



The
Cardinal Wiseman
Catholic School

Attendance Policy 2022/2023

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Review: As and when requested by either Governing Body or Headteacher of the school

Next review by: Pupil Care and Behaviour Support Team

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other policies and not as a standalone policy.

Mission Statement

The Cardinal Wiseman School believes in education for all. We aim to achieve this in a caring Catholic community based on the Gospel values of equality and justice. Our community seeks to follow the example and the teaching of Jesus Christ that is to love and help one another. We live by our motto:

"All things for Christ"

"Education for all = Achievement for all"



At Cardinal Wiseman School we are committed, in partnership with the parents, students, governors, Westminster Diocese and the Local Education Authority, to building a school which delivers on our mission statement of 'Education for all = Achievement for all'.

School performance information regarding attendance is forwarded regularly to the Department for Children, Schools & Families and the Local Education Authority. Given a level of Free School Meals which is 14.8%, the schools attendance target is calculated at 96.0%%. Last year our attendance was 94.2%.

Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School (CWCS) believes that regular school attendance is crucial to allowing children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

CWCS values all students. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to early identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

CWCS believe attendance is a shared responsibility, involving the whole school community and local community; our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a thread that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is supported by our policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour and inclusion policies. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

CWCS defines our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance Description	Approx. days lost per year	Approx. weeks lost
98-100% Excellent	0-4	Less than 1
95-98% Good	5-9	1 to 2



93-95%	Below average	10-13	2 to 3
90-93%	Unsatisfactory	14-28	3 to 6
Below 90% Persistent Absence		More than 25	More than 5

Students whose attendance drops below 90% are classed as vulnerable students.

The Principles of the Policy

- All school staff, including governors, administrative and support staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- Clear procedures for supporting students to come to school.
- Parents/carers and students having the opportunity to raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns.
- Allocating resources e.g. time, people, space to support the policy.
- Rewarding students termly and annually who have good attendance and those who strive to improve their attendance.
- Identifying patterns of absence and intervening early. Research shows patterns of attendance are established early in a school career. Children who miss significant amounts of their education in primary schools are more likely to truant later on. CWCS will work with the Local Education Authority and the Education Welfare Officer using data to identify students early.
- Sanctions for failing to ensure regular attendance are fully understood by the whole school community and parents/carers.
- Good attendance is essential to safeguard all pupils; poor



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attendance can lead to poor behaviour and poor attainment. Poor attendance can also lead to students being exposed to vulnerable situations such as CSE and county lines, therefore it is of the upmost importance that all stakeholders ensure every measure is taken to maintain a good attendance for all pupils.

Procedures

The school attendance policy promotes regular attendance in order to give students full access to the teaching and learning opportunities offered by CWCS. The policy is understood by teachers, pupils and parents/carers and is consistently applied.

All data regarding attendance is centralised by the use of SIMS Registration system. It is the responsibility of the Assistant Head teacher Pupil Care and Behaviour and the 6th form Inclusion Co-ordinator alongside the Director of 6th Form to monitor attendance & punctuality, whilst being supported by the Attendance Administration Team (AAT) & 6th Form Administrator (6thFA).

Data is revised and appropriate decisions made. Data is forwarded daily, by the Attendance Officer/administrator, to the HOY's & their Deputy's.

Registers are taken the mornings by all year group tutors.

The DfE expects schools (and all stakeholders) to pay particular attention to persistently and severely absent pupils.

- **Persistent** absence refers to pupils who miss 10% or more of school
- **Severe** absence refers to pupils who miss 50% or more of school. In the first instance, the DfE expects you to:



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- We will proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and work with them to understand and address the reasons for absence
- Signpost and support pupils and parents to access any required services, where we have identified out-of-school barriers

Where a pupil is persistently absent, the school will:

- Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers
- Work with the LA on legal intervention where support is not working or being engaged with
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care, where there are safeguarding concerns

Where a pupil is severely absent, the school will take the approach above for persistently absent pupils **and** agree a joint approach with the local authority.

The type of support the school and other partners can provide includes:

- A whole family plan
- An education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Alternative provision

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken by Education Welfare. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, expect schools to take an



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attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Leave of Absence - Penalty Notices.

No parent can as of right demand leave of absence for their child. The school has a discretionary power to grant leave only in exceptional circumstances and where a written application is made in advance.

The parent with whom the pupil normally resides must make the application in good time and discuss the matter well in advance with the school. Carefully consider why such leave is necessary and be prepared to offer documentation to support the application.

- Regulations have been amended (September 2013) to prohibit the Headteacher of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and they consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
- The Department for Education discourages term time absence. Term time absence is disruptive and affects the continuity of learning.
- Holidays which are taken because of availability of cheaper offers, the availability of desired accommodation, poor weather experienced in school holiday periods or an overlap with



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beginning of term do not qualify as exceptional.

- Tickets should not be booked prior to application. Prior purchase in no way validates the request.
- Where a return date is agreed, and the absence is extended, it will be regarded as unauthorised and you may also risk losing your place at the school.
- Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively. In the case of acute emergency, parents should contact the school at the earliest opportunity during the absence to explain the circumstances. They should keep the school fully informed as to an acceptable return date and offer documentation if requested towards justifying the nature of the emergency.
- The illness of a family member cannot be accepted as justification for a delayed return without showing the original tickets or travel documents that would have allowed a timely return.

Each request for absence will be considered individually in accordance with the policy made by the Governing Body of an individual school. Schools consider the following:

- The exceptional nature of the circumstances.
- The child's previous attendance history.
- The child's stage of education and progress.
- The time of year (assessments or exams).
- The length of the absence requested.



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Where the school and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences are an offence under section 444 of the education act 1996. **Parents of students in Years 7-11 are warned that if they take leave without authorisation the Local Education Authority has the power to issue Fixed-Penalty Notices of £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004).**

Where no application is made and the child is absent, then the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Claims that a child has been absent because they were ill will need the appropriate medical documentation from a UK based GP or hospital.

Penalty notices (s444A and 444B) offer a parent an alternative to prosecution under the act by giving the opportunity to discharge their liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.

Roles & responsibilities in the implementation of the policy

- Any student absence notified to the school on the dedicated absence phone line will be updated in SIMS accordingly, by the relevant Attendance Administrator.
- If any other member of staff receives a message from a parent this should be forwarded to the relevant Attendance Administrator for action immediately.
- If a student is sent home due to illness/injury, the medical office must notify the relevant Attendance Administrator at the time of departure.

School Comms, the automated 'first day of absence' calling system that we use, is linked to SIMS therefore it is important that registers are taken accurately at the beginning of tutor time & all lessons.



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- A.M. registers must be taken & sent before 9.10 a.m. A prompt is sent daily, at approximately 9.15am, to those teachers whose a.m. registers remain untaken.

Day one of absence:

- Text alert sent to parent's/carer's if not present by 11 a.m. If a response is received from the family regarding a student's absence, SIMS is automatically updated.
- Attendance Admin Officer. Telephone parent/carer of all absent LAC/vulnerable pupils (10:30 a.m.) If no message received before then the Head of Year (HOY) will be notified.
- Head of Year to contact attached social worker where contact cannot be made and where appropriate.

Day two of absence:

- Second text alert sent to parent/carer if not present by 11 a.m. Attendance Admin Officer to notify HOY and AHT if no parental contact within two days.

Day three of absence:

- If no contact or authorisation for absence has been received, Attendance Admin Officer to notify relevant Attendance Officer. Appropriate action is taken by the Attendance Officer (A.O). This may include phone call, letter sent home or for vulnerable pupils/persistent attendance concerns, visit by A.O & Safer Schools Police Officer (attached police officer).



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- Where attendance is a persistent issue, Frank Jenkinson (LEA attendance manager) will be notified.

The 'Children Missing Education Team' must be informed of unexplained prolonged absences, where every effort has been made to identify the location & well-being of a child. The school may ask the Safer Schools Police Officer to conduct a home visit if we are concerned about the well-being of a child.

Appropriate letters are sent to the parent/carer. When the pupil returns to school, the tutor must see a note of authorisation from the parent/carer and amend register on SIM's.

Support Systems

Where there are persistent concerns regarding a student's attendance, all strategies should be explored and the following support agencies/services can be utilized:

- Inclusion support
- Behavioral support
- Educational Therapist
- School Chaplain
- Connexions/Careers Department
- Mentoring Department
- SEN Department
- Homework Clubs
- Secondary Inclusions Team
- Multi –Agency Meetings
- Safer Schools Police Officer
- SAFE Adolescent Service



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- Reintegration support packages
- Common Assessment Framework

Meetings take place regularly with the Assistant Head teacher Pupil Care and Behaviour, Inclusion Co-ordinator/ Director of 6th Form, Attendance Officer, Heads of Year and the support team to implement the appropriate support for the student. The support may be long term or short term. If attendance continues to be a cause for concern, matters may be referred to The Legal Proceedings Panel at the London Borough of Ealing for consideration.

Specific Roles

Role of Parents/Carers

- Talk to their son/daughter about school and their experiences whilst there. Take a positive interest in their son/daughter's work and educational progress.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home.
- Encourage their son/daughter to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school if their son/daughter is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note on student's return to school.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their son/daughter is experiencing difficulties or refuses to come into school.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may



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impact on their son/daughter's attendance.

- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their son/daughter's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, going to bed at an appropriate time, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening.
- Not keep their son/daughter off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their son/daughter on holiday during term-time – Schools are not legally permitted to authorise holidays in term time so please do not enquire.

Role of the tutor

If a pupil is absent from school, tutors should adhere to the following guidelines.

- Take registers on time (no later than 9.20 am)
- Authorise absences on SIMs, on receipt of letters from parents/carers.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer before authorising any absences for students whose attendance is below 90%.
- Looked After Children's absence should be brought to the attention of the Head of Year immediately. Social services (LAC team) to be notified on the day of absence by the Year team if the carer cannot be contacted.
- Mark students late if they arrive after the late bell. Tutor's are



permitted to set a detention for 20 minutes (same day) for any tutees who were late and enter into diary.

- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve.
- A positive learning climate is essential for promoting good attendance.
- Tutors must keep the HOY and DHOY informed of any attendance concerns.
- All tutors must use the official codes of absence.

All tutors must foster a culture of safety and calm within their tutor groups. Building positive relationships is paramount, as it is more likely to lead to a climate of trust and openness, where pupils discuss problems associated with poor attendance.

Registers

Attendance must be recorded carefully and sent immediately. Where there are technical difficulties, tutors should provide a hard copy of the register for the attendance officer, before 9.25 am. This will allow for an effective flow of attendance data to tackle any truancy. Attendance information can be used to format accurate up to date data and communicate promptly to Parents, Heads of Year, Form Tutors, Classroom Teachers, Governors and the DCSF.

Attendance reports will be produced for Deputy Heads of Year on a weekly basis. Attendance Officer will review attendance on a fortnightly basis. Attendance data is produced for the DCSF on a termly basis.

The Role of the Deputy Head of Year (Years 7-11)

- Check tutor group attendance within their year on a weekly basis.
- Target & monitor students with attendance between 90-93% and



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record interventions on tracking spreadsheet.

- Initiate contact with parents/carers (letter/phone-call) of students whose attendance falls into 90-94% monitoring group to explore reasons for low attendance.
- Implement personalised interventions where appropriate, to improve attendance.
- Meet with Attendance Administrator regarding missing registers (fortnightly).
- Identify any pupils at risk of truancy and alert Attendance Officer.
- Alert the Attendance Officer if there are major issues that may need to be communicated to school staff, support team and outside agencies.

The Role of the Head of Year

- Review/screen the 90% (95% 6th form) & below letters before being sent out by Attendance Officer i.e. where there may be concerns over sensitivity or vulnerable pupils. The HOY may choose not to send attendance warning letter.
- Be available to meet with parents/carers of students with persistent attendance issues, as required by Attendance Officer.
- Facilitate the access of internal & external support agencies.
- Notify the 'Children Missing Education' team if there is an unexplained absence & where attempts have been made to establish the location/address and well-being of a pupil.
- Follow up on school transfers and ensure the receiving school has a start date for incoming student. Where families fail to provide information or accurate information on where a student will transfer to, concerns should be logged with the 'Children



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Missing Education' team.

- Liase with Social Services where appropriate (LAC/vulnerable).

The Role of the Attendance Officer (AO)

- Monitor students whose attendance drops below 90% and develop and implement successful strategies to avoid further persistent absence.
- Run an attendance file on all persistent absentees (90% below) with all support strategies and all meetings documented/evidenced.
- Be lead professional when dealing with external agencies (EWO, SAFE and Social Care) for persistent absentees – this may be passed onto the HOY or other relevant professionals within the school as the case progresses. This may include the preparation of parental contracts and witness statements where cases progress to court.
- To develop and implement successful strategies for managing attendance data, reports and statistical information.

The Role of Attendance Administrator Officer

- Support Year teams each morning with students who arrive late.
- Contact absent students from '9:30 early callers' list & notify HOY's of any unexplained absences
- Every two weeks review missing sessions report (missed registers) and liaise with appropriate Deputy Head of Year



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(DHOY)/ Inclusion Co-ordinator

- Deal with all Leave of Absence request forms, liaise with Assistant Head teacher/ Inclusion Co-ordinator 6th Form.
- Produce weekly attendance reports.
- Update & maintain attendance on SIMs when in receipt of paper registers & during enforced school closures.
- Produce weekly data/unauthorised absences for deputy Head of Year/Inclusion Co-ordinator 6th Form.
- Produce weekly missing registers report.
- Produce late detention list for KS3 & KS4 and submit to tutors every Monday for Years 7-11.
- Years 7-11 produce absent late detention list - text parents & notify Assistant Head teacher and year teams each Thursday.
- Generate punctuality letters.
- Produce half-termly attendance figures.

Female Genital Mutation (FGM)

Year teams and associated staff have an awareness of FGM and the potential attendance indicators associated with it. These are likely to present themselves through non-attendance or parental Leave of Absence requests at the end of the summer term. Where a student has been subject to FGM, they may also suffer irregular attendance through ill health at the start of the autumn term. Where suspicions arise, staff have a legal duty to call the Police on 101 and report their concerns.

Religious Observance

CWCS acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside



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school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent/carer to request their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's/carer's religious body.

Parents/cares are requested to give advanced notice to the school if they intend their son/daughter to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Punctuality Strategy (Yr 7-11)

Daily procedures for students who are late:

- Students who arrive after the late bell, 8:55am are directed by a member of the year team to the school canteen where they will receive a late stamp in their diary.
- AHT will conduct diary checks.
- Names of students will be recorded and entered onto SIMs as late by the AAT.
- Students will be spoken to regarding their lateness.
- Students will work in silence and carry out private study under the supervision of an AHT.
- The AAT will notify parents/carers of all students who arrive late



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via text message.

Procedures for dealing with persistent lateness:

- 5 'Lates': If a student is late 5 times or more, the parent/carer will be sent an initial warning letter which will be generated and sent by the administration team.
- 6 lates or more in a half terms results in Saturday detention.

A weekly check of punctuality will be conducted by the administration team.

- 10 'Lates': If a student is late 10 or more times, the parent/carer will be sent a second warning letter along with a text message stating that the child will be placed on punctuality report.
- KS3 students-each subsequent time that they are late, they will attend an after school detention for 40 minutes in J200.

The admin team will send out these letters and attach to SIMs as evidence. The letter will warn that a failure to improve punctuality will lead to isolation from break & lunchtime until a meeting with the Head of Year has been arranged.

- 15+ 'Lates': If a student is late 15 or more times, he/she will be sent home with a letter informing the parent/carer that their son/daughter is continuing to arrive late to school.
- KS4 students-each subsequent time that they are late, they will attend an after school detention for 40 minutes.



The letter will be generated by the administration team and passed to the relevant HOY. The HOY will issue the letter to the student and a copy will also be posted home. Students with 15 or more lates will be placed in to Inclusion each time they are late to school. This will be in operation for a minimum of 3 weeks and up to 6 weeks.

- In cases where punctuality does not improve, the school will refer the case to the family Local Education Authority Welfare Officer. In extreme cases, the school may seek to fine parents or arrange a parenting contract order where non-compliance is evident.

Late Detention

Students will be issued with a late detention if they arrive to school late on 2 or more occasions in the previous week. Late detention will be conducted every Friday after school between 3:20 and 4:20pm for 1 hour. This detention will be split into Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

Procedure

- AAT to compile late detention list each Friday afternoon and send to tutors before am tutor on Monday.
- Students will be notified on Monday morning and no later than Tuesday pm tutor, in order to provide parents/carers with 24 hours' notice.



- Tutor to enter this into student planner.
- Late detention register to be taken and submitted to AAT that evening.
- AAT to notify year teams of non-attenders and text parents to inform them of rescheduled detention Friday 3:20pm.
- Rescheduled detention to be conducted by year teams on rota basis.

Punctuality Strategy (6th Form)

Daily procedures for students who are late:

- Students who arrive after the late bell should be recorded late on SIMS by their tutor or subject teacher.
- Daily check of students late by 6th Form Administrator.
- Students will have a lunch time detention on day of being late
- Students spoken to by a member of 6th form team.

Procedures for dealing with persistent lateness (6th Form):

- Students late 15 times in a year receive a Saturday Detention.
- Letter home at 5 lates. Saturday detention if all 5 within ½ term.
- Letter home at 10 lates. 40 min detention for each subsequent late
- Parental meeting with HoY at 15 lates
- Letter home and meeting with Director of 6th form at 15 lates (and every 10 additional lates thereafter), and a Saturday detention issued.



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