



WETHERBY PREPARATORY
SCHOOL
— MARYLEBONE —



Wetherby Preparatory School
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Registration and Attendance Policy

Policy reviewed by:	Thomas Metherell
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Reviewer's signature:	
Head's signature:	

Circulation: This policy is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with the boys.

Please note: 'School' refers to Wetherby Preparatory School and 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Registration and Attendance Policy has been drawn up to clarify expectations of the boys in line with the school's vision and aims. Excellent attendance and punctuality are critical to achieving academic potential and progress. We expect students to aim for 100% attendance and punctuality and we expect students and parents to work with us in achieving that aim.

We will maintain registers daily for all our boys and will follow the steps outlined below where attendance and/or punctuality are falling below the standards expected.

We will make this policy available to all parents.

We will also make our school registers available for inspection by any appropriate body at any given time and will also share attendance data with any appropriate body where we are required to do so (for example ISI, Department for Education, Local Authority etc.)

Where there are existing safeguarding concerns or where the school is worried about the safety of any boy, and that boy's attendance is poor, they have failed to attend school as expected or they leave the school site without permission the school will follow up immediately with parents and where necessary, the police and/or LADO or Local Authority Children's Services.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all sections of the school: all staff, all boys and all parents.

DETAILS

1. Expectations

- 1.1. Parents are expected to enable their son to arrive at school on time.
- 1.2. The school day commences at 8:30am and finishes at 4pm. The school opens daily at 8am and boys are advised to arrive at this time in order to be on time and prepare for the day ahead. Boys are expected to attend all lessons punctually.
- 1.3. It is important that parents understand that we are unable to supervise the boys outside of the school hours stated above (unless they are enrolled in our School Clubs Programme) and do not take any responsibility for the boys outside of these times.

2. Parent contact details

- 2.1. It is a requirement that parents update the school in writing as soon as there is any change in contact details.
- 2.2. In addition, school requires more than one nominated parent / person contact details per boy. This is so the school can always speak with an adult who has responsibility for the boy, especially at times of emergency or absence and a parent is not immediately contactable.
- 2.3. In the case that parents decide to leave their son in the care of another responsible adult, it is critical that the details of the adult and the length of time for the agreement are passed to the school in writing to the School Secretary or Form Tutor (who will pass this onto the School Secretary).

3. Daily registration

- 3.1. The school is required to register the boys at least twice daily. At Wetherby Preparatory School, registers are taken in the first 15 minutes of the school day and every lesson. At the start of school all students who arrive between 8am and 8.20am are either in their allocated club room or

supervised on the English floor. After 8.20am, all boys should be in their form room in preparation for the register being taken. At this time, they should collect items for the day and make sure that they are aware of any changes / arrangements to the day's activities. Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues.

4. Signing out during the school day

- 4.1. Every effort must be made to make medical/dental and other appointments out of school hours; if this is absolutely unavoidable, then parents should contact the School Secretary, Jude Fekete jude.fekete@wetherbyprep.co.uk, by the latest at the start of the school day of the impending absence.
- 4.2. The *Daily Sign In and Sign Out* sheet asks for a destination and reason for leaving. Boys need to specify their reason for leaving e.g. illness, appointment, school visit etc.
- 4.3. The School Secretary and School Administrator will regularly check the *Daily Sign In and Sign Out* sheet system is working effectively.
- 4.4. A parent or someone authorised by a parent must sign a boy out of school.
- 4.5. Boys must be signed back in on their return.

5. Absence – notifying the school

- 5.1. *First day of absence notification* – if a boy is unable to attend school through illness parents should inform the school by either sending an absence e-mail to jude.fekete@wetherbyprep.co.uk, or by telephone, 020 7535 3520, before 8:30am.
- 5.2. *Consecutive days' absence* – if a boy is absent for more than one day parents must contact the school in the same way, above, on a daily basis, so that the school is sure of the boy's whereabouts.
- 5.3. *Extended absences* – school will discuss with parents regarding how the boy will continue with their schoolwork during any extended period of absence. Work is usually published on Microsoft Teams.
- 5.4. *Emergency Occasions* – there are some occasions e.g. bereavements, family problems, etc. where it may be inappropriate for boys to attend school; we will be sympathetic to such needs. Please inform the Head of these circumstances via the channels described above.

6. Recording of absence

- 6.1. Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

7. Authorised absence

- 7.1. Parents cannot authorise absence; only school can do this.
- 7.2. *Authorised Absence* – authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the student to be away or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as a satisfactory explanation for absence. Where an explanation is provided after the absence this must be done within 48 hours of the absence.
- 7.3. If no message is received, the school will assume that your son is absent without permission. In the case of an extended period of absence through illness, parents are asked to update the school of the student's health and school will assess whether any additional work is required to be sent home / emailed to the student.
- 7.4. Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:
 - Illness, medical or dental appointments.
 - Days of religious observance.
 - Educational visit or trip.
 - Study leave.

- Work experience.
 - Exclusion.
 - Traveller child travelling.
 - Family bereavement.
 - Involvement in a public performance.
 - Off-site examination.
 - Competitive sports.
 - Special occasions - the nature of such special occasions will be determined by the school on an individual basis.
- 7.5. *Lateness* – when the student arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation, for example:
- an accident on the way to school
 - car breakdown
 - a family emergency
 - a medical emergency
- 7.6. *Excessive amounts of authorised absences* – excessive amounts of authorised absence may often be as damaging to continuity of learning and pupil wellbeing as unauthorised absence. The school will therefore only authorise absence sparingly and only after careful consideration, particularly where students have a history of irregular attendance.
- 7.7. *Approved Educational Activity* – boys who are registered off-site or dual registered, or who are engaged in supervised educational activities away from school premises, need not be marked as authorised absence, provided that such activities are:
- educational nature;
 - approved by the school;
 - supervised.
- 7.8. These boys may be recorded as on an approved educational activity. This means that for statistical purposes, for particular activities, such as field trips, educational visits, and approved sporting activities they can be counted as 'present'. The nature of the activity must, however, be recorded in the class register by use of the appropriate code. This is important to ensure that an accurate record of those boys physically present on site at any given time is instantly available.
- 7.9. *Disputes* – should school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is not genuine; the absence should be treated as unauthorised. Parents have the right to challenge this decision by contacting the Head. Where disputes cannot quickly be resolved to the satisfaction of the parents, the school's complaints policy and process can be used.
- 7.10. For Coding for authorised absences see Appendix 1.

8. Unauthorised absence

- 8.1. Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for a boy's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.
- 8.2. Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:
- No explanation is offered by the parent.
 - The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (shopping, minding the house).
 - Family holidays (which are taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed with the school).
 - Lateness when the student arrives after 8:45am and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation as per list provided.
 - Signing out without parental permission.
 - Parental request for special occasion has been declined.

- 8.3. *Responding to Unauthorised Absence* – the school's first duty is to make sure every boy is safe. Once morning register has closed, the school will send parents an email or make a phone call to ascertain the reason for each unexplained absence.
- 8.4. Where there are concerns for a boy's safety, or where there are existing safeguarding concerns and a boy is absent without authorisation, school will make immediate contact with parents and/or conduct a home visit and where necessary contact the police and/or child protection services.
- 8.5. Where a boy normally arrives by school bus and is not present for collection at the normal collection point and time the bus driver will report this to the School Reception.
- 8.6. By the end of the Autumn Term 2024, parents will be able to check the attendance of their son on the iSAMS Parent portal.
- 8.7. If a parent removes their son without permission, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Head (Pupils) or Head will arrange a meeting with parents to investigate the matter further.
- 8.8. Where there are concerns about potential parental abduction / removal from school, for example, during family law proceedings, then it is incumbent on parents to make sure school are in possession of any copies of any relevant court orders.
- 8.9. School will follow any local law, regulations, procedures in notifying the local authority where attendance has fallen below legal requirements.
- 8.10. For coding for unauthorised absences see Appendix 2.

9. If a boy goes missing during the school day

- 9.1. If a boy goes missing during the school day, the Missing and Uncollected Child Policy, should be followed.

10. Persistent absence

- 10.1. The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the student regularly attends the school at which he is registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that his/her child attends that school regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence: [GOV.UK: school attendance and absence](https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence). When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- 10.2. *Responding to Persistent Absence* – where the school has concerns about excessive absence patterns this will have to be discussed with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support.
- 10.3. A reminder letter will be sent to parents following three consecutive days or five days absence in any one half-term. (See Appendix 3 and 4).
- 10.4. Persistent absence is absence of 20% or more. An individual student is considered to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if his attendance is less than 80%, regardless of whether or not the absence has been authorised. In such cases parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with the Head. (See Appendix 5). If the justifications for absence are inadequate, the school reserves the right to refer the matter to the relevant Local Authority.
- 10.5. The school will always consider any safeguarding concerns that may be contributing / causing the attendance issues. The school will always share safeguarding concerns with local safeguarding partner agencies where the threshold to do so has been met.

11. Lateness

- 11.1. Parents must ensure that children arrives at school so that they are present for registration; this is done at 8:45am each day. Meeting and exchanging news with friends before school is important for the children's social development. In addition, important notices and conversations with tutors could potentially be missed.
- 11.2. Students who arrive after 8:45am will be recorded as 'late for school' and must be signed into the *Daily Sign In and Sign Out* sheet by the School Secretary with their parent.

- 11.3. Where a genuine reason (see list in 7.5) for lateness exists, this will be an authorised absence but where explanations are inadequate or the lateness becomes frequent, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Head (Pupils) or Head will need to discuss this with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support.
- 11.4. *Responding to Persistent Lateness* – persistent lateness is lateness of 20% or more. Tutors will monitor lateness and will contact parents if it occurs for three consecutive days or any five days within a half term. If a student’s punctuality falls below 80%, parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Head (Pupils) or Head (See Appendix 6).

12. Procedure to be followed by staff when a boy is not collected on time

- 12.1. Parents must inform school if they are going to be late in collecting their son.
- 12.2. In the event that a boy is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a day, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the boy is cared for safely by an adult who is known to him. The school will ensure that the boy receives a high standard of care to cause as little distress as possible. The school will inform parents of procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their son will be properly cared for. This information must also contain any financial implication of such delay.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Head is responsible for implementing this policy and informing the Regional CEO of any challenges regarding its implementation.
- Updates to this Policy must be approved by the Regional CEO.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

- Any observations of non-compliance with this policy should be informed by writing to the Head or to the Regional CEO (in case of non-compliance by the Head).

REVISION HISTORY

- Version 1: published September 2024

Appendix 1 – Authorised absence coding

The following codes to be used in iSAMS when recording authorised absences:

- **Illness (I)** - This code is used when a student is ill and the school has been informed. Schools can request medical evidence from parents / guardians / carers if they feel the authenticity of an illness is in doubt.
- **Medical / Dental appointments (M)** - This code can be used when the student needs to attend a medical or dental appointment and the parents / guardians has informed the school. Parents / guardians / Carers are encouraged to arrange appointments out of school hours but the school will authorise if confirmation of the appointment is provided.
- **Approved sporting activity (P)** - This code will be used in times of approved sporting activities in school times, i.e. training sessions, trials and sporting events.
- **Educational visit or trip (V)** - This code will be used in times of approved educational visits or events in school times, i.e. revision days, subject trips.
- **Authorised circumstances (C)** - This code will be used for any authorised non-medical reasons for a child's absence from school, i.e. family funeral.
- **Study Leave (S)** - This code will be used during mock and external examinations for students that have been given parental permission to work from home.
- **Excluded (E)** - This code will be used when a student has been excluded from school.
- **Work experience (W)** - This code will be used when a student is attending work experience.
- **School closed to students (#)** - This code will be used when the school is closed to students.
- **No reason yet provided for absence (N)** - This code will be used when the school has not been informed of the reason for a student being absent.
- **Religious observance (R)** - This code will be used when a student is absent for a religious observance.
- **Pupil withdrawn from normal lessons (Q)**.
- **Interview (J)** - This code will be used when it has been agreed that the student can miss school to attend an interview or entrance exam.
- **Educated off site (B)** - This code is used when students are being educated offsite, ie a University Visit, or attendance at a non-sporting competition at a local school.
- **Dual registration (D)** - This code is used when a student is registered at another educational establishment, whilst still on the school roll.
- **Pupil not yet on roll (Z)** - This code is used if a student has been excluded and the parents / guardians are appealing, so the student stay on roll.

Appendix 2 – Unauthorised absence coding

The following code to be used in iSAMS when recording unauthorised absences:

- Family Holiday not agreed (G) - This code will be used when a student is on holiday, and it is not authorised.
- Unauthorised absence (O) – this code will be used when the absence is not authorised.

Appendix 3 – Absence correspondence with parents

- Day 1 – once the morning register has closed, the School Secretary will contact all parents whose son/s have a "N" on the register.
- Outline the absent reporting guidelines.
- Request parents to inform school of reason for absence.
- Where there are current safeguarding concerns / concerns for the safety of the boy, the school will notify the designated safeguarding lead and phone parents immediately the absence is noted.
- Day 2 and subsequent days – school will phone parents to establish whereabouts of the boy.
- If unable to speak to parents or a named contact – the School Secretary will email asking them to contact school urgently.
- Remind parents that if there are any concerns for the boy's safety then school will need to call police and/or child protection services.
- School's Designated Safeguarding Lead will review all unauthorised absences from day two.

Appendix 4 – Correspondence for concerning absence

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a boy has three consecutive days or five days absence in a half term:

Dear Parent(s),

Attendance is an essential component to a boy's academic success. Often, the number of days that boys are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.

This letter is to inform you that your son has accumulated five absences this half term / three consecutive absences this half term.

At this time, you and your son have an opportunity to work towards improving attendance without further intervention. However, if your son's absence falls below 80% the school will invite you to an attendance review meeting with either myself, Mr Pateman or Mrs Kingsmill Moore.

We look forward to working with you to improve your child's attendance. Please contact us if there is any way that we can assist in this process.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation,

*Thomas Metherell
Deputy Head (Pupils)*

Appendix 5 – Correspondence for persistent absence

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a boy has below 80% attendance in a half term:

Dear Parent(s),

Attendance is an essential component to a boy's academic success. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.

This letter is to inform you that your son's attendance is currently below 80% which according to government guidelines is an 'unacceptable' level.

Although your son's absences may have been authorised, any absence means a loss of contact time with the teacher and a loss of critical instruction. This is very difficult for a student to make up, even with parental help at home, and will need a clear plan for the student to ensure completion of missed work.

Research into the link between absence and attainment concluded that as the level of overall absence increases, the likelihood of achieving key attainment outcomes at the end of a key stage decreases.

*I will be in contact with you to arrange an **attendance review meeting**. The school looks forward to working with you to improve your son's attendance.*

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation,

*Thomas Metherell
Deputy Head (Pupils)*

Appendix 6 – Correspondence for persistent lateness

This letter should be sent by reception to parents if a student has below 80% punctuality in a half term:

Dear Parent(s),

Punctuality is an essential component to a boy's academic success. Often, the number of days that students are late accumulate without parents realising.

This letter is to inform you that your son's punctuality is currently below 80% which according to government guidelines is an 'unacceptable' level.

When boys arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your son may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled. Furthermore, when one boy arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and the teacher, thus everyone's education is compromised.

*We will be in contact with you to arrange an **attendance review meeting**. The school looks forward to working with you to improve your son's attendance.*

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation,

*Thomas Metherell
Deputy Head (Pupils)*