



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2025

INTRODUCTION

At Cardinal Wiseman School we are growing to be:



Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School is dedicated to promoting a distinctive Catholic ethos by upholding the teachings of the Catholic Church and promoting the Wiseman Virtues formed from the Gospel and rooted in the person of Christ. Our mission statement of 'Omnia Pro Christo' shapes our aims as a school and we are committed to developing the full potential of every individual, regardless of culture, race, religion, disability, or special need by creating a safe, orderly environment where all members of the community work diligently in a spirit of cooperation and treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times. By attending school and through the development of the Wiseman Virtues students will become formed as valued children of God.

The Importance of School Attendance at Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School understands that pupils attending school regularly with consistently good punctuality, leads to the very best outcomes for pupils. Excellent attendance enables pupils to fulfil their God-given talents and be successful. School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- *Academic Achievement:* Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- *Knowledge Acquisition:* School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.

- *Social Development:* School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- *Building Routine:* School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- *Teacher Interaction:* Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- *Preventing Knowledge Gaps:* Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- *School Engagement:* Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- *Legal and Parental Responsibility:* Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.
- *Community Well-being:* High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.

Legal Framework:

This policy has been written taking into account the following statements from the Education Act; 1.

- 1. Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 'If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence'.
- 2. Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996: 'If you, the parent, know that your child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fail without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend, you are guilty of an offence.'

Working Together to Improve school attendance (2024) outlines that Children Missing from Education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Aims of this policy:

- To safeguard the welfare of pupils
- To encourage parents/carers to take an active role in the attendance of their children.
- To promote a culture across the school which encourages excellent attendance and punctuality, which prepares pupils for life after school.
- To develop effective systems of communication between home and school
- To recognise and reward excellent and consistent attendance.
- To utilise the 5 foundations of effective attendance practice framework to encourage excellent attendance across the school

In order to promote and encourage excellent attendance for all learners, Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School will adopt the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice Framework. The

emphasis of this framework is on developing a school culture and climate of belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive. The aims of the strategy are to:

- Increase school attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism
- Ensure attendance is well managed and the appropriate level of resources are allocated to attendance procedures
- To make informed use of attendance data to target interventions

The 5 Foundations of effective attendance practice are;

- To embed an ethos in which excellent attendance is expected, developed and nurtured
- To have clear systems and processes to improve attendance
- To have a team of attendance experts working with a shared vision and core purpose
- To implement targeted intervention for key groups/ demographics, where data shows attendance is concerning
- To ensure that rewards are utilised to encourage attendance and support a culture of belonging.

Absence Procedures

Reporting Absences

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence. This should take place on the first day of the absence and on each subsequent day of absence. Parents should notify the school of a pupil's absence by 9.30am (on 0121 360 6383). Alternatively, parents/carers can email attendance@cardinalwiseman.net from the email address that we have for them on the system. If no notification has been received by the afternoon of absence, the school will contact parents via text to request that they contact the school to advise of the reason for the absence.

The school requests that whenever possible all medical/dental appointments are made before 8.20am and after 3.30pm or during school holidays wherever possible.

The school will contact by text the contacts of pupils where pupils have not come to school, and a reason has not been provided by a parent or carer, by 11am. The attendance team will endeavour to follow this up with a phone call later that day to ascertain the reason for absence.

Punctuality

The school expects pupils to arrive to school and lessons on time. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning, but also that of others. Pupils must be on school site by 8.20am. For Health and Safety reasons the school needs to know that a pupil is on site. Therefore, if they arrive after 8.25am they must sign in at the main office. If pupils arrive after 8.25am they will be given a late mark and a break time detention on the same day.. Should this be missed, pupils will lose their lunchtime.

Morning registers close at 8.55am. If a pupil arrives after registers close at 8.55am, they will not be marked present for that morning, hence affecting their attendance.

If persistent poor punctuality occurs, the "Support First" attendance protocol will be followed as outlined for persistent absentees below.

Unauthorised absence

Where absence is occurring which has not been agreed by the school this will be marked as unauthorised.

Definitions of unauthorised absence are:

- Truancy (including internal truancy)
- Parentally condoned absence without good reason
- Holidays in term time
- Arrival after the register has closed
- Absence without medical evidence where attendance is a concern
- Absence where no reason is provided by the parent

Unauthorised absences will trigger internal monitoring of attendance and may result in the Support First attendance protocol being initiated. Taking holidays of five days or more will lead to fixed penalty notices being issued except in exceptional circumstances, in line with the guidance from Birmingham City Council.

Persistent absence

When a pupil's attendance becomes a concern, parents will be contacted to discuss concerns and support will be offered where appropriate. An Early Help referral will be offered and support put in place to encourage improvement in the pupils' attendance. If absence continues and thresholds are met, staged letters will be sent in line with the 5 foundations framework and parents will be invited for a SARM meeting. If this is not successful in improving attendance, referrals to the Education Legal Intervention Team will be made in accordance with the Fast Track to Attendance protocol.

From Autumn 2024, AStar attendance is used to inform parents when attendance is becoming a concern, alongside the offer of support. This means that this communication is regular and timely.

Children missing from education (CME)

If a child is persistently absent without contact from parents/carers, school staff will make every effort to make contact with the child's family. If families do not respond to home visits/ phone calls and letters, a referral to the Children Missing from Education Team will be made.

Requesting authorised absences

Pupils will not be given authorisation to take authorised leave except in exceptional circumstances. It is very unlikely that requests for holidays or authorised leave will be authorised but if parents want the school to consider such a request they must mark an email to the attention of the Headteacher to attendance@cardinalwiseman.net and completing the leave in term time form available on our website.

When considering whether to grant a term-time leave in normal circumstances, the school will review:

- The circumstances involved
- The time and length of the proposed leave
- The student's attendance record
- Any previous requests for leave of absence
- If it is close to, or during, examinations or tests

If permission is not granted and parents/carers take their child out of school, the absences will be recorded as unauthorised and the parent/carer will receive a Penalty Notice if the unauthorised absence exceeds four days, in line with the Birmingham City Council guidance.

Home Visits

Where a child is away from school and no reason has been provided, safe and well checks will be made by the school where necessary. We will also carry out home visits where a child is away from school for a prolonged period. These visits may be unannounced.

Monitoring attendance

Roles and responsibilities.

All teaching staff will:

- Record attendance accurately
- Consistently champion the importance of good attendance
- Provide pastoral support alongside the Head of Year where attendance becomes a concern
- Follow behaviour policy if a pupil is late.

Assistant Heads of Year will:

- Oversee and monitor all attendance matters within the year group
- Raise any concerns about individual pupils with the attendance office and Assistant Headteacher
- Contact parents of pupils whose children have not arrived for school each morning
- Contact parents for informal discussions where attendance becomes a concern
- Reward pupils for excellent attendance
- Ensure a high profile with regards to attendance- refer to attendance in assemblies and pastoral sessions

The Attendance Champion (Sophie Kelly) and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Discuss attendance at weekly pastoral meetings and in SLT meetings.
- Ensure that the 5 foundations of effective attendance practice framework are implemented across the school.
- Regularly promote the importance of good attendance in assemblies and Raising The Bar briefings
- Ensure that staff have sufficient CPD to be able to champion excellent attendance
- Monitor how groups of pupils are attending weekly, comparing to national averages and similar schools nationally, and intervene appropriately.
- Support the attendance officer with Support First protocols when necessary.
- Consider and implement a range of strategies to promote effective attendance, such as rewards, assemblies and regular communication with all pupils and parents
- The attendance officer will:
 - Ensure that registers are completed accurately
 - Be responsible for recording all attendance data and reasons for student absence
 - Use Parentmail to contact a parent/carer who has not informed the school of the non-attendance, requesting they contact the school.
 - Send letters at each threshold stage of the 5 foundations of effective attendance practice framework.
 - Complete Early Help referrals for families where appropriate when attendance becomes a concern

- Implement the Support First attendance protocol when thresholds are met within the key stage.
- Track the attendance of pupils on managed moves or at Alternative Provision.

Designated safeguarding leads will:

- Ensure that pupils with poor attendance and/or poor punctuality are placed on the “Children with a vulnerability or safeguarding concern” list.
- Parents/carers will:
- Encourage excellent attendance and punctuality with their children
- Inform the school if their son/daughter develops a medical condition that requires a reasonable adjustment from the school.
- Contact the school before 9.30am if there is a reason why their child cannot attend school

Governors will:

- Approve the policy and any proposed changes.
- Be aware of the targets for attendance and current progress towards those targets.
- Hold the school to account by providing challenges to its work and data on attendance.
- Be aware of strategies designed to encourage excellent and improved attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor the effectiveness of strategies used to monitor attendance and ensure appropriate requirements are funded and supported through termly meetings by the link governor.
- In addition, schools are required to produce written home-school agreements which include clear understanding about attendance and punctuality.

Rewarding excellent attendance

Pupils will be rewarded for excellent attendance throughout the academic year. This could include; letters home, extended breaks, achievement points, celebration events, invitations to the end of year rewards trips, etc. Outstanding attendance across a child’s school career may lead to an invitation to the awards evening.

The attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents, including start and close of the day, register closing times and the processes for requesting leaves of absence and informing the school of the reason for an unexpected absence.