



WHEATCROFT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parent / Carers,

New- Attendance Expectations and Monitoring

I am writing to inform you about important updates to the way schools are expected to monitor attendance, in line with the Department for Education's guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024). The new national framework makes it clear that schools must act promptly and consistently when attendance falls below expected levels.

At Wheatcroft School, we have always valued the importance of regular attendance, as every day in school matters for learning, friendships, and long-term success. Our target for all children is 96% or above, and we want to work closely with families to ensure that every pupil has the best possible opportunity to achieve this.

The new guidance sets out clear stages for schools to follow when attendance becomes a concern.

Stage 1 – Awareness (below 96%)

If your child's attendance drops below 96%, you may receive a letter making you aware of this. At this stage, our focus is on support, advice, and working together to address any early issues.

Stage 2 – Monitoring (below 90%, classed as Persistent Absence)

If attendance falls below 90%, a formal monitoring process will begin. Parents will be informed in writing, and attendance will be tracked over a specific period (usually 2 weeks). You may be invited to a meeting in school to set clear targets for improvement.

Stage 3 – Escalation

If attendance continues to be a concern despite earlier intervention, the school will put in place a four-week monitoring plan. If attendance does not improve, we are required to refer the case to the Local Authority's Attendance and Enforcement Officer (AEO). A final written warning will be issued, and if attendance still does not improve, the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice.



The updated framework also strengthens the responsibilities on schools to work in partnership with parents. As outlined in Section 13 of our Attendance Policy, we are committed to open communication, regular updates, and support for any barriers that may affect attendance, such as health needs, SEND, or family circumstances. Our approach is first and foremost supportive, but schools are also expected to escalate concerns if improvement is not seen.

Where persistent absence continues, Section 15 of the national framework requires schools and Local Authorities to consider legal action. Parents may receive a Penalty Notice (£160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days). A maximum of two fines may be issued within a three-year period, after which further measures such as an Education Supervision Order or prosecution through the courts may be pursued. In the most serious cases, fines of up to £2,500 can be applied.

As part of these changes, Wheatcroft has introduced a new Attendance and Absence Policy, which is now available in full on our school website in the dedicated attendance section. This page includes helpful information for families, our procedures for monitoring attendance, and links to wider support. At Wheatcroft, we place great value on strong links between school and home, and we believe that by working together in partnership we can remove barriers, build positive routines, and ensure that every child enjoys the full benefits of their education.

We want to emphasise that our goal is always to work with families to resolve attendance issues early and positively. We understand that children may be unwell at times, and we always want them to rest and recover when needed. However, consistent absence from school has a significant impact on children's education, and national expectations now require schools to act more quickly and robustly.

If you have any questions about these changes or would like support in ensuring your child's attendance improves, please contact the school and your child's class teacher or a member of the school senior leadership team will be happy to help.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us to ensure that every child at Wheatcroft attends school regularly and benefits fully from their education.

Yours sincerely,



Headteacher



Taken from the Attendance and Absence policy 2025- Available on the school website- Attendance and Punctuality- scroll to the bottom of the page.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Wheatcroft CP School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
2. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT daily.
3. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
4. If a pupil's attendance falls below 96 percent, a letter may be sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer contacts the parents to discuss this.
6. The pupil's attendance is monitored for two weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents may be required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.
7. After the two-week monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to 96 percent.
8. If targets are not met, the headteacher makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents. If there is no improvement after an additional four weeks, a fixed-Penalty notice is issued.

