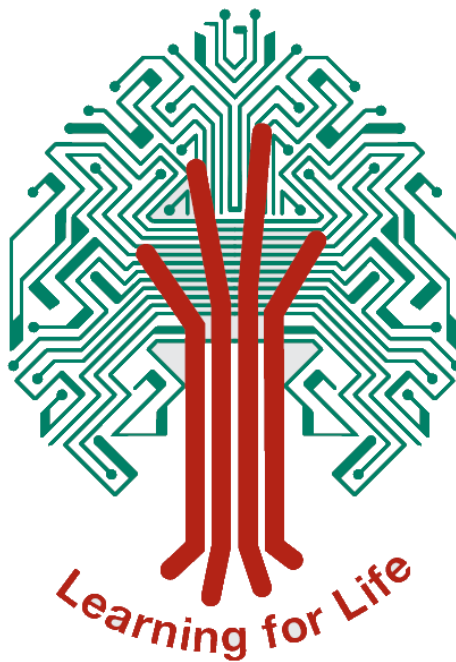




ATTENDANCE POLICY (Students)

Reference this policy is aligned to with LCC	n/a
Agreed with Support Staff Trade Unions	n/a
Adopted by the Governing Body	September 26
Next Review Due	September 27
Agreed with Teacher Trade Unions and Professional Associations	n/a

School Aim

Welland Park Academy provides a challenging and supportive environment that encourages all students to attend every session possible. We believe that good attendance is essential for educational success. Regular attendance helps students achieve their full academic potential, develop positive attitudes towards learning, build friendships, and engage fully in academy life. It also supports personal development, wellbeing, and preparation for life beyond education.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. By attending school regularly, students can maximise learning opportunities, build confidence and resilience, and develop the skills needed to succeed in adulthood. The academy's attendance target is 96% or above, which equates to fewer than seven days of absence across the school year.

Research consistently shows that attendance has a significant impact on academic achievement, life skills, future employment prospects, and social development. Every day missed represents lost learning and opportunities that cannot be fully replaced. Poor attendance can limit students' progress, GCSE outcomes, and future choices. Both academy and national data show that attendance below 96% has a negative effect on attainment and personal development. For this reason, we have robust procedures in place to support students, parents, and carers in ensuring students attend school whenever possible.

Guidance from the NHS and mental health professionals also highlights that regular school attendance supports positive mental health, while prolonged school avoidance can negatively affect emotional wellbeing, academic progress, and social outcomes. Further information can be found in the support document on the academy website.

Parental support

The Academy believes in working collaboratively in partnership with parents and carers. Where a student's attendance gives cause for concern, contact will be made between the appropriate staff, parents and carers who should be aware that absence from school will likely have a detrimental effect on their child's education. Interruptions to the complex learning process leads to gaps in a child's knowledge and understanding, missed stages in the acquisition of a new skill and lost opportunities to share in and grow from new experiences.

Parents and carers of registered students of compulsory school age are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends and stays at school; Students are expected to attend for the full 190 days of the academic year unless there is a good reason for absence. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Welland Park Academy will do their best to work with families to support good attendance and remove barriers where possible and appropriate, however attendance at school is a parental responsibility. As a last resort, the school may refer poor attendance cases to the Local Authority, who will decide whether to proceed to fines or, as a last resort, prosecution. This only happens in cases where all reasonable and appropriate support has been explored and not engaged with as the academy will always aim to support students before resorting to Local Authority referrals.

The school encourage families to contact the academy should they have any questions or concerns as early as possible. This can be through their child's Form Tutor, Head of Year, Pastoral Support Manager (see school website for details) or the School Attendance Champion (Emma Ferreri).

Absence

Absence is defined as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

There are different types of absence:

Authorised: where the school approves student absence; only the school can authorise absences. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis provided that attendance is not below the Academy threshold.

Authorised absence will be considered, usually on a short-term basis, for occurrences such as:

- Child sickness
- Serious or critical illness of a close relative
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments; the school asks that where possible these are made out of school time and that the student attends school before and after the appointment if this is not possible
- Religious observance
- Bereavement
- Wedding of an immediate family member
- An absence due to a family emergency
- Attendance at or in connection with a Children's Hearing or Care Review

Unauthorised: where the school will not approve absence

Absence will not be authorised for events such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained or with a lack of evidence provided
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Non-medical appointments
- Closure of a sibling's school for training days
- Regular absences without supporting information to explain the absence

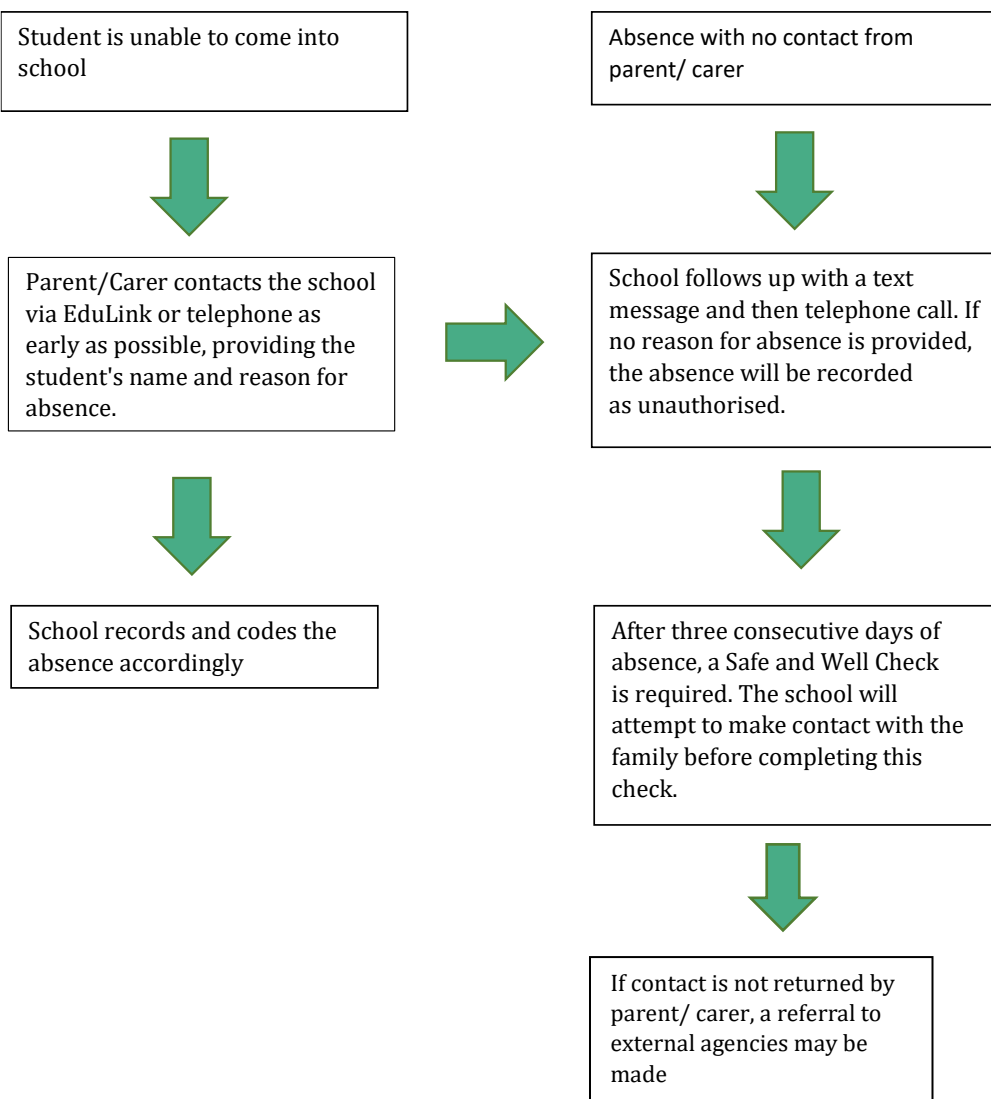
Rewarding good attendance

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance throughout the academic year, including at each half termly rewards assembly, tutor, HOY and SLT rewards.

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below expected standards 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away, however this will be decided on a case by case basis.

Procedure for reporting absence and monitoring attendance

Reporting procedures for absence:

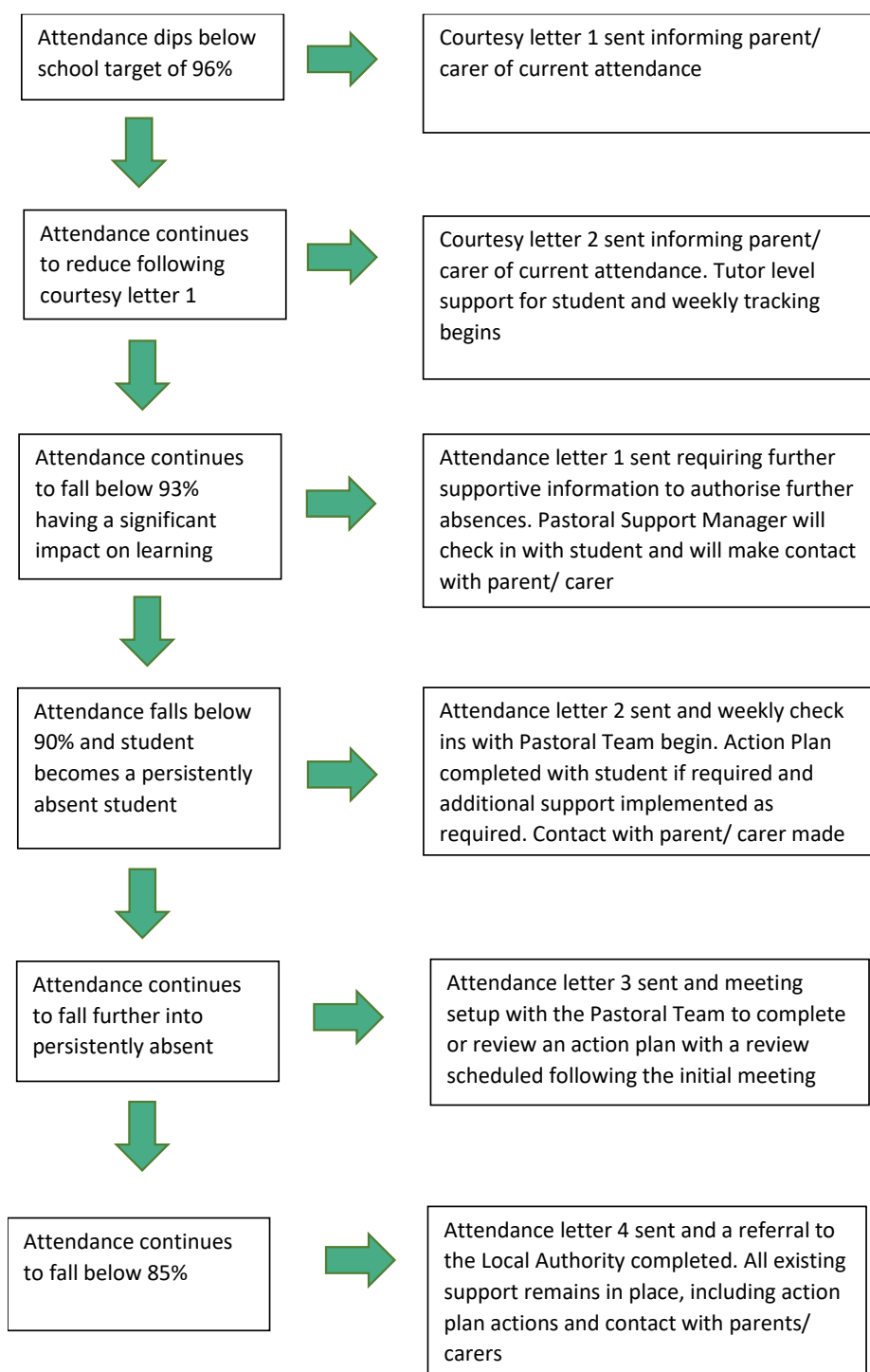


Case by case decisions will be made by the Lead DSL regarding home visits and subsequent external agency referrals.

- Students arriving late are required to sign in and their names passed on to the Attendance Team. All students that are late without an accepted reason will have a lunchtime detention on the same day. Failure to attend this detention will result in an afterschool detention on the same day until 4.15pm. After 3 late arrivals in a half term, students will serve an after-school detention with the Senior Leadership Team in the first instance. After this, if this persists, the pastoral team will contact the parents/ carers directly to discuss the issue.
- If a student arrives late after the close of registration, 9.15am they will be marked on our registers as a 'U'.
- Registers are also taken in every lesson.
- Application for Leave of Absence must be sought in writing from the Principal, prior to the event. From August 2024, the amendments to the Education Regulations in relation to absence from school, give NO entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application must be put in writing to the Principal and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Holidays that are unauthorised will be recorded and will likely lead to a referral to the Authority in line with National Frameworks for Attendance and a Penalty Notice being issued in line with Government Guidance.

Monitoring attendance:

Each student's attendance is taken on a case-by-case basis, however, in line with government guidance it is good practice to keep students and parents/ carers informed of their child's attendance. Below is a guideline to our usual procedures as part of our attendance monitoring and collaborative working with families. Attendance can be seen on Edulink, however, if attendance falls below the school target and is therefore having a negative impact on student's learning, we will make contact with families early on and work in partnership should there be any support, intervention or guidance required. We will also be mindful that absences early on in the academic year have a significant impact on the attendance figure of students compared to later in the year.



- Parents are responsible for providing as much evidence/ supporting information as possible to support their student's long-term absence (such as but not limited to doctor's letters, appointment cards/ messages, agency letters, medication evidence etc.) These are used to help build an effective and appropriate support package for students in line with any needs. In cases where there are concerns about the reported illness, the absence may be recorded as 'Unauthorised' until suitable information is provided. Any costs incurred in obtaining these will be the parent's responsibility.

Students at risk of persistent absence (PA)

Persistent absenteeism is defined by the government as missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason. An attendance of 90% equates to missing half a day from school each week (19 days across the academic year) and results in a significant loss of learning time. The government defines students as 'severely absent' if their attendance falls below 50%.

The Academy will ensure it provides support to students at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing persistent absence, the Pastoral Team will work with the Attendance Officer:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents
 - Having a weekly tutor review
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams
 - Creating attendance clinics
 - Using fixed penalty notices where all other reasonable strategies have been exhausted
 - Seek to remove barriers where reasonably possible and appropriate in line with school procedures and policies

Where a student becomes at risk of becoming PA, the Academy will:

- Welcome the student back following any absence and offer.
- Meet with the student to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Make contact with the student's parent/ carer to discuss progress and/ or concerns around attendance.

Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the Academy will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social care, to support the student in line with the Academy's duty of care.

The Academy attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Looked after children

- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Children with a social worker

Punctuality

Time:	Punctuality Action:
7.30am	Breakfast Club open to all students with free breakfast for PP students
8.30am	Back gates opened. Students in taxis or special arrangement with the school to enter through reception
08:40am	Students expected to be in school.
08:40am	Gates closed and morning registration opens. Students arriving at school after this time will enter via reception, sign in and receive a late mark, lunch time detention and a C1.
9.15am	All morning registration closed for collation by the attendance team. After this time students arriving late to school will receive a U mark.
12.30pm	Afternoon registration opens. Students who arrive at Period 4 lessons after this time receive a late mark.
1pm	Afternoon registration closed for collation by the attendance team. After this time students arriving late to school will receive a U mark.
2.10pm	Students returning from lunch off site (by arrangement only) must sign in through reception.

In preparation for life, it is important to foster positive attitudes to arriving at school on time. Students who arrive late may have a negative start to the day and may miss vital information given at the beginning of the day/lessons which can lead to caps learning.

On arrival after the close of register, students must immediately report to the Academy front reception where the register will be amended to indicate the student is in school. This ensures that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are on site.

The school will regard punctuality with the utmost importance and sanctions are applied for lateness. These include but are not limited to detentions during social time, after school detentions and/ or more serious sanctions for persistent lateness. We do not require a parent/ carer's permission to set and enforce a sanction, but will always inform them if an after-school detention is taking place. Late arrival due to reasons such as traffic will likely result in sanctions as we encourage students to develop good attendance habits by allowing extra time for their journey and arriving punctually each day.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return. Students are expected to return to school following medical appointments during the school day to avoid gaps in learning.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Pastoral Team is notified and they will conduct a search for the student. If they cannot be found, they will contact the parent or carer in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- The time missed and time spent locating students will likely be made up during social time or after school. The context around the truancy will be considered when deciding on appropriate sanctions and these remain a school decision.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider referral to the Local Authority for a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice may be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

Missing children

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform 'on call' immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- Available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises.
- If the pupil has not been found after this search, then the parents/ carers of the student will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

The Academy will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Positive Behavioural Policy.