circulate a report to HPLs with total lates for checking of actions.

Morning Punctuality Checks

Every morning a member of the pastoral team will leave site at 8.35am and walk to the shops on Plymyard Avenue to help usher students to site on time.

*Except in the case of students with underlying SEND needs or those who are Young Carers. HPLs should consider whether students who are identified as being persistently late might fall into either of these categories.

Appendix

1. Attendance Intervention Agreement
2. Attendance Intervention Review (to accompany EPN request to Local Authority)
3. Attendance Letters.
4. Part time timetable agreement and forms.

**Attendance Meeting
Stage (.....)**

Pupil:

House:

Attendance 2021/2022:

Attendance 2020/2021:

Date of initial meeting:

Present at meeting:

This attendance intervention agreement has been made in a bid to improve the student's attendance to school and timetabled lessons. The aim of the agreement is for the student to return full time to timetabled lessons.

This agreement has been made with the support of parents / carers. Throughout the process the pupil will be supported in school by

Minutes of the meeting

Summary of barriers to regular attendance as identified by parents/carers/student/pastoral

Action	Duration/Review Date	Further Details

Review:

Date:

Present:

Educational penalty notice request

Pupil:

House:

Attendance 2021/2022:

Attendance 2020/2021:

Date of review:

This pupil is being supported by an attendance intervention agreement in a bid to improve their attendance to school and timetabled lessons. The aim of the agreement is for the student to return full time to timetabled lessons.

This agreement has been made with the support of parents / carers. Throughout the process the pupil will be supported in school by

Barriers to regular attendance as identified by parents/carers/student/pastoral team:

Intervention Strategies and Outcomes/Impact		
Action	Date	Outcome
Stage 1: Phone call home to raise initial concerns.		
Stage 1: AHPL meeting with student.		
Stage 1: Referral to House Study Support, faculty intervention		

<p>Stage 1: Meeting with HPL, AHPL parent and carer.</p>		
<p>Stage 1: Referral to other professionals, services or agencies</p>		
<p>Stage 1: Modifications to provision (Student Services support, timetabling etc)</p>		
<p>Stage 1: Home Visits.</p>		
<p>Stage 1: Parents/carers informed in writing that medical evidence will be required to authorised further absences (MEL)</p>		
<p>Stage 2: Attendance meeting will be called; parents/carers will be invited in writing to meet with the House Progress Leader/ Assistant House and Progress Leader and Student Welfare Officer for a minuted meeting.</p>		
<p>Stage 2: Review of agreed actions from stage 2 panel meeting</p>		
<p>Stage 3: Student liaison interventions inc: fixed term home pickups, 8am phone calls, home visits</p>		
<p>Stage 3: Attendance Panel Meeting with Student Welfare Officer and Gill Grey Locality Attendance Officer.</p>		
<p>Stage 3: Review of agreed actions from Panel Meeting 3</p>		
<p>Stage 3: Education Penalty Notice requested from the Local Authority</p>		

Template Letters

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear [Parents Name]

**RE: [Pupils Name and DoB] – Attendance
Attendance Meeting : [day, date and time]**

I am writing to express concern regarding your Xxxx level of attendance at school which is currently %.

I would therefore like you to attend a meeting at school on xxxx. at xxx. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the barriers that are preventing xxx from attending school regularly. Gill Grey Locality Attendance Officer will also attend the meeting.

It is important that you attend this meeting, if the suggested time is inconvenient please contact school to arrange another date or time

Please note that parents who refuse to cooperate with School Attendance Panels may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service who may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents who do not pay the Fixed Penalty Notice may be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, Section 444 or the Local Authority may also apply for an Education Supervision Order.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Lane
Student Welfare Officer

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear [Parents Name]

**RE: [Pupils Name and DoB] – Attendance
Attendance Meeting : [day, date and time]**

STUDENT: House

Dear XXX,

I would like to invite to a meeting regarding XXX's attendance to school. The meeting will take place on xxxxxxxx at xxxx. Please bring XXXx with you and go straight to the main reception to sign in.

In the meeting we will explore the barriers to regular attendance, discuss the support available, and agree a plan to support xxxxxx return to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

House Progress Leader

Parents Name and Address]

Dear [Parents Name]

**RE: [Pupils Name and DoB] – Attendance
Attendance Meeting : [day, date and time]**

I am writing to express concern regarding your Xxxx level of attendance at school which is currently %.

I am aware that you have attended a stage 1 attendance meeting with xxxx House Progress Leader and Assistant House Progress Leader. However xxxxxx attendance has not improved.

I would therefore like you to attend a stage 2 attendance meeting at school on xxxx. at xxx. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the barriers that are preventing xxxx from attending school regularly. Together we will write an attendance action plan. This will include a target for attendance improvement and a review date.

It is important that you attend this meeting, if the suggested time is inconvenient please contact school to arrange another date or time.

Please note that parents who refuse to cooperate with School Attendance Panels may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service who may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents who do not pay the Fixed Penalty Notice may be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, Section 444 or the Local Authority may also apply for an Education Supervision Order.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Lane
Student Welfare Officer

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear [Parents Name]

**RE: [Pupils Name and DoB] – Attendance
Attendance Meeting : [day, date and time]**

I am writing to express concern regarding your Xxxx level of attendance at school which is currently %.

I am aware that you attended a stage 2 attendance meeting with xxxx House Progress Leader and myself on XXXXXXXX. However XXXXXXXX attendance has not improved.

I would therefore like you to attend a stage 3 attendance panel meeting at school on xxxx. at xxx. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the barriers that are preventing xxx from attending school regularly. Together we will agree a formal attendance action plan. This will include a target for attendance improvement and a review date. Gill Grey Locality Attendance Officer will also attend the meeting.

It is important that you attend this meeting, if the suggested time is inconvenient please contact school to arrange another date or time

Please note that parents who refuse to cooperate with School Attendance Panels may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service who may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents who do not pay the Fixed Penalty Notice may be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, Section 444 or the Local Authority may also apply for an Education Supervision Order.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Lane
Student Welfare Officer

Guidance for Schools on the use of reduced time-tables

1. Purpose

This guidance is intended to safeguard both pupil and school, should a reduced timetable be required. It is intended to establish agreed approaches for all maintained Wirral Schools; Academy Schools; Free Schools and alternative provision settings, in the appropriate use of reduced timetables (sometimes referred to as 'part-time' timetables).

2. Introduction

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to identify and track any pupil missing education. Any pupil on a reduced timetable is potentially at risk of missing education and therefore falls within this remit.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The new Local Authority inspection framework now includes the need for each authority to report robustly on school age children who are not in full-time education. This establishes the need for Wirral Council to have guidance in place for all pupils on reduced timetables. It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable, however, in exceptional circumstances, schools may need to implement one in order to support a pupil who cannot attend school full-time for a short, agreed period.

Wirral Council remains committed to supporting all children's entitlement to a full-time education, and makes clear the requirement that a reduced timetable cannot be implemented without written agreement from parent / carer and agreement from the EHCP Coordinator at Wirral Council where appropriate. Where a part-time timetable is in place, this should always be in the best interests of the child.

Schools have a safeguarding responsibility for all pupils on their roll and therefore must be aware that even with parental agreement to any arrangement they make, they are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending any off-site provision during school hours.

3. Full-time Education

- All education should be suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude, taking into account any special educational need.
- There is an assumption that pupils should receive full-time education consistent with their Key Stage. Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all pupils. It is illegal for

schools to discriminate against pupils on the basis of their special educational needs and/or disability

- A timetable is considered reduced when it consists of something less than that which is provided to the majority of the pupil's peers in that setting.
- Guidance issued suggests the following periods as full time:

Age	Hours
5–7	21
8–11	23.5
12–14	24
14–16	25

4. When might a reduced timetable be used?

- **As part of an in-school support package:** The school, parent/carer and other professionals agree that a short-term (no longer than 6 weeks) reduced timetable would support a pupil who has become disaffected, to regain success. This would be a closely monitored intervention to address and manage the impact of significantly challenging behaviour or emotional or social needs.
- **Medical reasons:** A pupil has a serious medical condition where recovery is the priority outcome. These arrangements would be part of a “medical plan” agreed between the school and health professionals. Please see Supporting Pupils at School with medical conditions before offering a reduced timetable for this reason. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- **Reintegration:** As part of a planned reintegration into school following an extended period out of school following exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal, etc. (no longer than 6 weeks). This includes those pupils for whom reintegration after the shutdown of schools due to Covid 19 may be difficult.

5. Good Practice

In circumstances where the school consider that it may be necessary to establish a reduced timetable for a pupil, the school should:

- Notify the Attendance Service of its intention to implement a reduced timetable for a pupil. The appropriate form needs to be completed and submitted via schoolattendance@wirral.gov.uk.
- Convene a meeting to discuss the proposals for a reduced timetable. This must include parent / carer. This will also include Wirral Council where the pupil is a looked after child (a member of Virtual School), has an allocated social worker, or has a statement of SEN / Education Health and Care Plan (the EHCP Coordinator) and may include Early Help professionals who form part of any Team around the Family.

- Establish a plan, for example a Pastoral Support Plan, Individual Learning Plan, Personal Education Plan etc., which will contain details of the proposed timetable to get the child back into full-time education
- Review the schedule of supportive interventions that will accompany this reduction in time at school
- Develop outcome and exit strategies that will identify to all stakeholders when the intervention has been successful
- Confirm and communicate the named person responsible for the plan within the school
- Consider safeguarding measures for the duration of the reduced timetable. The school must carry out a risk assessment before implementation and the details recorded.
- Ensure that the parent / carer agrees the plan and teaching hours. A reduction in hours cannot be implemented without parental / carer agreement.
- Consider Completing an Early Help Assessment Tool to establish if there are wider needs and support is required from other partner agencies.
- Monitor the overall use of this strategy within the school and report this to governors each term
- Ensure effective communication with parents / carer and Wirral Council with regard to progress towards full-time reintegration to school.

6. Monitoring and Review

The school must:

- Report the reduced timetable on the appropriate form to the Attendance Service as soon as it becomes operational by sending a signed copy of the completed and signed part-time timetable agreement form.
- Send a copy of subsequent reviews and any extension plans (up to a maximum of 6 weeks)
- Record the child's attendance accurately on the attendance register
- Use the C Code when a pupil has a reduced timetable including sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at school or an alternative provision. The school must be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for the care and welfare of the pupil during the time when they would otherwise be at school.
- Use the B Code if the pupil is receiving off-site provision, approved, and monitored on a daily basis by the school. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where the pupil is at home doing school work.
- Use the D Code where a pupil is registered at two schools. The D code only applies where a pupil is attending a school other than their home school and where that school is coding the pupil's attendance.
- Monitor the overall use of this strategy within the school and report this to governors termly.
- Ensure effective communication with parents / carer and Wirral Council with regard to progress towards full-time reintegration to school.

- **For Census purposes record these pupils as Full-time pupils.**

7. Wirral Council Responsibilities

- Request copies of the agreed plans in relation to part time education.
- Ensure that reduced timetables are appropriately recorded.
- Ensure that copies of part time education plans are shared with Children's Social Care where pupils are subject to Child Protection or Child in Need plans.
- Ensure a copy of the plan is provided to the Virtual School when a pupil is Looked After.
- Discuss any cases with schools when a pupil has been on a reduced timetable for longer than 6 weeks or longer than the specified period in the original plan

8. For advice and support please contact:

Caroline Henderson, Attendance Service Manager – 0151 666 5203 – carolinehenderson@wirral.gov.uk

Damian Stormont, Enforcement Officer, 0151 666 4964 – damianstormont@wirral.gov.uk

Anna Dollard, Inclusion Strategy Manager, 0151 666 4398 – annadollard1@wirral.gov.uk



Wirral Attendance Service,
 Birkenhead Town Hall
 Hamilton Square
 Birkenhead
 CH41 5BR

PART-TIME TIMETABLE AGREEMENT FORM

Pupil Forename:		Pupil Surname:	
Address:			
.....		Post Code:	
Date of Birth:		Ethnic Origin:	
Unique Pupil No (UPN):		School Year:	
Current school:			
Name of Lead Person in School:			

Is the child currently known to social care?	YES	NO
If yes, who is the named social worker?		
Is the social worker in agreement with this plan?	YES	NO
Is the child currently in the TAF process	YES	NO
Is the Lead Professional aware of this plan?	YES	NO
Is the child subject to an EHCP?	YES	NO
Who is the EHCP Coordinator?		
Has this plan been agreed with EHCP coordinator?	YES	NO
Has the child previously had a Fixed Term Exclusion	YES	NO
If yes, number of sessions missed due to FTE		

<u>Parent 1</u>	
Title:	Forename: Surname:
Address:	
..... Post Code:	
Tel No: Relationship to Pupil:	

<u>Parent 2</u>	
Title:	Forename: Surname:
Address:	
..... Post Code:	
Tel No: Relationship to Pupil:	

Reason for part time timetable (including interventions previously put in place):

Timetable (please insert the hours that the child is expected to be in school):

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Objectives of the part-time timetable:

Any other comments relating to this part-time timetable:

Date of meeting agreeing the part-time timetable:

Start date of part-time timetable:

Review date of part-time timetable:

End date of part-time timetable:

I understand my child has been placed on a part-time timetable for a limited period.

I have discussed the matter fully with the school and agree, during the period of the part-time timetable to:

- take full responsibility for my child during the hours when not attending school
- ensure there is supervision of schoolwork during those hours
- ensure there is a flow between school and home for marking and guidance
- take full responsibility for the health and safety of my child when they are not in school.

Signature

(Parent/Carer):

Date:

During the period of the part-time timetable the school will:

- monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable
- hold a review on the agreed date and inform Wirral Attendance Service of the outcome
- provide work for the child to do whilst at home and mark all work completed
- mark the school register with a C for any session missed due to the agreed plan.

Signature

(School):

Date: