Attendance Strategy

Last Reviewed: October 2026

Introduction

At Wells Primary School, we firmly believe that all pupils benefit from outstanding school attendance. To this end, we will do all we can to ensure that our pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly. In order for a pupil's attendance record to be deemed very good, it must be 97% or above:

100%	Outstanding Attendance
97%–99%	Very Good Attendance
95%-97%	Good Attendance
Below 94%	Attendance Requires Improvement

Aims and Objectives

Wells Primary School will maintain systems and practices that will:

- Create an ethos in which excellent attendance is the norm.
- Maintain a safe, secure environment where pupils feel valued and welcome, thereby positively encouraging attendance.
- Raise pupil awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance, and encourage in pupils a sense of responsibility.
- Celebrate excellent school attendance.
- Support pupils and families who experience difficulties maintaining good school attendance.

The School Day

The school day starts at 8.25am. Children may go into classes from 8.20am when the school gates open and registers will be taken promptly at **8.35am**. Children will be marked as late if they miss the register taken in class. Registers will close at 8.40am from when children will be marked as absent.

Children who arrive late must go to the front entrance and sign in on the school inventory system.

The school day finishes at 3pm.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day.
- Contact the school before 9.30am on the morning of each day of the pupil's absence by calling 0208708 0500, option 1 or email the school at office@wellsprimary.co.uk

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

Any unexplained absence is treated as unauthorised absence.

School Personnel

Attendance Officer
Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance: **Head Teacher**
Deputy Head
Education Welfare Officer: **Redbridge Designated Person**

Wells Primary School has a responsibility to ensure that all teachers:

- Complete registers accurately and punctually during every registration period.
- Follow up any unexplained absences upon the pupil's return to school.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) of concerns.
- Are alert to early indicators that could culminate in non-attendance and report these concerns as soon as possible to the DSL.

Wells Primary School acts in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and works collaboratively with local authorities to support parents in ensuring that their children are regularly attending school.

The legal framework

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996; which may lead to prosecution. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). In February 2004, section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act gave powers to designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's attendance at school. Since September 2015 the Persistence Absence percentage has changed from 15% to 10%.

Responding to Non-Attendance

Pupil attendance is continually monitored by the attendance officer, head teacher and DSL. When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in accordance with their Attendance and Punctuality procedures, this may include:

- First Day Absence calls, text messages or emails to all named contacts with parental responsibility.
- In the event of no response being received for the absence the school will attempt to communicate with other named contacts.
- Written communication for unexplained absences.
- Implementation of a staged attendance intervention.
- Home visits.
- Continued concerns about a child's attendance may result in a referral to the school's Safeguarding Team, the Education Welfare Officer, the school nursing service, MASH Team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the police for a welfare check.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the school may result in a referral to the local authority requesting the issue of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution.

Punctuality

If a pupil arrives late to registration, they will receive a late mark in the register. Reasons for lateness may be investigated and responded to in line with the School's Attendance and Punctuality procedures.

Lateness after registration has closed is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) and parents/carers will be notified of this absence. Continued Lateness after the Close of Registration may result in a referral to the local authority requesting a penalty notice.

Medical Appointments

Parents/carers are encouraged to arrange all non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours but where this is not possible the school should be notified in advance by calling or emailing the office on 02087080500 /office@wellsprimary.co.uk

Where it is not possible to arrange appointments outside of school hours, pupils are encouraged to attend school either side of their appointment where possible.

Religious Holidays

The school will authorise absence for major religious holidays. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school in advance of their intention to keep their child at home. If parents/carers do not inform the school any days missed may be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Requests for extended absence for religious observances should be made in writing to the Headteacher at office@wellsprimary.co.uk

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and it is essential that parents/carers take their family holidays during the school holidays. It is the school's policy not to authorise absence during term time for holidays and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised.

We recognise that there may be occasions where parents/carers feel that there are extenuating reasons for requesting leave during term time. In such circumstances parents/carers should write to/email the Headteacher outlining the reason for the request and the dates the pupil will be absent from school. The Headteacher will inform the parents/carers of their decision in writing. The LEA will only issue penalty notices if parents have completed the correct leave of absence form.

Requests for long periods of absence will not be authorised. Prolonged unauthorised absences may put your child's place at Wells Primary School at risk.

If parents take their children on holiday during term time without authorisation the school will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school. "Parents" includes partners who are not married to, but who live with, one of the parents who has main care responsibilities for the child. Other family members with parental responsibility including grandparents and siblings may also be liable for a penalty notice.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

To prevent children from becoming persistently absent, the school will:

- Proactively use data to monitor pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Identify all pupils each week whose attendance falls below 93% for monitoring.
- Notify parents and carers that their child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee.
- Work with each pupil and their family to understand and address the reasons for absence.
- Provide support in school where appropriate, or signpost families to other agencies where there are out of school barriers.

Persistently absent pupils

Where pupils are persistently absent the school will:

- Proactively use data to monitor pupils with poor attendance.
- Identify all pupils with attendance below 90%. Where there are not exceptional circumstances and/or attendance is not improving, a meeting with the head teacher, EWO and family will be arranged.
- Work with each pupil and their family to understand and address the reasons for absence.
- Provide support in school where appropriate or signpost families to other agencies where there are out of school barriers. Consider implementing a CAF.
- As a last resort and where other strategies have not worked, work with the local authority on legal intervention where there is lack of engagement with parents and carers.
- Inform children's social care about poor attendance where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Work with the schools of siblings where there are family attendance concerns.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or additional needs

We are aware that for some children, medical conditions or additional needs may make it difficult for them to attend school at every opportunity. In these circumstances, we will deal sensitively with families to support children's attendance.

The school will:

- Work with parents and carers to encourage attendance wherever possible.
- Make adaptations that will facilitate attendance. Children with difficulties coming into school may be met by an adult for settling in time, or have time with the Poppy, the school dog, for example.
- Make appropriate referrals to wider services to support pupils in maintaining good attendance.
- Ensure that children who miss school for medical reasons or SEND needs are given appropriate support when they are in school/come back to school so that they feel welcome and included. They will be given academic support to avoid anxiety about missed learning.
- Consider whether an EHCP is required or whether an existing EHCP needs to be amended.

Support for pupils with a social worker

The school will:

- Work with parents and carers to maintain the same ambition for attendance and to encourage attendance wherever possible.
- Work closely with the child to remove any barriers to good attendance.
- Inform a child's social worker where there are unexplained absences.
- Monitor attendance closely and provide reports for PEP and LAC meetings, and CIN or CP meetings.

Rewards and Incentives for Regular Attendance

- Weekly recognition – during the Achievement Assembly, the three classes with the highest attendance are acknowledged for high attendance. The winning class is rewarded by receiving the weekly Attendance Cup. (Adapted targets would be made for a class with a child who was unable to be at school for medical reasons).
- Certificates and awards are given to individual pupils for excellent or improved attendance in the weekly Achievement Assemblies.

Penalty Notice Information

Reasons for Penalty Notices/Prosecution

Term Time Leave of Absence

A school can apply to their local authority for a penalty notice if there are 5 or more days of consecutive absence due to term time leave.

Unauthorised Absence

A school may apply to their local authority for a penalty notice if there are 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. These absences can be a combination of the following codes:

G - Term Time Leave of Absence

O - Unauthorised Absence - Failure to contact the school (unexplained absence) may result in an absence being recorded as unauthorised

U - Late After the Close of Registers

Who is Liable for a Penalty Notice / Prosecution?

Penalty notices/prosecution are now issued/sought for each parent for each child **(per parent, per child)**. Parent refers to anyone with parental responsibility and may include carers, step parents, grandparents or any other adult with parental responsibility.

For Example: If a family with three children take term time leave of absence, each parent would receive three penalty notices of £160 for each child. This would amount to £960 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £480 if paid within 21 days.

First Offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave of absence or unauthorised absences the amount has increased to:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of being issued, this amount is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days of being issued

Second Offence

If a second penalty notice is issued for term time leave of absence or unauthorised absence within a three-year period, there **will not** be a discount for early payment.

The penalty notice is payable at the full amount of £160 within 28 days of the date of being issued

Third Offence / Any Further Offenses Within a Three-Year Period

If there is a third instance of term time leave of absence or unauthorised absence, a penalty notice **will not** be issued.

Any further cases will be referred directly to Magistrates' Court for prosecution. Magistrates can impose a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child.

If a parent is found guilty of an offence, this is recorded as a criminal offence and will show on any DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks as "Failure to Safeguard a Child's Education"

Transition, In year Admissions and Cross Border Checks

All schools will have the ability to check for previous penalty notices/prosecutions issued within a three-year period in their own local authority or any other local authority that the family has lived in at year 6 to 7 and 11 to 12 transition or for in year admissions.

Data Sharing with The DfE and Local Authority

From September 2024, it will be mandatory for all schools to share live data with both the Department for Education and their local authority. Schools will also have termly targeted support meetings with their local authority, to discuss pupil attendance. If schools have authorised leave in term time, local authorities may ask to see proof of exceptional circumstances and in some cases, direct schools to apply for penalty notices to be issued.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on a two yearly cycle and should be read in conjunction with the Redbridge Attendance Strategy.