

# Wanstead High School Attendance and Punctuality Policy



**Approved by:**  
**Last reviewed on:**  
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**Signature of Chair of Governing Body:**

## Glossary

<b>HOY</b>	Head of Year
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>DHT</b>	Deputy Headteacher
<b>EWO</b>	Educational Welfare Officer – professional who supports pupil attendance when it falls below 90%
<b>EWS</b>	Educational Welfare Service – Local Authority services that supports school attendance
<b>EWASS</b>	Education Welfare Advisory & Support Service, EWO and safeguarding service used by Wanstead School.
<b>TAC/TAF</b>	Team Around the Child/ Team Around the Family – a meeting involving parents/carers and different professionals
<b>MARF</b>	Multi Agency Referral Form – Referral Form used to share information with other services in request for support, where concern exists around a pupil's welfare
<b>CAF</b>	Common Assessment Framework - a shared assessment and planning process for use across all children's services. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and provide a co-ordinated service through a Team Around the Family (TAF).
<b>PA</b>	Persistent Absence – term used to describe a pupil's absence when it falls below 90%
<b>SA</b>	Severe Absence – terms used to describe a pupil's absence when it falls below 50%
<b>EBSA</b>	Emotionally Based School Avoidance – umbrella terms used to describe absence that relates to school-based anxiety and other mental health conditions that act as barrier to regular attendance for some children and young people.

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## 1. Aims and Principles

At Wanstead High School we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel safe, valued and supported. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

### The aims of the school's attendance policy are:

- To establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality so that pupils attend regularly and take full advantage of the education we provide in terms of academic and social development for our students.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents/carers, teachers and governors
- To ensure that the school's statutory obligations regarding the attendance of pupils at school are met and carried out in the most supportive and effective way.
- To provide support, advice and guidance on matters of attendance and punctuality to pupils, parents/carers and school staff
- To instil in our pupils' positive habits and routines relating to attendance and punctuality in preparation for life as an adult.
- Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all and working together to remove any barriers to attendance and punctuality.
- The law relating to school attendance states in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that the parent of every child of compulsory age shall cause him/her to receive full time Education suitable:

a. to age, ability and aptitude and

b. to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school
- It is our aim to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children and to fully support those who cannot due to identified barriers including those with chronic health needs and poor mental health.
- For our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital that each student is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines students develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

### Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and attendance below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school and higher education, employment or training.

### The Link between attendance, attainment, wellbeing and safety

- The research into attendance and attainment has shown that pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).

- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent)<sup>3</sup> and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study).

See appendix A - 'Everyday counts for infographic outlining attendance by days attended.'

## 2. Promoting Excellent Attendance and Punctuality

At Wanstead High we believe that the foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents./carers and the child.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Set targets for the school for attendance and communicate these regularly
- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our school communications, Headteacher's newsletter and website
- Report to you on how your child is performing at school and what their attendance and punctuality percentage is.
- Celebrate and reward commendable attendance, this includes those with a high % of attendance (97-100), those with improving attendance and those who have shown attended despite chronic health needs.
- Provide support and guidance to pupils and families who face barriers to good attendance.
- Meet with parents/carers, pupils and other professionals and agencies so that we work together on raising attendance levels at both a whole school and individual level.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is recorded accurately and analysed.

They will work alongside Form Tutors, Heads of Year and the Attendance Team to ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

<p><b>Pupils</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence</li> <li>• Arrive in school on time</li> <li>• Go to tutor time and lessons on time</li> <li>• Take responsibility for registering on Inventory at school Reception Desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours</li> <li>• Provide evidence following absence or appointments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parents/Carers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the school on the first day of absence and all subsequent days, unless the school has indicated otherwise.</li> <li>• Discuss with the Attendance team or Head of Year any planned absences well in advance</li> <li>• Support the school in aiming for between <b>97%- 100%</b> attendance each year for their child</li> <li>• Make sure that any everyday absence is clearly accounted for calling <b>0208 8989 2791 option 1</b></li> <li>• Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments · Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.</li> <li>• Requests for authorised absence must be made in writing and sent to the Headteacher and should be made only for exceptional circumstances or other educational activities</li> </ul>

<b>All Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an awareness and understanding of the benefits of good attendance and promote these in discussion with pupils</li> </ul>
<b>Class teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take registers promptly within the first 5 minutes of the lesson</li> <li>• Promptly report any missing pupils via <a href="mailto:childprotection@wansteadhigh.co.uk">childprotection@wansteadhigh.co.uk</a>, who are not marked absent at am reg/previous lessons</li> <li>• If pupils are late to lessons, mark them present with an L code and input number of minutes late.</li> <li>• Notify parents when levels of absence are impacting on the progress of a pupil within their class, particularly exam groups.</li> <li>• Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school</li> </ul>
<b>Form Tutors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all students are registered accurately each morning - registers taken at 8.40am</li> <li>• Promote and recognise commendable attendance of pupils at all appropriate opportunities. Postcard's home.</li> <li>• Liaise with the Head of Year and attendance leader on matters of attendance and punctuality.</li> <li>• Meet with tutees who fall into the 'at risk' threshold of 90-93% attendance</li> <li>• Identify and communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a pupil's' absence</li> <li>• Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school</li> <li>• Monitor tutor groups overall attendance</li> </ul>
<b>Heads of Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of Year Group overall attendance</li> <li>• Promotion of good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and character curriculum</li> <li>• Meet fortnightly with Attendance officer and EWO to identify at risk pupils, review improvements and next steps for those moving into new thresholds</li> <li>• Identification and referral of pupils to school-based attendance interventions</li> <li>• Raise and discuss pupils with falling attendance at half termly social inclusion meetings</li> <li>• Initial pupil meetings and attendance success planning - 85-89%</li> <li>• Meet with parent/carer – Attendance Support Plan -80-84%</li> <li>• Support students and parents to overcome barriers to attendance, arrange meetings and signpost appropriate support.</li> </ul>

<b>Attendance Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily absent processes</li> <li>• Keep all school register codes up to date</li> <li>• Follow up unexplained absences and keep register codes updated – the correct absence code must be recorded within 5 working days of the session</li> <li>• Collate all leave of absence request forms and inform parents of the school's decision to authorise or unauthorise absence via letter</li> <li>• Collate interventions on absence, keeping a record of letters sent and penalty notices issued</li> <li>• Producing and sharing absence and punctuality reports to be shared with Form Tutors/HOY/EWO/DHT</li> <li>• Send out and log attendance and punctuality concern letters</li> <li>• Fortnightly attendance meetings with HOY/EWO</li> <li>• Weekly attendance monitoring and Persistent absence tracking</li> <li>• Attendance Support Phone call to parents -85-89%</li> <li>• Attending and supporting pupil meeting</li> <li>• Organise and facilitate parent meetings</li> <li>• Home visits with EWO</li> <li>• Support EWO with SAP meetings</li> </ul>
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<b>Data Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce comparative internal reports on attendance – weekly, half termly, termly by key groups.</li> <li>• Meet at least half termly with DHT/AO to review data and data analysis of attendance</li> </ul>
<b>Deputy Headteacher responsible for attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development, implementation, review and update of overall attendance strategy and policy.</li> <li>• Discuss any specific concerns relating to attendance patterns/messages with HOY Friday briefing.</li> <li>• Parent attendance meetings</li> <li>• Referral to external interventions and agencies</li> <li>• Decision making with EWO/AO/PM re borough interventions and legal proceedings</li> <li>• Monitoring and review of severe absence support</li> <li>• Reporting of attendance data to school governors</li> </ul>
<b>Headteacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall responsibility for school attendance</li> <li>• Approves/Declines requests for leave of absence</li> </ul>

#### 4. Recording Attendance and Punctuality

- Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day at **8.40am** and again for the afternoon session at **2pm**.
- It is important that all pupils arrive on time at the beginning of the school day. The school day begins at **8.35am** and all students are expected to be in school at this time.
- In the morning at **8.40am**, Form Tutors are responsible for am registration and in the afternoon period 5 teachers for the pm registration at **2pm**. It is the responsibility of class teachers to formally register pupils at the beginning of each lesson. At any time during the school day, staff should only mark pupils as present if they have physically seen them.
- If a student arrives between **8:41** and **9.00am** the attendance will be registered as **L (before register closes)**, Form Tutors must also record the number of minutes late. This is also true of period 5 - pm registration at 2pm.
- If a student registers **after 9.10am** they will be registered as **U (late after register closes)**, this counts as half a day absence and can significantly impact a pupil's attendance record.
- On-going and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence. The school may request a meeting to tackle persistent lateness. Parents, guardians or carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved.
- If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem and offer support. If support is ineffective, or is declined and a child has 7 or more sessions marked as a **U code**, parents/carers will be subject to legal action and will be issued with a fine.
- Parents are urged to communicate any known medical appointments in advance and inform us of any exceptional events that might lead to their child arriving after the school am register had closed. If a student is late due to a medical appointment, he/she will receive an authorised absence **coded 'M'**.
- Parents/Carers are asked, where possible, to arrange doctors' and dentists' appointments outside of school hours or during school holidays.

- At Wanstead High School pupils have a full tutor time programme which forms part of our character curriculum. This programme includes assembly, which is used for collective celebration and learning, as well as careers guidance, literacy and reading enrichment and structured discussion and pupil voice on issues related to pupil's personal and social development. This is a time when pupils are also given important notices and it is therefore vital this time is not missed due to lateness.
- Pupils must also be punctual and arrive on time to all lessons across the school day.
- If pupils miss the beginning of lessons, they risk missing important instructions and information relating to the topic of learning itself and/or an opportunity to review and revisit prior learning. Lateness also causes disruption to the learning of other pupils and will be **coded as L** with minute late recorded by class teachers.
- Punctuality to lessons will be monitored, Form Tutors and Heads of Year will meet with pupils who are persistently late to lessons to understand the reasons why. Where pupils do not have justifiable reason and lateness persists, they will receive a detention and parents will be invited in to discuss this concern.
- If pupils are **late to school**, they will be required to complete a **same day detention** for **20 minutes**. This is typically held at the end of the school day but may also take place during a break or lunch time depending on staffing and operational needs. This applies to pupils from Year 7 through to Year 13.
- If pupils are late up to **three times** or more in **5 school days** (Friday - Thursday or Monday- Thursday) they will be required to attend a **90-minute detention** with the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Behaviour, Personal Development and Attendance. This applies to pupils from Year 7 through to Year 13.
- Pupils found to have **truanted** a lesson will be required to complete a **60-minute same day detention** and persistent truancy will result in further meetings and discussions to identify the underlying reason and ensure appropriate consequences and support are in place to prevent further incidents. This applies to pupils from Year 7 through to Year 13.

## 5. School Absence Procedures

**First Day Absence** - A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, our intention is not to interrogate parents and carers but they should be aware that this information will be requested until suitable information is provided.

### If a pupil is absent, parents and carers must:

- Contact the school on the morning of the first day of absence by **8am**. Information received via phone/email is used to update the registers to ensure we have a clear picture of known absences.
- In the case of illness and other absences, Parents/Carers are asked to call on the morning of each day of absence, unless they have provided medical note/evidence which states the number of days which the pupil will need for recovery.

### If a pupil is absent and we have not been notified by parents or carers, then we will:

#### First Day of Absence

- N code the register - illustrating that a pupil is absent with no reason provided
- Send an InTouch communication, informing you that your child is not present in school according to the registers.
- Follow up with a telephone call and further text to parents/carers; this is because we have a duty to ensure a pupil's safety as well as their regular school attendance.
- Continue to contact parents/carers so that the absence is explained and the N code can be replaced with a suitable code.

#### Third Day Absence

- If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school will start a Child Missing in Education enquiries and we will contact emergency contacts, known friends and wider family to see if they are able to help us locate you and explain the ongoing absence, and lack of communication.



## **Fifth Day Absence**

- If contact has not been established then as a school, we may carry out a home visit and welfare check, this will involve two staff members which may include a member of the attendance team, the school EWO, HOY or our school Safety Officer.

## **Tenth Day Absence - Child Missing in Education referral will be completed and sent**

- The school has a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. [CME referral](#)
- If the child has not been seen and/or contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing' his/her education. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their contact details are up to date.

## **Twentieth Day Absence**

- If a pupil has been absent from school for 20 consecutive days and this absence is unauthorised by school, the pupil may be removed from the school roll. Parents/Carers wishing to readmit their child would be required to do so through the Local Authority school admissions process.

## **6. Children Missing in Education**

- As described above in our absence procedures, where a pupil is absent and there has been no contact with the school the Education Welfare Officer will be notified and a home visit may be undertaken. If a parent/carer cannot be contacted they will be reported as missing to the home Local Authority where they live.
- All absences of 10 days or more without contact will deem the pupil missing and an alert will go to the CME (Children Missing Education) team at the Local Authority.
- 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. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.
- A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for unauthorised absence and 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.
- In line with Government attendance and safeguarding guidance, the school has policies, procedures and responses to identify and protect any child who may go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.
- Through training staff are taught to stay alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of non-attendance and potential safeguarding concerns, such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

## **School Admissions**

- The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools must place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupils will attend the school.
- If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.
- The school understands that it is important that the admission register is accurate and kept up to date. We will regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur. This can assist the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register:

- the full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live; this will need to be verified with the local authority
- the new address; and
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record in the admission register:

- the name of the new school; and
- the date on which the pupils first attended or is due to start attending that school.
- Schools are required to notify the local authority **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admission register. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are registered at the start of the school's youngest year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.
- Schools must also notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register **under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.** This duty does not apply where the pupil has completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.
- A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraph (f)(iii) or (h)(iii) if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after jointly making reasonable enquiries. Advice on carrying out reasonable enquiries can be found in the [Children missing education](#) guidance.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must and will provide the local authority with:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.
- Schools and local authorities should work together to agree on methods of making returns. When making returns, the school should highlight to the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example in cases where the child's destination school or address is unknown. The school will also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns.
- It is essential that schools comply with these duties, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised.
- The department provides a secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer pupil information to another school when the child moves. All local authority-maintained schools are required, when a pupil ceases to be registered at their school and becomes a registered pupil at another school in England or Wales, to send a Common Transfer File (CTF) to the new school. Academies (including free schools) are also strongly encouraged to send CTFs when a pupil leaves to attend another school. Independent schools can be given access to school2school by the department.

- The school2school website also contains a searchable area, commonly referred to as the 'Lost Pupil Database', where schools can upload CTFs of pupils who have left but their destination or next school is unknown or the child has moved abroad or transferred to a non-maintained school. If a pupil arrives in a school and the previous school is unknown, the school will contact the local authority who will be able to search the database.

This guidance forms part of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

## 7. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

### Authorised Absence

Authorised absence describes circumstances where the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. This will only be in cases of exceptional circumstances and special considerations such as

- when a pupil is absent as a result of illness and an acceptable explanation has been received. If a pupils attendance falls below 90% and absence due to illness is sporadic or follows a pattern the school may refuse to authorise further illness where medical evidence is not provided.
- Religious Observance subject to a maximum number of **3 days per academic year**. Pilgrimages (for example, Lourdes, Mecca, Rome or Jerusalem) are not considered to be religious observance that require absence during term time.
- when a pupil has been excluded from school
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence, up to a maximum of 3 days
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts of sport (considered on individual circumstances)
- Absence relating to child entertainment performances (considered on individual circumstances)
  - Medical/dental appointments may be authorised but should be made outside of school hours wherever possible. The school may request to see evidence of appointment cards/texts and may refuse to authorise the absence if appointments are frequently made during the school day and it is impacting a pupil's overall attendance.
  - It is recognised that parents/carers may need to attend to sick relatives or funerals abroad and children and families need time to grieve. This must be balanced with the knowledge that children with prolonged absences find it harder to return and settle. With this in mind, the Local authority recommends a maximum of 3 days leave is acceptable.
  - In these cases, as with others involving travel abroad, schools can and will request evidence of outbound and return bookings/tickets. In cases when this is refused the school may pursue a fixed penalty fine.

### Circumstance not included on the list

- Serious illness of a close relative. The Local Authority feels that such a circumstance is difficult to define and therefore is open to exploitation. In principle, leave will not be granted unless the Headteacher is convinced that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Prison Visits Most visits can be achieved during weekends and holidays, but there may be exceptions for individual cases for example when distance is a factor.
- Leave for attendance at weddings will not generally be granted, however, the Headteacher may consider them on a case-by-case basis and may allow up to one day's leave in exceptional circumstances when convinced that the wedding could not have been held outside of term time or the school day.

- **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence occurs when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained.
- sporadic and frequent illness where medical evidence is not provided

The school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence that he/she has been on holiday.

Please see **appendix b** for overview of codes used to identify authorised and unauthorised absence on school registers.

## **8. Persistent and ongoing absence**

- If a pupil misses **10%** (equivalent to 3 weeks in a year) or more schooling across the school year (or if attendance drops below 90% over a number of weeks) for whatever reason they are defined as a **persistent absentee**.
- Whether this absence is authorised or unauthorised the school will put into place a number of measures and supports to encourage a pupil's attendance to improve. These measures include but are not limited to

- Daily, Weekly and longer-term monitoring of attendance data to identify individuals and groups where patterns of attendance indicate a cause for concern and further analysis.

- Letters of concern and warning. The first being an early intervention letter when a pupil's attendance falls between 93-91%.

This is to ensure that parents are aware that their child is at risk of falling into persistent absenteeism and are aware of the impact this may have on their academic and social development.

- Phone calls and discussions with parents to identify possible barriers and find solutions

- Meetings between pupils and key pastoral staff to plan out an attendance success action plan

- Attendance interventions and mentoring

- Referral to the Educational Welfare officer and service.

**Please see appendix c for the school's attendance thresholds.**

## **9. Severe absence**

- If a pupil's attendance falls below **50%** their absence is considered to be severe. The school will work closely with parents to support pupils who may have identified barriers such as poor mental health or a diagnosed chronic health condition.
- Where a pupil has a chronic health condition the school may request updated medical evidence from a health professional at the beginning of each academic year or at appropriate timescales as advised by professionals.
- In line with Government guidance the school will consider whether a referral to children's services is necessary and will consider whether the pupil requires an Educational Health Care Plan.

The school will further support pupils and parents/carers by

- hold regular meetings with parents and relevant professionals where appropriate
- following the advice of the school's policy for *Children Who Cannot Attend because of Health Needs*.
- considering an interim reduced timetable or flexi school arrangement
- consider a referral to the Local Authority for medical home tuition support

## 10. Support for pupils not attending school regularly

- The school understands that often when pupils are not attending school regularly, there are complex and varied reasons that are acting as a barrier between that young person and their education.
- The school is committed to working with parents/carers and professionals in a child centred way to support those pupils and their families, with the overall aim of helping that young person to engage with and access the education that they are entitled to.
- Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter, and may make things worse.
- Young people are often reluctant to attend if friendships have broken down or if they feel there is an issue with a specific lesson/subject. In both of these scenarios, parents/carers are asked to contact their child's Form Tutor and Head of Year to discuss the issues and find a solution to the matter that supports their child feeling happy and safe to return to school. **It would not be appropriate for a parent to prevent their child attending school or allow their absence whilst the issue is resolved.**

### Emotionally Based School Avoidance

- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people who have severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors, often resulting in prolonged absences from school.
- Anxiety has also been identified as a key feature of EBSA. Although a certain level of anxiety is considered a normal and natural part of growing up, some young people may experience heightened levels of anxiety which impact on their functioning and school experiences.
- When the school has identified or been made aware that the reason for a pupil's absence is linked to their mental health, the school will adopt a graduated approach and implement a **school support plan for attendance and wellbeing**.
- **Assess** - School will work with parents/carers and the young person to assess their needs and identify any specific circumstances that act as a trigger for any school based or related anxiety. This may be done through the use of questionnaires, discussion with a trusted adult or a more formal assessment with an educational psychologist or appropriate professional.
- **Plan** - A trusted adult in school will work with the pupil and their parents/carers to build a school safety plan or a return to school plan which identifies desired outcomes and the key provisions that will be put into place to support the pupil within and beyond school. It may be that the school, in agreement with parents/carers, with the input and recommendation from medical professionals, arranges a reduced timetable as a short-term measure.
- **Do** - Provisions and support will be put into place as soon as possible. The school asks that parents and carers have made an appointment to see their GP to share the concerns relating to their child's mental health and where necessary school and the GP can make referrals to other relevant professional e.g. EWMHS Redbridge.
- **Review** - Regular reviews of the support plan, wellbeing and attendance will take place, at least every half term. Where pupils are finding it very difficult to attend school, we will arrange at regular intervals to complete a supportive home visit or remote meeting to complete check ins. This is to also support the safeguarding of our pupils where we may not be able to check on their welfare for long periods.

### Pupils with chronic health needs and medical conditions

- Please see the school's policy '**Children with health needs that cannot attend school**' for detailed guidance on the steps the school will take in supporting pupils in this regard. Below is a summary of the key details.
- Where it is appropriate and possible for a pupil with health to attend school but their attendance is impacted by their health, the school will adopt a graduated approach and work with that pupil and their parents and carers to put into place a suitable **school support plan** for wellbeing and attendance.
- However, it may be the case that a young person is unable to attend at all for a period of time, or is absent for long periods due to their health needs and the advice of medical professionals. The Local Authority is

responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for pupils who cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education.

- As a school we will notify the LA when it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more due to their health needs, whether that be consecutive or cumulative.
- The law does not define full-time education but children with health needs should have provision which is equivalent to the education they would receive in school. If they receive one-to-one tuition, for example, the hours of face-to-face provision could be fewer as the provision is more concentrated.
- In discussion with pupils, parents/carers and professionals the school may complete a referral to Redbridge Inclusion Panel for medical home tuition, for one-to-one support in the home for a period of time. The school will be included in regular updates as to the pupil's progress and wellbeing. A school reintegration plan is put into place, to support transition back into school, when the young person is well enough to return.

## Reduced Timetables

Reduced timetables may be arranged with parents/carers and the Local Authority in exceptional circumstances, they are an interim support that must be reviewed regularly and the aim is always to support a reintegration to full time education. The school applies to the Local Authority for a reduced timetable provision and must provide medical evidence which evidences the need for this reasonable adjustment.

### 11. Elective Home Education and Flexi Schooling

**Elective home education** is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full-time.

- The London Borough of Redbridge accepts the rights of families to home educate their children and believes in developing positive relationships and mutual respect between parties, but in order that the right of every child to receive an effective education is ensured, the London Borough of Redbridge expects families to understand the necessity to work in partnership and allow for communication on a regular basis.
- If you wish to electively home school your child, although not a legal requirement, we would ask that you arrange a phone call with the Deputy Head teacher or Headteacher to discuss this decision. Once a final decision to electively home educate a child has been made, parents and carers should inform the school in writing of their intention and then also register your intention with the Local Authority using their [online registration form](#).
- The school would also notify the Local Authority at [ehe@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:ehe@redbridge.gov.uk) as soon as they are notified in writing on this intention. The school would remove the young person from their roll.
- Where the school holds any concerns around the safety and welfare of that pupil, school would share these concerns with parents/carers and relevant authorities.

**Flexi Schooling** differs from elective home education. Parents/ carers who request flexi-attendance are asking for a pattern of provision which will involve both attendance at school, as well as times when the child will receive educational provision at home.

- Flexi-schooling is also different from temporary part-time/reduced timetable attendance arrangements, which the school/parent/carer may seek to make. Such arrangements are monitored and reviewed with the intention that the child be returned to full time attendance as soon as possible. Flexi-schooling is full time, although the provision may be split.
- Arrangements for flexi-schooling can only be made at the request of a parent or carer with parental responsibility. This is not an arrangement that can be initiated by the school.
- Whilst there is a legal right to a school placement and to Elective Home Education there is no legal right to flexi-schooling. Headteachers can refuse to agree to such requests. There is no right of appeal against the decision of a Headteacher not to agree to a flexi-schooling request. Upon such a request the Headteacher would make a decision on a case-by-case basis.

### 12. Request for Leave of absence

- The Government published updated attendance guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' in May 2022 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>)
- The guidance states that "Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

- An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. **A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion."**
- Therefore, Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that the Headteacher can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether the absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school to go on holiday.
- Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to write to the Headteacher in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and is very likely to incur a penalty notice fine.

If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, please complete this absence request form which can be accessed here... Each request form is completed on an individual basis by the Headteacher. The Headteacher's decision will be communicated to you in writing.

Important notes for parents/carers requesting absence:

- We are unlikely to authorise absence in normal circumstances
- To ensure consistency across Redbridge schools we advise you to inform us of any siblings for whom you are also requesting holiday so that we can discuss our decision with their school
- It is important that you request absence well in advance so we have time to prepare our decision
- Please take careful note that we must inform Redbridge Local Authority if you meet the thresholds for a Penalty Notice Fine
- The school is obliged to investigate any absence and will follow up on any intelligence gained that may contradict the information shared by parents. At this stage we would amend registration codes to reflect what we believe to be an accurate reflection of the reason for school absence

### **13. Study Leave**

- Study leave is not an entitlement for pupils and as a school we believe that a pupil's needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations.
- No study leave will be granted therefore, and students will be expected to attend school in the usual way. A bespoke timetable will be provided for our Year 11 pupils to ensure they get the most from this revision period for their June GCSE examinations.
- Pupils who do not attend school in advance of exams without evidence of other exceptional circumstance or illness will have their absence marked as unauthorised and this may lead to further processes.

### **14. Wanstead Sixth Form Attendance**

- This attendance policy applies to all pupils who attend Wanstead High School from Year 7 until Year 13. Although specific arrangements are in place for pupils in Year 13 to complete some of their timetable as home study, all pupils are expected to attend school on time, every day in line with their published and agreed timetable.
- Pupils of post-statutory school age may have their school place withdrawn if they do not comply with their contract which outlines attendance and punctuality expectations.
- In the first instance a meeting with parent/carer will be held to discuss support strategies. Should all attempts fail a pupil's place may be withdrawn for breach of the school/pupil contract.

## 15. Fixed Penalty Notices and Legal Proceedings

If attempts by the school and the EWO to work in partnership with parent/carers to improve attendance have been exhausted and no justifiable reason for absence has been identified further action may be taken by the Local Authority Education Welfare Service.

- A **Penalty Notice** can be considered for unauthorised leave of absence, taken without permission after the third day of absence. It will be issued by the Educational Welfare Service at the request of a Headteacher in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct.
- If issued this will incur a fine of £60.00 per child, per parent/carer, being imposed if paid within 21 days of receipt of notice, rising to £120.00 per child, per parent thereafter to be paid by day 28. Subsequently, consideration will be given for the matter to be investigated by the Education Welfare Service and possible legal action.
- A Penalty Notice can also be considered for any unauthorised absence where there is no justifiable cause. In the first instance a school can request a Penalty Notice to be issued once 12 unauthorised absences have been recorded in any 12-school week period.
- In the case of lateness after the close of registration, this will be deemed unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice for persistent lateness will be requested by the Headteacher when a threshold of 7 unauthorised lates in a 6-week period has been reached.
- There is no right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice.
- **Education Supervision Orders (ESO's)** will be considered by the Educational Welfare Service when it is deemed that legal intervention is needed. The purpose of ESO's is very clear, that of improving school attendance through supporting parents to exercise their parental authority.
- An ESO places a child or young person under the supervision of the Local Authority for a prolonged period and empowers the supervising officer to direct parents and children in matters relating to school attendance. These are implemented under the Children Act 1989.
- **Parenting Contracts** are a formal written signed agreement between parents/carers and Local Authority and/or governing body of a school. Parenting contracts are voluntary but non-compliance will be recorded by the Local Authority/School and may be used as evidence in court if legal action is deemed necessary.
- **Parenting Orders** are imposed by the court and parent's agreement is not required before an order is made. A parenting order instructs parents/carers to attend parenting classes and take any action a court deems necessary in order to improve their child's attendance

The Educational Welfare Service initiates legal proceedings on behalf of the London Borough of Redbridge, only Local Authorities have the power to prosecute parents/carers and must consider the Attorney General's guidelines for Crown Prosecutors in all prosecutions.

## 16. EWASS

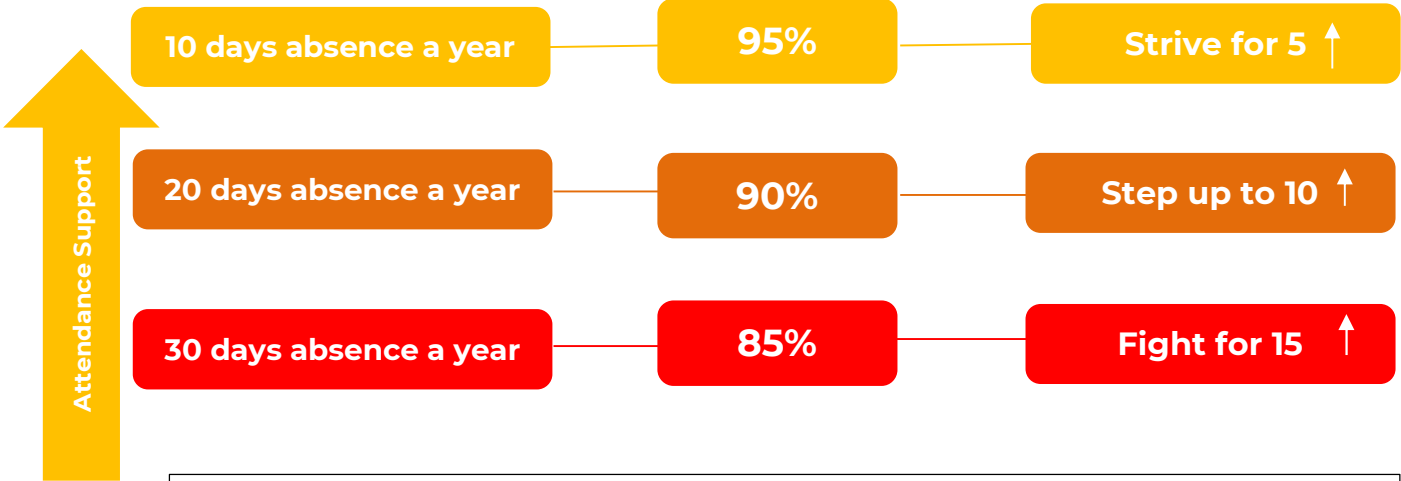
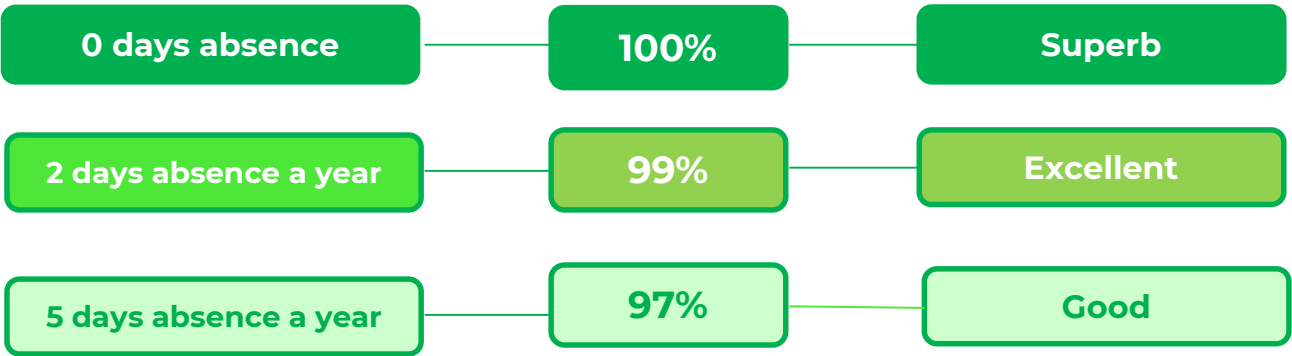
Wanstead High School use the services of the Education Welfare Advisory & Support Service Ltd. The service provides the school with a Educational Welfare Officer who works with the attendance team, Heads of Year and the Deputy Headteacher to support the implementation of the school Attendance policy and strategy. This also involves communicating with parents and carers, facilitating meetings and carrying out home visits.

## 17. Monitoring of Attendance Data

The school monitors attendance at a whole school level and by groups using SIMs and also Fisher Family Trust Aspire which compares school and group attendance with other FFT schools nationally and regionally. This monitoring and comparison are used to inform school evaluation, improvement strategy and intervention for key groups and individuals.




**'Every Day Counts, Every Minute Counts'**



**Worried about attendance or punctuality? What's in the way?  
We are here to listen and help!**

If there are any barriers getting in the way of good attendance, you can contact  
 Form Tutor, Head of Year, Ms Lewis/Mrs O'Malley-Butler (Attendance Team)  
 Ms Cini – Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Martin -Deputy Headteacher (BAPD)

**"Being a few minutes late doesn't matter, does it?"  
How much learning could you be losing?"**

5 minutes late each day	3 days of potential learning lost	
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days of potential learning lost	
15 minutes late each day	10 days of potential learning lost	
20 minutes late each day	13 days of potential learning lost	
30 minutes late each day	19 days of potential learning lost	

## Appendix B DFE Absence Codes

<b>Present in School or an approved off-site educational activity</b>	
<b>/\</b>	Present in School – am and pm registration
<b>L</b>	L Code = Late to school before the registers close
<b>U</b>	U Code = Late to school after the register close (present but half a days absence)
<b>B</b>	Code B = off-site educational activity, approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Code D = dual registered - at another educational establishment
<b>J</b>	Code J = at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Code P = participating in a supervised sporting activity
<b>V</b>	Code V = educational visit or trip
<b>W</b>	Code W = work experience
<b>Authorised Absence for School</b>	
<b>C</b>	Code C = Leave of absence authorised by the school, exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Code E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
<b>H</b>	Code H = Holiday authorised by the school
<b>I</b>	Code I = Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
<b>M</b>	Code M = Medical or dental appointments
<b>R</b>	Code R = Religious observance
<b>S</b>	Code S = Study leave
<b>T</b>	Code T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
<b>P</b>	Code P = Approved Sporting Activity
<b>V</b>	Code V = Approved educational visit
<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
<b>X</b>	Code X = Not required to be in school, used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
<b>Y</b>	Code Y = Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Z</b>	Code Z = Pupil not on admission register
<b>#</b>	Code #: planned whole or partial school closure

**Unauthorised Absence**

<b>G</b>	Code G = Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
<b>O</b>	Code O = Absent from school without authorisation
<b>N</b>	Code N: reason for absence not yet provided

## Appendix C Wanstead School Attendance Strategy and Support Thresholds

<b>Universal All Pupils</b>	<p>Promotion of good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and character curriculum</p> <p>Certificates and recognition for those with commendable attendance – (97-100%, improved attendance and resilience)</p> <p>Parent Information and Communication</p> <p>Displays</p>	<b>Tier 1</b> Promotion of good attendance/identification of 'at risk'
<b>Early Intervention 90-93%</b>	<p>Early Intervention Letters</p> <p>Pupil discussion with Form Tutors</p> <p>Identification of barriers</p> <p>Early Intervention Group Sessions</p> <p>HOY Monitoring and Check In</p>	
<b>Persistent Absence 1 PA1 85-89%</b>	<p>Pupil needs and support discussed at Social Inclusion Meeting</p> <p>Parent/Carer phone call</p> <p>Pupil attendance success meeting with HOY/Attendance Officer</p> <p>Referral for support internally</p> <p>Absence unauthorised unless evidenced</p> <p>PA Concern Letter</p>	<b>Tier 2</b> – Targeted Support
<b>Persistent Absence 2 PA 2 80-84%</b>	<p>Meeting with Parent/Carer</p> <p>Explore barriers</p> <p>CAF/Early Help Referral</p> <p>Referral for support internal and external services</p> <p>Home Visit EWO</p>	
<b>Persistent Absence 3 PA 3 61-79%</b>	<p>Continued support where evidence of needs and communication present</p> <p>Referral for further support and action from EWS where evidence and communication not present. This may result in</p> <p>Fixed Penalty Notice</p> <p>Parenting Contract</p> <p>Education Supervision Orders</p>	<b>Tier 3</b> - Specialist/Multiagency
<b>WH Severe Absence Below 60%</b>	<p>Next Steps discussed with parent/carers and professionals</p> <p>EHCP considered</p> <p>Referral to Children's services considered</p> <p>Medical Home tuition Explored</p> <p>Online/alternative provision support considered</p>	

N.B Actions at each stage are a summary and not an exhaustive list.

# Wanstead High School

Education with Character

Redbridge Lane West, Wanstead, London E11 2JZ

Tel: 020 8989 2791 • Email: [whs@wansteadhigh.co.uk](mailto:whs@wansteadhigh.co.uk)

• Website: [www.wansteadhigh.co.uk](http://www.wansteadhigh.co.uk)



Headteacher: Miss E Hillman

## First Low-Level Attendance Concern Letter – Early Intervention – 92-93% Trigger Point

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Name and Form**

I'm writing to express my concern with your child's levels of absence from school. Please see below their current attendance percentage, as you can see their overall attendance has fallen below our expected level of 97%

Overall Percentage Attendance	Number of Unauthorised Absences:
92.5%	0

The school has a duty to provide you with this information in order to promote improvement in rates of attendance, so that where possible, your child is able to reach our 97% and above attendance target.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best educational experience for every child. We understand that in exceptional circumstances, for example when a pupil has a diagnosed chronic health condition, that rates of attendance may vary.

However, the vast majority of pupils should aim to reach this target due to the clear link between high rates of attendance, positive educational attainment, social development and emotional wellbeing. If a young person's attendance at school falls below 97% this can have a profound impact on these areas. We would very much like to support you and your child so please contact us as soon as possible, if you would like to discuss any issues or barriers that are adversely impacting your child's attendance.

Further information and guidance about school attendance can be found in our attendance policy which is accessible through the school website, including the next steps that are taken when a pupil's attendance drops further.

You may also find the following websites useful:

- NHS guidance on illness and school absence

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

- DFE guidance on attendance effects on attainment.

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4>

Thank you for your support in your child's attendance. We hope to see an improvement in your child's attendance over the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Team



THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD





## Wanstead High School Standard Operating Procedure



### Attendance Procedures and Strategy

<p><b>All Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote a culture of good attendance</li> <li>Take registers accurately and promptly at all times</li> <li>Communicating the positive benefits of excellent attendance.</li> <li>Share and record concerns regarding lesson attendance and punctuality</li> <li>Record lateness to lesson including minutes late.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Form Tutors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor tutor groups overall attendance</li> <li>Praise and postcards for good and improved attendance and punctuality - Universal</li> <li>Initial supportive conversations with pupils who are 'at risk'</li> <li>Early identification of any barriers to attendance for individual pupils PA1</li> <li>Raise/flag concerns to HOY/Safeguarding</li> </ul>	<p><b>HOY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of Year Group overall attendance –Universal</li> <li>Promotion of good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and character curriculum</li> <li>100% Certificates half termly - awarded at achievement assemblies</li> <li>Meet fortnightly with Attendance officer and EWO to identify at risk pupils, review improvements and next steps for those moving into new thresholds – EI/PA</li> <li>Referral to school based attendance interventions- EI</li> <li>Raise and discuss pupils at half termly social inclusion meetings –PA1</li> <li>Initial pupil meetings and attendance success planning – PA1</li> <li>Meet with parent/carer – Attendance Support Plan – PA2</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EWO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fortnightly meeting with HOY/Attendance Officer</li> <li>Lead SAP meetings – PA2</li> <li>Home visits –PA2</li> <li>Decision making and actioning PCN/Legal proceedings –PA3</li> <li>Discussion and advice for pupils with SA</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Attendance Officers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily processes</li> <li>Producing and sharing absence and punctuality reports</li> <li>Send concern letters – EI ½ Concern letters – EI</li> <li>Fortnightly attendance meetings with HOY/EWO</li> <li>Weekly attendance monitoring and PA tracking</li> <li>U code concern letters – EI/PA1</li> <li>Phone call to parents –PA1</li> <li>Attending and supporting pupil meeting –PA1</li> <li>Organise parent meetings –PA2</li> <li>Home visits with EWO – PA2</li> <li>Support EWO with SAP meetings –PA2</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deputy Headteacher – Safeguarding and Attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development, review and update overall attendance strategy and policy.</li> <li>Lead universal element of strategy -U</li> <li>Discuss any specific concerns relating to attendance patterns/messages with HOY Friday briefing.</li> <li>Parent attendance meetings –PA2</li> <li>Referral to external interventions – PA2</li> <li>Decision making with EWO/AO/PM re borough interventions and legal proceedings –PA3</li> <li>Development, implementation of Sever absence support and process - SA</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pastoral Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support discussion and decision making at SI meeting – PA1</li> <li>Referral to external intervention – PA1</li> <li>Share relevant SG information that may be impacting attendance and punctuality.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Data Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce comparative internal reports on attendance – weekly, half termly, termly by key groups.</li> <li>Meet at least termly with DHT/AO to review data and data analysis of attendance</li> </ul>



