

Wessex Gardens Primary & Nursery School





Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2024 - 2025

At Wessex Gardens we believe that every child has the right to feel safe and to be protected from any situation or practice that could result in them being harmed. Each child's welfare is of paramount importance and we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our care and we expect all staff, governors, placements and volunteers to share this firm commitment.

Growing Together

Wessex Gardens Primary and Nursery School is a place where we grow kind, confident, resilient and independent lifelong learners in a trusting and honest environment. Here everyone is welcome and valued. We are motivated and supported to reach our full potential as we continue to aspire to excellence.

This policy was ratified by the governing body on 26th November 2024

Approved by:	Alexander Banks	Jill Summers
Designation:	Headteacher	Chairman of the Governing Body
Signed:		
Review Date:	November 2025	

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Statement of intent

Wessex Gardens Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, excellent attendance is essential regardless of gender, culture or socio-economic factors. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We believe that regular school attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational opportunities. This in turn helps them to become resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to make a positive contribution to our community. We aim to ensure children attend school at all times, discouraging absence from school unless it is absolutely essential. Our current school attendance target is 96+%.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers .

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas, such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium, can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers. Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parents/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is Michelle Lent, who can be contacted via admin@wessexgardens.barnet.sch.uk. Staff, parents/carers and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

The school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) lead on attendance is Alexander Banks, headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The attendance link governor is Ruth Charteris.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Home Visit Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance, and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring that the school adheres to the DfE Children missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance that is appropriate to their role.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to oversee the attendance officer role.
- The strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.

- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education.
- Acting as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Ensuring the school adheres to the DfE Children missing Education Statutory Guidance.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and promoting the policy to pupils.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Reporting attendance concerns to the headteacher for action.
- Implementing the strategic approach to attendance.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data, and identifying trends, areas for intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents/carers with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other support has not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Adhering to the DfE Children missing Education Statutory Guidance.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their child/children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence in advance and only in exceptional circumstances.
- Booking any medical appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

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

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has authorised the absence.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has authorised the absence for the appointment
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has authorised the absence
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children, birthdays etc.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Missing education

- Not registered at a school, and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school.

4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents /carers and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day during term time, and stay in school for the full day.

Arrival time at school:

- The school gates open at **8:30 am** and pupils can be in their classrooms from **8:40 am**.
- The school day starts at **8:50 am**, and pupils are expected to be in their classroom ready to begin lessons at this time.

Time of Registers:

- The morning register will close at **9 am**.
- Pupils that arrive after **9 am** will receive a late mark.
- Pupils that arrive after **9:15 am**, will receive an unauthorised absence mark for that morning session.

5. Absence procedures

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office by telephone or email before **8:50 am** on the first day of their child's absence and at regular intervals, as determined by the school, throughout the absence. They will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence, and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day. Parents/carers of pupils with attendance below 90%, or on school monitoring **due to unauthorised absences**, will be required to contact the school daily until their child returns to school.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent/carer has not contacted the school by 9:00 am to report the absence, office staff will message the parents/carers, as soon as is practicable, on the first day that their child is absent from school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

If a pupil's attendance drops to 90% or below, the EWO will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parents /carers.

In the case of PA pupils, or pupils on school absence monitoring, the school will request evidence for the absence in the form of a doctor's appointment card/SMS or GP prescribed medicine such as an antibiotic prior to authorising the absence. The attendance officer / EWO may also make arrangements to meet with the parent/carer to ensure that appropriate support is put in place to improve the pupil's attendance. The school will inform the EWO, on a monthly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school, and the LA, have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

6. Attendance register

The school uses Integris, which is an electronic management information system, to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible, and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Class Teachers will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending a medical appointment or an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA

- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements, or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements, and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school, but are receiving remote education for any reason, will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three academic years.

7. Leave of Absence Requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a Leave of Absence considered, the parents/carers must complete a Leave of Absence Request Form, at least two weeks before the intended Leave of Absence start date. This must show the reason for Leave of Absence, including the dates and where they are going. The office will inform the parents/carers what evidence is needed to support this Leave of Absence Request.

All requests for Leave of Absence will be considered and decided by the headteacher. The decision to grant or refuse the request, is considered on an individual basis. The best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil’s education will be taken into account, along with the pupil’s previous attendance

record.

Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school

The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to parents/carers requests for Leave of Absence, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods.
- The school does not grant leave of absence for the purposes of family holidays

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a fixed penalty notice. The school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively; any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the parents/carers will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the absence (s) from school.

The school will ensure that the parents/carers complies with the terms of the licence.

Religious observance

Parents/carers will be expected to request leave of absence for religious observance.

The school will only accept leave of absence requests for religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parents/carers belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parents/carers will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help improve attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue, and whether there are any contributory factors to their

child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal, and there have been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break times.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet the pupil's individual needs.

9. Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher. It is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

10. 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.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parents/carers in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. Absent pupils

Pupils 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 pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the headteacher immediately
- The office staff will be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library / ICT room
 - Any outbuildings
 - The pool building
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, the parents/carers of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact the parents/carers using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents/carers have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, the SENDCO will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for, and talk to the pupil, to ensure they are safe and well.
- The parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils 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 Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the headteacher, will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
 - Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
 - Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
 - Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents/carers.
 - Liaising with class teachers.

- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Requesting fixed penalty notices.
- Having meetings with parents/carers

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

Rewarding Punctuality and Attendance:

In the headteacher's Monday assembly good class attendance is celebrated by classes with the highest attendance having a visit from **Otis the Bear**. This is reported in the newsletter.

The school council discusses measures for improving attendance and punctuality within the school to help ensure a whole school approach.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs, or home circumstances that result in additional absences, are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

13. Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about attendance, so that they understand what to expect from the school and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil, wherever possible, to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with the parents/carers, where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education. Parents/Carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day during term time, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes concerning, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence, and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, for example bullying, the headteacher and relevant school staff will address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, for example because they are related to issues within the pupil's family; the headteacher will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents/carers to access support available to them.

14. Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need.
- LAC.

- Young carers.
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM.
- Pupils with EAL.
- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Having weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 20%, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance pupils are facing.

Where a PA pupil is at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities such as social services to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Penalty notices and legal intervention

The Education Welfare Service (EWS):

The Education Welfare Service is responsible for supporting good school attendance and high standards of pupil welfare. They have a duty on behalf of the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers make sure that their children attend school regularly.

The school attempts to resolve absence/lateness concerns with parents/carers before the school's designated Education Welfare Officer (EWO) becomes involved. However, if the concerns cannot be resolved the school will discuss the case with the EWO.

At Wessex Gardens Primary and Nursery School regular meetings are held between the EWO, the headteacher and the attendance officer. Children with persistent absence or lateness are discussed at these meetings. All children whose current attendance level is less than 90% are brought to the attention of the EWO in these meetings.

The EWO supports the school with pupils who are having difficulties with attendance or punctuality and a joint decision is made about the appropriate action required for example a meeting in school, phone call, letter or referral. Following the referral, the EWO will be involved with monitoring the pupil's attendance or time keeping until it improves, or the decision is taken for further action to be undertaken by the Local Authority. This can include Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders in the Family Proceedings Court, Prosecution in the Magistrates Court and deletion of the child from the school register.

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the headteacher will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents/carers and the EWO.

- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents/carers to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

The school will request that the LA issue a fixed penalty notice, will be issued in line with the DfE's ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Parents/carers will only get a maximum of two fines for the same child in a three-year period.

Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents/carers to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents/carers with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parents/carers, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents/carers to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents/carers to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents/carers to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an ESO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.

- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a termly basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to class teachers to enable them to support with the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented with the aim of improving attendance.

The governing body will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

17. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance.

Staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and annual refresher training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed

The governing body will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their professional development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing body will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role. The training will include training on interpreting and analysing attendance data, and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

18. Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other

reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in year 6, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name.
- Address.
- The full name and address of any parent/carer the pupil normally lives with.
- At least one telephone number by which any parent/carer the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency.
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there.
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school.
- The reason that the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register.

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register to ensure that the registers remain an accurate record of registered pupils and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

19. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96+ percent. Details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the curriculum committee. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2025.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix A

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Wessex Gardens Primary and Nursery 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. A spreadsheet is sent to the headteacher detailing weekly and annual attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and pupils are encouraged to have excellent attendance. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the attendance officer and the headteacher.
3. Contact is made with parents/carers 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 and attendance officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents/carers of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls below 96%, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored by the EWO who will contact the parent/carer to inform them that the pupil's attendance will be monitored.
7. The pupil's attendance is monitored for a period of four weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents/carers are required to attend a meeting in school with the EWO, the headteacher and the attendance officer.
8. After the four week monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the headteacher to congratulate the pupil and their parents/carers on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents/carers continues until attendance reaches 96%.
9. If targets are not met, the EWO service will consider sanctions such as a Court Assessment Meeting or a Fixed Penalty Notice.