Wye School
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Attendance Policy

Review Timetable

The Policy will be reviewed every year, as set out below:	
Policy reviewed centrally	n/a
Policy tailored by individual schools	September 2026
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Summary – Attendance at a Glance

Attendance Matters

At Wye School we have the highest expectations across all areas of school life including attendance. We value positive relationships between both staff and pupils and want all pupils to feel they belong here and are valued. We work with our pupils to ensure that they have the highest possible attendance at school. We believe that this is the best way for them to succeed and to get the most out of all we have to offer.

There is a clear link between academic outcomes and school attendance. We want all pupils to achieve excellent outcomes to give themselves the very best chance in life.

There are 175 non-school days per year for holidays, shopping and appointments. There is no need, except in extreme circumstances to miss a day's education. If you miss one session in a week (remember, there are two sessions per day) your attendance is 90%. This means you miss 19 days of education in a year and risk dropping one grade in your GCSEs.

It is vital we work together to teach our pupils the value of attending school each and every day. However, we do appreciate that at times, pupils may not be able to attend school. We ask our parents and carers to follow the processes below. They support our safeguarding procedures.

Should you have a concern about your child's attendance, then we ask that you contact us to discuss this. We believe in strong partnerships across all parts of school life. This includes attending school.

It is also important to us that pupils arrive to school on time, and they must be at school by 8:30 ready to be in line-up at 8:35.

Absence through illness or unforeseen circumstances

Please email attendance@wyeschool.org.uk or telephone 01233 811119 to speak to the attendance officer before 8.30 on the first day of your child's absence.

If you need to leave a message, we ask that you leave the following information:

- Full name of student;
- Student's Year group and Form;
- Full name of the person reporting the absence and their relationship to the child;
- Reason for the absence

You may receive a call back from the school to discuss your child's absence and to see if we can support in any way. If pupils suffer any form of injury that makes attendance or mobility difficult, then we ask that you contact the school to make us aware. This is so we can do a risk assessment with you. It will identify impacts of the injury and the support your child may need.

Attending an Appointment

Please make every effort to make appointments out of school time. If you cannot avoid a school time appointment, please provide at least 24 hours' notice prior to the appointment using the details above, and present your appointment letter, card, or text as supporting evidence. We will need this for our records. Pupils must be picked up and returned to school if their appointment ends during the school day, it is local to school, and they are medically and emotionally suitable for school following the appointment.

Medical evidence can be brought in to reception or forwarded to us by email (we accept pictures or scans) at attendance@wyeschool.org.uk. The following counts as medical evidence:

- a doctor's note OR
- a note from the GP's receptionist on headed paper with name and the time of the appointment OR
- a prescription box that clearly shows name on it and the date OR
- an appointment's card with name and date on it OR
- an appointment's text (which can be screenshotted and sent to us as a picture) OR
- an admission/discharge letter from a hospital with name and date on it OR
- a dated receipt from a shop where self-medication was bought from on the day of the illness.

Known Absence

Your child may need to miss school for exceptional reasons. If so, parents/carers should ask the Principal. Where possible, this should be requested at least four weeks before the required date. All requests should be made to the Principal using the absence request form that can be located on our website under attendance. Wye School > Parents > Attendance .

If such a request is made, the school as expects it to be a short absence. But even then, we may not be able to approve it.

If the Principal or his delegate does not authorise it, then any absence is 'unauthorised' and can incur a penalty.

We must follow legal rules. Therefore, we cannot approve holiday requests during term time. Additionally, we may issue penalty notices. For more details, please check the Attendance Policy and Procedures (section 6.1).

Support

We take absence very seriously. We are committed to supporting any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly. We will target support for any pupil whose attendance falls below 95%. Further information on support can be found below.

We expect all students to achieve 96% attendance.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 8.30 and we expect your child to be in school at that time. Registers close at 8.40 and arrival after that time will mean the child is late. Lateness means they miss out on important routines which help get their day off to a positive start. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons during the day for others.

How we manage lateness to school and lessons

Lateness to school

We expect students to arrive on site by 8.30am for a prompt line-up at 8:35 and tutorial/assembly at 8.40am. If a student arrives to school after 8.40, they will be considered late and will need to sign in at reception. If students are late to school without a genuine reason the student will be set a 30-minute lunch detention for the same day.

The morning register is kept open for the duration of tutor time, 8.40-9.10am. Where a student has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence, the student will be marked as arriving late after the register closes. This is marked as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Lateness to lessons

Students are expected to be punctual to lessons. If they are late, their teacher will sign their conduct card. A full conduct card will lead to a 30-minute lunchtime detention.

Parents may face prosecution if their child is often late after the register has closed. We'll watch for this and offer support. If the problem persists, we might take action.

The rest of this document outlines our Attendance Policy and Procedures. We encourage all parents to review it. This ensures they understand how we handle attendance. If getting your child to school is hard, please contact us immediately attendance@wyeschool.org.uk.

Part A - Policy

1. Introduction

This Attendance Policy outlines the culture and approach to supporting good attendance at our school. The second part of the document outlines the more detailed procedures, roles and responsibilities related to pupil attendance that operate at our school. Through all that we do to manage attendance, we are committed to creating a positive learning environment, supporting pupil achievement, and complying with legal requirements.

This is a successful school, and all pupils play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve their best. For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that parents[1] make sure that children attend regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Regular attendance at school is of critical importance to a child's education. Evidence tells us that the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. Any absence affects the pattern of a pupil's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. **Ensuring your child's regular attendance is your legal responsibility**.

The principles of a 'support first approach' are adopted and we seek to:

Support first approach (as set out in DFE Guidance)	
Expect	Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
Monitor	Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

[1] *The definition of a parent can be found in the Education Act 1996, and this applies to all the legislation to which this guidance relates. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this guidance include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) who has care of the child. To reflect this, this guidance uses 'parent' to refer to both parents and carers.*

Listen and understand	When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
Facilitate support	Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
Enforce	Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

2. Aims

Our aim is to create a school environment where children feel they belong and want to come to school. We believe our school is a great place to learn, and that being in school day in, day out, is in the best interests of all our pupils. However, we recognise that there will be times when there may be barriers that prevent children from attending school. In these instances, we will act early to understand the issue, provide support and work with the child and their family to get them back to regular attendance as quickly as possible.

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents[2] must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of our pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[2] Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory[3] school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
We want our pupils to go to school every day unless they are not well enough to attend. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.
In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.
We will do all we can to encourage our pupils to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.
Please see DfE guidance documents 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015', 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013' and Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – or ask the school for printed copies.

2.1. Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the government guidance 2024 Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures. These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

[3] A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2024

5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. For pupils who miss more than 50% of possible sessions they are defined as 'severely absent'. The school will ensure that data, including the DfE's View Your Education Data platform, is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include identifying the individual needs of pupils; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all pupils and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period and to support pupils to reintegrate back into education to access fulltime provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

7. Staff Training on Attendance

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school/trust strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,
- the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data,
- and any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Part B - What the Law Says and Our Procedures

1. Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines responsibilities of particular members of staff and stakeholders in relation to attendance.

Parent responsibilities

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child receives a full-time education, by regular attendance at school or otherwise, as defined in the Education Act 1996. They also have a responsibility to ensure that their child arrives on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.

Parents should:

- let the school know before or at the start of the day, by telephone, email or by sending a note with siblings that a child is ill or any other reason for absence. The school should be informed again if the absence is likely to continue;
- provide a note or medical certificate to confirm the reasons for absence;
- apply in advance for permission for any exceptional reasons for absence;
- where possible, make doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours;
- read regular newsletters and emails from the school;
- talk to their child about attendance and punctuality.

Student responsibilities

Students should:

- attend school every day;
- arrive at school on time;
- attend wearing the correct uniform;
- attend all lessons punctually;
- take full part in all lessons;
- uphold the School Values: Ambition; Creativity; Confidence; Respect; Enthusiasm; and Determination;
- bring any difficulties to the attention of their Form Tutor or Head of Year.

School responsibilities

To promote and encourage attendance and punctuality, we will:

- provide a quality curriculum so that students enjoy learning and want to come to school.
- provide for the needs of all students.
- follow up all unexplained or unauthorised absences with parents/carers.
- provide support to students experiencing difficulties.
- provide a re-integration procedure or programme for students who return to school following a prolonged absence.
- contact parents/carers if there are causes for concern.

- work with specialist services to promote attendance.

Students and parents should contact their Form Tutor, Head of Year or Attendance Officer for day-to-day queries about attendance matters. More detailed support on attendance can be requested from our Attendance Officer, Head of Year, Safeguarding and Pastoral Leaders.

Local Governing Body (LGB) Responsibilities

The LGB recognises the importance of school attendance and will:

- promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance. The LGB will also ensure:
- that the attendance policy and its contents are generally made known within the school and to parents of registered students at the school, and that steps are taken at least once in every school year to bring the attendance policy to the attention of all those parents and students and all persons who work at the school (whether, or not, for payment).

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Attendance Champion

Phillip Maisey, Assistant Principal, phillip.maisey@wyeschool.org.uk, is the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance.

At the direction of the Principal, he is responsible for monitoring whole school attendance and reviewing attendance by key groups including year groups, pupil premium, SEND and other vulnerable groups.

Attendance Officer

Lubka Lindo, Attendance Officer, attendance@wyeschool.org.uk

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team) and advises the Principal as requested.

Head of Year/Pastoral Support
Heads of year will monitor the attendance of their year group and be in regular contact with persistent absentees to work alongside families to overcome barriers to attendance. They will also monitor data to look for patterns in absences and lateness each week.

Pastoral support will be in regular contact to assist when students are absent. This will involve ringing home on the first day of a student's absence to offer support and to offer support to families where an absence will be greater that two days. They will also make regular welfare checks to enquire about a student's wellbeing and to offer support during any prolonged absences.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

Form and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance during the first ten minutes of lessons and tutor sessions. They will actively promote and encourage good attendance and report issues or concerns to their head of year.

Absence Reduction Strategy

In accordance with DfE guidelines, Wye School considers students with below 90% attendance as persistently absent and those with under 50% attendance as severely persistently absent. It is essential that Wye School addresses attendance concerns throughout the academic year to support with improving attendance. We will put in place strategies to improve poor attendance trends identified through data. This may, for example, mean working to support students in a year group where there is higher-than-average absence.

If we have concerns about a child's attendance, in addition to putting in place personalised strategies in school, we will communicate our concerns regarding attendance with parents/carers, either by telephone, letter or email, in the first instance.

Where attendance does not improve, we will request a meeting with parents/carers to discuss what further support can be put in place to improve attendance. We work with external support services to help remove barriers to attendance and reduce persistent and severe absence. Data and reports will be shared with the Local Governing Body. As part of promoting regular attendance the school will consider the issuing of Penalty Notices. Though involvement in an attendance meeting is voluntary, it is the last step before a formal referral to the Kent County Council's Attendance Service (PIAS) and potential prosecution. Failure to engage in an attendance meeting will be cause for a referral to PIAS.

Pastoral Support Plan (PSP)

A PSP invite can be issued at any point to support any student that requires additional attendance support. The purpose of an PSP is to provide additional attendance support and to coordinate support already in place through other teams/agencies i.e., medical support, SEND or social care.

<u>Students with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities</u>

The school recognises that some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other student and therefore the attendance ambition for these students is the same as they are for any other student. That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, we will be mindful of the barriers these students face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This will include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for students with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a student has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed.
- Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the student's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, the school will work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support

interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see the School's SEND Policy for further details on SEND support.

- Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers students may face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance, recognising that such arrangements can be for a limited time only.
- Ensuring data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

Students with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see the School's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy for further information. In all cases, the school will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising students and parents; and talk to students and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual student's specific needs.

Part-time timetables

All students who are of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a reintegration package.

Please note that a part-time timetable cannot be used as a reasonable adjustment for SEND, unless this is on a temporary basis and as advised by an external agency e.g. Educational Psychologist and agreed with Kent SEN. A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the student is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. Formal arrangements will also be put in place for regularly reviewing it (minimum monthly) with the student and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will treat such absence as authorised. We will of course consider how best to support learning when a child is working on a part time timetable.

2. Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.** It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date, it is a legal document. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

3. Contents of Attendance Register

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. On each

occasion the register is taken, the appropriate attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil. Please refer to **Working Together To Improve School Attendance** for the code descriptors and also **Appendix 2** of this document. The school must record whether each pupil is:

- Attending, or
- Absent

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to safeguard children, improve attendance and is supported using our electronic Management Information System to record attendance information. Our registers will be preserved for 6 years from the date after the last entry was made.

4. Attending the School (and Lateness)

Pupils are marked present (/ \) if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

Our pupils must arrive by 8.30am on each school day.

Our morning register is taken at 8.40 am and will be kept open until 9.10am

Our afternoon register is taken at 1.30 pm and will be kept open until 2.00 pm

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (**L**) – which counts as present.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code “Late after registers close” (U) which is an unauthorised absence mark. However, if the pupil is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See DfE guidance Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

5. Attending a place other than the school

Pupils are marked as attending a place other than the school if they are present for the assigned session. These codes include:

- Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
- Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
- Code W: Attending work experience
- Code B: Attending any other approved education activity
- Code D: Dual registered at another setting

Our school retains responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. Our school must be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Our school should ensure that we have in place arrangements whereby providers notify the school of any absence. Our school must record the pupil’s absence using the relevant absence code.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school or Pupil Referral Unit for part or all of their education, our school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider arranged by the school, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code B (any other approved educational activity). The school expects the alternative provision (AP) to notify us of any absences by individual pupils, to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary**.** Attendance updates will be provided on a termly basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative setting. Any attendance concerns will be followed up by us, in conjunction with the Alternative Provision (AP).

6. Absent – Leave of absence

A leave of absence means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence' which means the pupil's absence is with permission granted by the school. These codes include:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

6.1. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. The school will consider each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school website.

The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.** Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage, we will follow the necessary protocols.

All term time absence for children in care should be discussed in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

6.2 Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents should try to make appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site to attend a medical appointment during the school day without parental confirmation.
Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised. Please ensure you contact attendance@wyeschool.org.uk at the earliest opportunity.

6.3 Part-time timetables - Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.
If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

7. Absent – other authorised reasons

Absent due to other authorised reasons means that the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence'. These codes include:

- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

7.1. Mobile pupil - Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The school will authorise the absence of a mobile pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.
To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.
Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

7.2. Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends.
In accordance with the law, the school will authorise **one day's absence** for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be necessary, they should be requested in advance using the leave of absence in term time process. Additional days taken without exceptional circumstances will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

7.3. Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows Department for Education guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)' 2024[4] which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence, we will endeavour to have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

Please email attendance@wyeschool.org.uk or telephone 01233 811119 to speak to the attendance officer before 8.30 on the first day of your child's absence.

If you need to leave a message, we ask that you leave the following information:

- Full name of student.
- Student's Year group and Form.
- Full name of the person reporting the absence and their relationship to the child.
- Reason for the absence

Do expect to receive a call back from the school to discuss your child's absence and to see if we can support in any way. If pupils suffer any form of injury, then we ask that you contact the school to make us aware. This is so we can do a risk assessment with you. It will identify impacts of the injury and the support your child may need.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Designated Safeguarding Lead Riona Sparks at riona.sparks@wyeschool.org.uk for further information on the support available.

Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned.

Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, no pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

[4] Please ask the school for a printed copy of Working Together to Improve School Attendance if required

7.4. Suspensions (Exclusions)

In this policy, the word 'suspension' is used to refer to what legislation calls an exclusion for a fixed period. Suspensions and permanent exclusions are both types of exclusion, and where this policy uses the word 'exclusion' this includes both suspensions (fixed-period exclusions) and permanent exclusions.

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an exclusion. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions. The full behaviour and exclusions policy for our school can be found here Wye School > About Us > Key Information > Policies.

Any exclusion **must** be agreed by the Principal or their delegate if absent.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

8. Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences and are not counted as possible attendances):

- Code Q: Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
- Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

9. Absent - unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reason for absence was provided.

Absence will be unauthorised if a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. The unauthorised absence codes include:

- Code G – Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N – Reason for absence not yet established
- Code O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U – Arrived in school after registration closed

10. Administrative codes

Where necessary and applicable, our school will use the defined administrative codes. These codes are not collected for statistical purposes and are:

- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admissions register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

11. First Day of Absence Response

On the first day of a student's absence contact will be made by our attendance officer or a member of the student's year group pastoral team. If we are concerned about a student's absence from school or if we have not received a reason why students is not at school, we will contact home using the emergency contact list.

Parents will be asked to supply details of **at least one additional person who can be contacted in an emergency, and these details will be reviewed on a** yearly basis at the start of the academic year. Parents are asked to inform the school in the event of any in year changes to these details.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, we may undertake our own 'safe and well' checks and/or request a Welfare Check from the police.

12. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

This section sets out the measures in place at Wye School to promote regular attendance by its registered students, including:

- How the school is promoting and incentivising good attendance.
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority
- The point at which Penalty Notices for absence and other sanctions will be sought if support is not appropriate (e.g. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), not successful, or not engaged with.

Promoting and Incentivising The School will:

- Build positive relations with pupils and parents. Positive relationships between home and school can be the foundation of good attendance.
- Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
- Regularly contact parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identify students who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Make the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority.
- Support students back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Reward good attendance. We do this through: Celebration Assemblies; emails/phone calls home; postcards home; informal discussions with student; awarding of School Values points and other small rewards. We are mindful that 100% attendance may not always be possible, and, therefore, do not focus solely on this when rewarding students for their attendance.

13. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let

the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.
When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the attendance champion or Head of Year to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.
If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a Notice to Improve – attendance warning letter.
We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.
If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

14. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions
Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.
Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.
Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.
The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.
Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.
A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £80 per parent, per child payable within 21 days, rising to £160 per parent, per child if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.) If a second Penalty Notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period the penalty is £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. There will be no option to pay a lower amount.

2. Prosecution. Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or up to 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on School attendance parental responsibility measures for more information.

Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.
In addition to Penalty Notices, there is a range of other legal interventions open to schools We will work together with local authority and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution and will work closely with the local authority to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are: Parenting contracts, Education supervision orders, Attendance prosecution, Parenting orders, Fixed penalty notices

15. Children Missing Education (CME)
Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school will make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the local authority representative responsible for children missing education if unsure about any individual cases:

16. Following up Unexplained Absences
Where no contact has been made with the school, the school will contact parents by text, email, telephone or letter to try and establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within 2 school days, we will make the absence as unauthorised, using the **O** code. If we are concerned about a pupil's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the pupil's whereabouts.

17. Reporting to Parents
Parents can monitor their student's attendance record at any time through Arbor. Attendance data is also shared with parents through their school report. Where a child's attendance drops below 95% parents may be contacted by their student's year group pastoral team. Any attendance records dropping below 90% will be contacted by a member of the school's attendance team or their Head of Year.

18. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence
All reasons for absence are stored on Arbor. Details will include the date, time and reasons for absence. This will include the recording of any medical evidence provided.

19. Policy Monitoring Arrangements
This policy will be reviewed yearly by The Assistant Principal or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

20. Links with other policies
This policy is linked to our Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, all found here.
Guidance Documents (include but are not limited to):
Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE 2024)
Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3
Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school
Mental Health issues affecting a pupil's attendance (DfE February 2023)
Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Arranging education for children with who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE December 2023)
Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2024)
Department for Education Releases Keeping Children Safe in Education for 2024 (swgfl.org.uk)
School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance
School census guidance and regulation
https://www.gov.uk/education/school-censuses-and-slasc
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion
Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance

Appendix A – 5 Foundations of Effective Practice

- **Foundation 1**: *The school has a fully embedded ethos in which excellent school attendance is expected, developed and nurtured. The escalated approach to supporting attendance is built on foundations of belonging and connectedness.*
- **Foundation 2:** *The approach to improving attendance is built on clear policies, systems and processes. This ensures continuous and sustainable improvement drives attendance practice. The attendance policy is understood by all stakeholders and allows the school to set, and maintain, high expectations to improve the culture of attendance.*
- **Foundation 3:** *The school prioritises developing a team of attendance experts, with a shared vision and core purpose. The Attendance Leader delivers bespoke training to support all staff to fully understand their role in improving attendance. External partnerships support attendance improvements through a multi-disciplinary approach for identified children and families.*
- **Foundation 4:** *Data information and analysis direct resources proactively towards key demographic groups and identified individuals. The expert use of data analysis informs decision making at all levels. The attendance process ensures the Attendance Leader understands the reason for attendance concerns; these barriers can then be successfully supported and removed.*
- **Foundation 5:** *Connecting and belonging drives the school approach to supporting attendance. All staff are supported to understand 'deeper roots' regarding poor attendance concerns. The school has developed, and embedded, an effective rewards system to further drive attendance improvements and celebrate success*

Appendix B – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance & Absence Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established

O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure