

WIGMORE SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

WIGMORE HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Aims

At Wigmore High School we are committed to promoting excellent attendance and ensuring that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. We recognise that regular attendance means attending all sessions, for the full duration of those sessions, except where there is a statutory reason not to attend, and we work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and wider agencies to remove barriers to attendance and support every child to achieve their full potential.

This policy supports a whole-school approach to attendance, recognising that excellent attendance, punctuality and engagement are essential to pupils' wellbeing, safeguarding, attainment and future success. The aims of this policy are to:

- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance.
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every pupil can access the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Identify and address attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Work collaboratively with families and other agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Support pupil wellbeing and safeguarding through effective attendance practices.
- Promote punctuality and ensure pupils arrive ready to learn.

This policy reflects the expectation that attendance is everyone's responsibility and that schools, families, pupils and partner agencies work together to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made> It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Detailed responsibilities sit with governors, headteacher, attendance lead, attendance officer, teachers, administration staff, parents and pupils. Attendance is a whole-school responsibility with regular monitoring and challenge.

Trustees

The trustees are responsible for:

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

The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trustees

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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Reporting to the Local Authority where an individual child has 10 or more sessions of absence and liaising with the Local Authority over enforcement measures where necessary
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Paul Bescoby (Assistant headteacher Safeguarding and Student Care) and can be contacted via phone or email (admin@wigmore.hereford.sch.uk).

The Attendance Officer

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is also the school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Executive Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Executive Headteacher when fixed-penalty notices have been issued.

Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office on the same day.

School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Class teacher or Associate Headteacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents

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

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:00 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Assistant Headteacher (safeguarding and student care) or an Associate Headteacher who can be contacted via phone or email (admin@wigmore.hereford.sch.uk)

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording Attendance

Registers must be taken morning and afternoon, corrections audited, attendance codes used correctly, and statutory retention requirements followed. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school

- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

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

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 08:30 and ends at 15:25 for KS3 (Year 7, 8 & 9) pupils and 15.30 for KS4 pupils (Year 10 & 11).

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:45 on each school day.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U)

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 08:55. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:40 and will be kept open until 13:50.

5. Unplanned Absence

Parents must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school admin staff, who can be contacted via telephone or email. Schools will follow up with unexplained absence on the first day and take safeguarding action where appropriate.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance

- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

6. Planned Absence and Leave

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

Where possible, the pupil should:

- Be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- Wear school uniform to their appointment, to make it easier to return to school afterwards

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). Examples of exceptional circumstances where absence may be authorised:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- A nationally recognised event where participation is by a pupil who has a national ranking or is a member of a professional team and likely to make this a career.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

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

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

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least six weeks before the absence, the Executive Headteacher/Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

7. Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)
- Parents/carers of pupils arriving late (after 08:45) need to sign their child in at reception stating the reason for their lateness. Punctuality is monitored by class teachers. If there are concerns regarding punctuality parents are contacted and support given if necessary to ensure improvement. Persistent lateness will be reported to the Herefordshire Local Authority.

8. Promoting Attendance

- A statement of attendance is included in every pupil's annual report at the end of the Spring Term.
- Current attendance is available for parents to view and monitor via Arbor App
- Form tutors use weekly tracking sheets to monitor the attendance of pupils within their tutor group.
- Class Teachers use termly attendance data to discuss any attendance issues with parents at Parents' Evening.
- A colour coded system is used for monitoring attendance. This is displayed on the newsletter and throughout the school to reinforce the expectation of excellent attendance
- Class Teachers take a register each morning and straight after lunch. This can quickly pick up patterns of absence. If a pattern of absence is spotted, staff will highlight this to pupils and parents.
- Tutor group attendance is displayed on the internal TV screens.
- Our social media platforms highlight the importance of attending school and the impact missing school can have on learning.
- The tutor groups and pupils with the highest attendance are regularly celebrated in assemblies.

9. Supporting Attendance

Support may include meetings, attendance plans, mentoring, Early Help, family support, SEND adjustments and multi-agency working.

10. CME

Children Missing Education procedures must be followed when pupils cannot be located, fail to attend regularly or are removed from roll. Schools must notify the Local Authority where required and complete appropriate safeguarding enquiries.

11. Mental Health, SEND and Vulnerable Pupils

Attendance barriers should be assessed individually with reasonable adjustments and coordinated support where required. Schools should follow the Herefordshire graduated approach to attendance.

12. Attendance Contracts and Notice to Improve

Attendance contracts may be used. Notices to Improve may be issued where support has not led to sufficient improvement and statutory criteria are met.

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parents (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the [local code of conduct](#) for the Herefordshire.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

13. Penalty Notices

The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Before referring for a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
If in an individual case Herefordshire Council believes a penalty notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. Circumstances where this may apply include (not exhaustive): Several term time holidays below the threshold and repeated absence for birthdays or family events
When a parent purposefully tries to avoid a penalty notice by taking their child out of school when the school is open for four days for pupils and closed on the fifth day due to a bank holiday or training day.
[Penalty Notice - Local Code of Conduct 2024](#)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

14. Persistent and Severe Absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
- Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see sections 12 and 13, above)
- Students Missing Education (also known as children missing education or **CME**) When students leave the school and no information has been received regarding their new placement and parents/carers are unable to be contacted, the school has a duty of care regarding safeguarding and must contact the Local Authority. The student will be deemed to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to investigate, which will include liaising with Social Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate the child. By giving the school details of the students' new school and location, unnecessary investigations can be avoided. [Children missing education - Herefordshire Council](#)
- Children Missing in Education (CMIE) Where children are missing considerable amounts of their education despite high levels of intervention and support, then we may refer the student's case into the Child Missing in Education (CMIE) panel at the Local Authority

15. Reintegration Following Absence

Individual reintegration plans should be considered following lengthy or unavoidable absence.

16. Monitoring and Governance

Attendance data should be reviewed weekly, termly and annually and reported to the trustees.

Person Responsible	Paul Bescoby
Last Updated	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027

Appendix 1

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

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

C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Attendance Targets

100%	Gold Standard
96+%	Green Standard This is expected standard. You have every chance of achieving in all your subjects
92% - 96%	Amber Standard Not good enough. You are putting your educational achievements at risk
<92%	Red Standard This is "The Danger Zone". You are unlikely to achieve your targets