



**“Together we learn, Together we succeed”**

# Attendance Policy

This policy has been written to ensure that the school's ethos, curriculum, and practices promote shared values. It also encourages staff, children and other members of the Welbourne community to understand others and to value diversity, irrespective of gender, race, belief and sexual orientation.

As a Rights Respecting School, we put the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos.

Policy Agreed	Reviewed by	Ratified on	Approved by	Next Review
Nov 2025	R Tailor	20 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2025	FGB	Nov 2027

# 1. Vision and Commitment

At Welbourne Primary School, we believe that consistent attendance is the foundational key to unlocking every child's potential. Our vision is to cultivate a strong sense of belonging where every child, from Nursery (age 2) to Year 6 (age 11), feels safe, valued, and excited to attend school every day.

This policy is rooted in the understanding that good attendance is achieved through supportive partnerships with families, not through punitive measures alone. Where attendance is a concern, our primary focus will always be to identify the underlying barriers and offer early, targeted support.

The statutory requirement for pupils is to attend for 190 days per academic year.

Welbourne Primary School carefully considers all policies with respect to the impact on equality and the possible implications for pupils and staff with protected characteristics.

Consideration has been given to any potential impact on those with protected characteristics within Welbourne Primary School:

Age

Pregnancy/ maternity

Sex

Marriage/ civil partnership

Disability

Gender reassignment

Ethnicity, race and culture

Religion or belief

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Key Responsibility for Attendance
Head Teacher	Overall strategic oversight and accountability for attendance figures; ensures statutory compliance and resource allocation.
Senior Lead for Attendance	Leads day-to-day intervention strategies; coordinates communication with the Local Authority (LA); trains staff on policy implementation.
Class Teachers	The first line of intervention. Monitors daily attendance and punctuality; builds strong, positive relationships with pupils and families; immediately flags absence concerns to the Attendance Lead.
Welfare and Attendance Lead	Oversees attendance data and trends; initiates early intervention for pupils at risk of poor attendance; leads communication with families regarding attendance concerns and support plans; makes referrals to external agencies.
Governing Body	Challenges and supports the Head Teacher by reviewing attendance data and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and intervention strategies.
Parents/Carers	Ensures the child attends school regularly and punctually; contacts the school by 8:55 AM on the first day of absence; collaborates actively with the school on any support plan.

## 3. Defining Standards and Statutory Thresholds

### 3.1 Punctuality

The school day starts at 8:55 AM for all 3 year old Nursery to Year 6.

The 2 year old Nursery sessions follow their designated schedule.

- Lateness (Code L): Arrival after the register closes at 8:55 AM (before 9:15 AM). This is recorded as present but arriving late.
- Late after Registers Close (Code U): Arrival after the statutory register closes (9:15 AM). This counts as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

### 3.2 Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes classified as Persistently Absent (PA) if their attendance falls to 90% or below, regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. At Welbourne, 90% attendance equates to approximately 19 days (nearly 4 weeks) of missed education over the year. This PA threshold automatically triggers formal intervention under Section 6.

## 4. EEF-Led Strategy: Early Intervention & Parental Partnership

Welbourne Primary employs strategies validated by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which highlights the high impact of parental engagement and early intervention in improving outcomes.

### 4.1 Proactive Communication and Positive Reinforcement

- EEF Strategy: *Focusing on parental engagement and self-regulation.*
- Implementation: We actively communicate the value of attendance through positive language, celebrating successes, and linking attendance directly to curriculum engagement.
  - Attendance Champions: Weekly recognition (certificates, assemblies) for classes and individuals achieving 100% attendance and punctuality.
  - The Attendance Link: Teachers maintain a brief, positive line of communication (e.g., a postcard, quick chat) with families whose children are at risk of dropping below 97%, focusing on support before the problem escalates.
  - Welcome Back Protocol: Every child returning after an absence receives a brief, positive welfare check to reaffirm their sense of belonging and reintegrate them smoothly.

### 4.2 Home-School Agreement and Collaborative Support

- EEF Strategy: *High-quality early years practice that develops communication and language skills.*
- Implementation: Our initial approach to low attendance is a Think Family model, focused on understanding and removing barriers.
  - When attendance falls below 95%, the Attendance Lead schedules a Support Meeting with the family to collaboratively create a simple, supportive action plan.
  - This plan identifies any underlying issues (e.g., anxiety, transport, social challenges) and links the family to relevant school support or external agencies (e.g., Family Support Worker, CAMHS).

## 5. Attendance Procedures and Flowcharts

These flowcharts detail the operational steps taken daily and the escalation path for attendance concerns.

### 5.1 Daily Register Protocol

This sequence ensures all absences are accounted for before 10:00 AM.

Time	Staff Action	Outcome/Next Step
8:55 AM	Class Teacher/Tutor takes the electronic register.	All pupils present are marked.
9:00 AM	Register Closes. Teacher sends the completed register to the Main Office.	Any pupil not marked present is now recorded as absent.
9:00 - 9:15 AM	Child arrives late (before statutory registers close).	Child reports to the Office. Marked 'L' in the register.
9:15 AM	Statutory Register Closes. Office staff generates the list of unexplained absences.	If a pupil arrives now, they report to the Office, are marked 'U' (unauthorised absence), and receive a late slip.
9:15 - 10:00 AM	Welfare & Attendance Lead begins First Day Contact (FDC) protocol: calling all parent contacts on the list.	If reason is satisfactory, absence is authorised ('I' for Illness). If contact fails, further follow-up action is initiated by the Welfare & Attendance Lead: -all contacts are sent a text -all contacts are called If no contact by 11.30am, SLT is informed and a home visit may be appropriate. If no contact by 1.30pm, contact MASH for further advice.

## 6. Staged Intervention Protocol (EEF Evidence)

Our intervention is structured, transparent, and escalates only when supportive attempts have failed or non-compliance is evident.

Stage	Attendance Threshold	Intervention Action (Focus on Support First)	
Stage 1: Monitoring	95% - 97%	Informal check-in by the Class Teacher/Pastoral Team. Focused on awareness and preventative measures.	We aim to focus our efforts at these stages, to ensure a robust system of monitoring that results in triangulated support with the relevant and responsive guidance and clarity for families.
Stage 2: Early Action	90% - 95%	Formal letter of concern issued by the Attendance Lead. Mandatory Support Meeting scheduled to agree upon a collaborative Home-School Action Plan.	
Stage 3: Persistent Absence (PA)	Below 90%	Second formal letter warning that the case meets the Persistent Absence threshold. Formal review meeting with the Head Teacher and Attendance Lead. The school may initiate referral to the Local Authority (LA) Attendance Service at this point.	
Stage 4: Legal Action	Below 90% (and all support exhausted/refused)	Formal referral to the LA, which may lead to the issuance of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), formal parenting orders, or court proceedings.	

## 7. Statutory Absence Codes and Leave

### 7.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

### 7.2 Authorised Absence (A)

Absence is granted only if the school is satisfied the reason is legitimate and unavoidable. Valid reasons include:

- Genuine illness (verified by the parent).
- Medical/dental appointments that could not be made outside school hours (proof of appointment may be required).
- Religious observance (on days exclusively set apart by the religious body).
- Exclusion from school.

### 7.3 Unauthorised Absence (N)

Absence is marked 'N' if the school has not received a satisfactory explanation, or if the reason given is deemed unacceptable by the Head Teacher. Examples include:

- Family holidays taken during term time.
- Shopping, birthdays, non-urgent trips, or family business.
- Keeping a child home for minor or non-infectious ailments.

### 7.4 Leave of Absence in Term Time (H)

- Policy: The Head Teacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time for the purpose of a family holiday.
- Exceptional Circumstances: Leave may only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances (e.g., bereavement, parental service overseas). A request must be made in writing well in advance. Taking a holiday without authorisation will result in an unauthorised absence mark ('G') and may result in an FPN being issued.

## 8. Effective Communication with families

We understand that strong home-school communication is vital for maintaining good attendance. Our approach is guided by the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) "Supporting School Attendance" guidance, emphasizing clear, consistent, and supportive dialogue.

- **Early and Positive Messaging:** We will proactively communicate the importance of attendance and punctuality through newsletters, school website updates, and parent workshops, focusing on the positive impact on learning and well-being.
- **Clear Protocols for Absence Reporting:** Families will receive clear instructions on how to report absences, including the preferred contact method (phone/email) and the expected timeframe (by 8:55 AM on the first day of absence).
- **Structured Communication during Concerns:** When attendance becomes a concern, communication will follow the staged intervention protocol (Section 5.2 and 6), ensuring families are informed at each step. This includes:
  - **Letters of Concern:** Formal notifications outlining attendance percentages and potential next steps.
  - **Support Meetings:** Scheduled opportunities for face-to-face discussions to understand barriers and collaboratively develop solutions.
  - **Home-School Action Plans:** Jointly agreed strategies to improve attendance, reviewed regularly.
- **Multilingual Support:** Where possible, key attendance information and communications will be provided in multiple languages to ensure all families can fully understand and engage.
- **Open Door Policy:** We encourage families to contact the school with any concerns or questions regarding their child's attendance, fostering an environment of trust and mutual support.

## 9. Recording and Monitoring

All attendance data is recorded electronically in the register and analysed:

1. **Daily:** To identify any unexplained absences and initiate the First Day Contact protocol.
2. **Weekly:** To monitor individual and class attendance trends, identify pupils at risk of falling below the 97% threshold, and inform early interventions. To ensure there are no N codes for the last week in review.
3. **Termly:** To identify pupils falling below the 95% and 90% thresholds, track patterns of absence (e.g., frequent Friday absences, high number of illness days) to inform welfare intervention, and report performance to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.