



WELLACRE

August 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance Expectations and Updates for this year

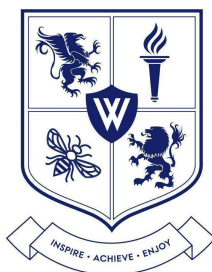
At Wellacre we are committed to maximising the achievement of all our students. There is a clear link between attendance and educational achievement. **Our aim is to promote excellent attendance and punctuality in order to ensure all of our students achieve their potential.**

The final Principal's Letter in July made reference to the **recent Department for Education (DfE) changes to attendance guidance** which have now become statutory and will be implemented from September 2024. These changes must be made by all schools and Local Authorities across the country, with the aim of ensuring consistent approaches. There is now a new **National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices** - this is summarised in the table at the end of this letter.

The DfE have updated the '**Working together to improve school attendance**' document available on their website. This clarifies the expectations for parents/carers, schools and the Local Authority to promote the importance of regular attendance at school and to provide ideas for support and intervention when a young person is not attending school on a regular basis. There are also changes around the use of attendance coding for schools to use on their attendance registers.

The new regulations also mean that your child's attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the Local Authority every day. This will be live data and will allow the DfE to provide schools with the tools to monitor and see improvement in attendance and will allow the Local Authority to provide advice, support and Early Help services. It will also allow the tracking of attendance trends across year groups and student cohorts.

Please find below a **summary of our attendance bands**. Take the time to review this with your child and discuss any improvements which can be made when considering their attendance record last academic year.



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Attendance at 97% or above - congratulations, your child has achieved the school target and is on the right path for success.

Attendance between 95% and 96.9% - your child has missed approximately 8 days of school, the equivalent of 40 lessons, leaving room for improvement.

Attendance below 95% - your child has missed at least 2 weeks of school. This is the equivalent of missing 50 lessons and is a serious concern.

Attendance below 90% - your child has missed at least 19 days of school, the equivalent of missing 95 lessons and is classified as a Persistent Absentee (PA). The Local Authority is notified.

We rely on your full support and ask that you consider the following **ways for parents / carers to encourage high attendance**:

- Check the school website for the dates of holidays. [Term Dates, Calendar & School Day](#)
- Ensure your child arrives at school by 8.30am each day, ready for morning registration.
- Only allow your child to stay at home in response to genuine illness. [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)
- If your child is to be absent, **contact school as soon as possible and before 8.15am** to provide a reason.
- The school should be contacted on **each day of your child's absence**.
- Inform school of any medical appointments. Where possible please make appointments outside of the school day. We request you provide medical appointment letters/cards.
- Contact Mrs George (Attendance Officer) 0161 748 5011 Ext 212, or your child's Head of House or Achievement Tutor, if you have any concerns.
- Do not take holidays in term time – there are 185 non-school days each year. Whilst we understand that it can be difficult and often expensive to take holidays outside of term time, **students need to be in school and it is quite clear in government guidance that absence can only be granted in very exceptional circumstances**. A family holiday or short break is not in itself an exceptional circumstance despite those circumstances being 'special' to the family involved. Paragraph 38 of the DfE Working together to improve school attendance guidance states; '*Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.*'

In accordance with DfE guidelines can I remind parents/carers that the school will not authorise any leave of absence during term-time other than in exceptional circumstances. If a holiday is taken during term-time without school's permission, the student's



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absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a referral will be made to the Local Authority, which may result in a Fixed Penalty Fine being issued. If your child's leave of absence is due to taking part in an approved sporting activity, we require you to provide documentation from its governing body, which confirms the date your child is performing or competing. We will not authorise travel time to and from a sporting activity.

Any requests for a leave of absence during term time must be made to the Principal 4 weeks in advance by following this link on the Attendance page of the school website.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/10tG_nEJpwMTaHuNGLUVvQTCXbwKRPFjKxWKSJ2a0HpU/edit

You will be notified of the outcome within 10 working days.

With all of these changes, our priority is supporting our children to access school every day, ensuring they have the reasonable adjustments, interventions and Early Help to engage in their learning and equip them for their future beyond Wellacre.

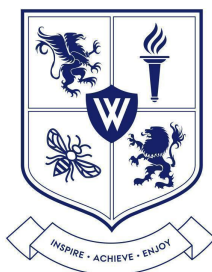
Should you have any questions regarding attendance please contact your child's Head of House, our Attendance Officer Mrs George or myself. You can also find further information in our Attendance and Punctuality policy.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Pemberton

Vice Principal



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Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

5 consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.