



School Attendance Procedure 2026-27

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Policy Notes

Policy may be subject to review and revision at any time by the Wallington Local Governing Body notwithstanding that the next review date has not been reached.

Review dates are for guidance only and whilst the intention is always to arrange reviews within the stated time frame all Policy Notes will remain in force until this has taken place and been formally approved by the Wallington Local Governing Body.

Reviewed
To be reviewed

Sep 2026
Sep 2027

1. Aims of this procedure document

Wallington High School for Girls aims to encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. We will work together with all stakeholders in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality for all students. Our intention is to enable all students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Girls' Learning Trust Student Attendance Policy.

It is expected that all students aim for at least 97% attendance each year. At Wallington High School for Girls:

- 97-100% attendance is defined as **expected**
- 95 – 96% attendance is defined as **satisfactory**
- Below 95% but above 90% is defined as **a cause for concern**
- Below 90% is defined as **a serious cause for concern**

The school understands that there are exceptional circumstances when levels of attendance may fall below 97% or even 95% for reasons beyond the student or parents' control, however these are very rare.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The School

We encourage good attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- E-certificates awarded to all students whose attendance is 97% and above;
- rewards for students with 100% punctuality;
- school targets are set and individual targets are set where necessary;
- attendance information sent to parents/carers regularly to assist them in monitoring their child's attendance;
- regular promotion of excellent attendance in assemblies, the student bulletin, the 'Wallington Week' and at Parents' Evenings;
- termly analysis of attendance figures and trends for individuals, year groups and the whole school;
- termly reports to Governors;
- computerised registration system which allows every lesson to be monitored;
- an Attendance Officer for Secondary and Sixth Form dedicated to the administration of attendance including the follow-up of absence and lateness;
- contact with parents/carers on the first day of absence;
- a working partnership with the Borough's Schools Attendance Service and Education Welfare Officer;
- support for students and parents/carers where attendance and/or punctuality difficulties are emerging;
- attendance and punctuality as the responsibility of a member of the Senior Leadership Team who is also the Attendance Champion (Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Student Support and Behaviour). This person is Ms S Khan – skhan@wallingtongirls.org.uk

2.2 Students

Students will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time. They will attend all lessons punctually and will not leave the school without permission. They will follow the procedures outlined in their planners for any requests for absence or appointments during the school day.

2.3 Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance and informing school of the reason for any absence on the first morning of any absence as per the DfE guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2026).

Parents/carers can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record. Parents/carers play a very important role in ensuring good attendance records of their child. Below is a list of suggested strategies:

- encourage full attendance;
- stress the importance of full attendance to your child;
- do not allow your child to have time off for minor complaints or illnesses: if they are well enough to be up and about they are generally well enough to attend school;
- monitor your child's attendance report carefully;
- try to book any medical or dental appointments out of school hours or make them for the very end of the day;
- ensure your child is punctual to school;
- inform the school of any absence;
- take any family holidays in school holidays, not during term time;
- if your child seems unwilling to attend, contact the school as soon as possible: do not let your child stay at home as this could set a precedent for the future.

3. Process of recording attendance

Registration is completed in each lesson using our Management Information System.

The legally required morning and afternoon register is taken in the registration period at 8.25am and in Period 5 at 2.00pm. If a student in Years 7-11 arrives after the register closes at 8.25am, they should report to reception to sign in. The School's Attendance Officer will mark the student as late on the register (L) and record the reason for lateness. If a student in Sixth Form arrives after the register closes at 8.25am, they should report to reception and use their electronic entry card to tap in on the reception reader.

If a student registers after 9.00am then this will be recorded as an absence for the morning session (U code) and the parent will be required to provide an explanation for the absence. The attendance team records all absences in accordance with the Department for Education (DfE) national codes.

4. Process for recording student absence

The School's Attendance Officer (Years 7-11) or Sixth Form Administrator (Sixth Form) must be informed on the first day of absence before 8.45am via email from the parent/carers (sent from the same email address currently notified to us on our administrative system), and **every subsequent day** before 8.45am if the absence continues. If no contact is received by parents/carers, the School's Attendance Officer (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form Administrator (Sixth Form) will contact parents/carers of students with an unexplained absence on the first day of the absence by 9.30am. If there is no communication from parents/carers, then this will be automatically recorded as an unauthorised absence (O code).

If your child has to leave school for an appointment during the school day please email the school at least 48 hours (two school days) in advance and include "appointment" in the subject of the email. To ensure the safeguarding of all our students we are unable to let a student leave school without parent/carers consent in Years 7-11.

Please contact the School's Attendance Officer (Years 7-11) or Sixth Form Administrator (Sixth Form) using this email address – attendance@wallingtongirls.org.uk

Authorised Absence

The following absences may be treated as authorised by the school:

- Short-term sickness typically for up to three days, where the school is satisfied that the explanation is reasonable.
- Medical or dental appointments, where parents have been unable to arrange the appointment outside of school hours. Students should only be absent for the minimum time necessary to attend.
- Religious observance, for one day, where it is exclusively set apart by the religious body to which the family belongs (not the personal preference of the parent).
- Bereavement of a close family member, for a period of up to five school days, at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes, including Roma, Gypsy, Irish or Scottish Traveller, Showpeople, and Bargee communities, where the school is satisfied that the absence is for occupational purposes and arrangements for education have been discussed.
- Leave authorised under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher, including for example public performance licensing, participation in external exams, or attendance at a recognised educational opportunity.
- Funerals of close family members. This may include one day for travel, one day for the event itself, and one day for return travel or religious/cultural observance.
- Exclusion or suspension, where the student is not permitted to attend school for a fixed period.

Evidence for Authorisation

In order to authorise absence in certain circumstances the school may request further information from parents/carers. The school may ask for further evidence in the following circumstances:

- Illness lasting three or more consecutive days, or repeated illness across a half-term, where medical evidence may include a GP appointment confirmation, prescription, or a note from a healthcare professional.
- Illness before or after a school holiday, where medical evidence may be requested to verify that absence was genuine and not related to unauthorised term-time holiday.
- Late return from travel abroad, where the school may request evidence (e.g. flight documentation)

5. Requests for leave of absence

Requests for leave of absence are not generally granted. If there are very exceptional circumstances where parents/carers must request a leave of absence, they must do so by completing an Application for Student Leave Form and writing to the Headteacher, including relevant evidence e.g. medical certificate, letter from employers etc. It is expected that requests will be made at least **one month** in advance. Parents/carers should obtain an Application for Student Leave Form (see Appendix 2) from reception or from the school website. On receipt of the completed form, the Headteacher, in consultation with the School's Attendance Officer, will decide whether to authorise or not, and will write to parents/carers. Each request will be considered individually.

If the request is granted, the expected date of the student's return will be included in the letter and the absence will be recorded using the appropriate DfE attendance code. If unauthorised, the absence will be recorded as such, and the school may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice in accordance with local authority procedures.

6. Monitoring attendance and punctuality

Monitoring Attendance

When attendance data highlights issues with individual students' attendance immediate intervention is provided, targeted, monitored and evaluated by the Form Tutor and/or Head of Year. Below is the process the school employs to monitor and support students' attendance:

Years 7 to 11

Attendance Cause for Concern

- Form Tutors will contact parents when attendance falls below 95% - as directed by the Head of Year. The school will work closely in partnership with parents/carers to build strong relationships in order to support the young person. Heads of Year may ask parents to provide medical evidence in cases where the student has a persistent absence.

Stage 1

- Heads of Year will contact parents/carers when attendance falls below 90% and a Stage One Letter will be sent home.

Stage 2

- Should attendance continue to decline, then a Stage Two Letter will be sent home and a meeting arranged with parents/carers and the Head of Year. The school will work closely in partnership with parents and external agencies to address any barriers to attendance and or punctuality.

Stage 3

- If this support has not been effective or has not been engaged with the school will work with the Local Authority to put formal support in place in the form of a Stage Three Letter and an Attendance Support Plan. There will also be a meeting with parents/carers, the Head of Year/ Assistant Headteacher/ Education Welfare Officer, and parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice.

Sixth Form

An absolute minimum of 90% attendance for each subject is required by all students to guarantee entry to the relevant examinations. The school reserves the right not to enter students who fall below this level of attendance.

Attendance Cause for Concern

- Form Tutors will contact parents when attendance falls below 95% - as directed by the Head of Year. The school will work closely in partnership with parents/carers to build strong relationships in order to support the young person. Heads of Year may ask parents to provide medical evidence in cases where the student has a persistent absence.

Stage 1

- The Sixth Form Administrator or Assistant Head of Year will contact parents/carers when attendance falls below 92% and a Stage One Letter will be sent home and a phone call arranged with parents/carers.

Stage 2

- Should attendance continue to decline, then a Stage Two Letter will be sent home and a meeting arranged with parents/carers and the Head of Year/Student Support Officer. The school will work closely in partnership with parents and external agencies to address any in or out of school barriers to attendance.

Stage 3

- If attendance does not improve the Director of Sixth Form will seek to work with students and parents to help to remove barriers to school attendance. A Stage Three Letter will be issued during a parent meeting and an attendance contract will be implemented. Attendance below 90% for each subject may result in a student's withdrawal from exam entry.

Stage 4

- Where an attendance contract has not been successful a meeting will take place with the Deputy Head of School and Director of Sixth Form to discuss the student's place at the Sixth Form.

Statutory intervention

Once the school has exhausted all avenues of support and it is not working or being engaged with, the Headteacher will refer to the Local Authority for consideration of intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education. Within Sutton it has been agreed to use Penalty Notices in the following circumstances:

- 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a 10 school-week period, coded as G (holiday), N (reason not known), O (unauthorised), or U (late after register closes)
- Seen in public during the first five days of an exclusion without school permission
- Continued unauthorised absence during a Notice to Improve monitoring period
- Persistent lateness after registers have closed (10 sessions within a 6 school-week period)

As of August 2024, the penalty for each parent is £80 for each child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. A second Penalty Notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same student is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. Penalty Notices apply to pupils of statutory school age, which finishes on the last Friday in June of Year 11. Further information regarding a Penalty Notice can be found on the London Borough of Sutton Website: [Penalty Notices – Cognus](#)

What can I do if my child is starting to present with attendance difficulties?

These difficulties can present themselves in a number of different ways e.g. a reluctance to go to school, feigning illness, failure to attend school despite arriving to school, missing lessons whilst in school etc. If a problem seems to be emerging parents/carers should:

- talk to your child to try to ascertain if there are any problems or worries at school, on the journey to or from school or at home;
- contact the Form Tutor or Head of Year as soon as possible;
- work with the school and local authority to understand your child's barriers to attendance
- seek advice from the Borough Schools' Attendance Service (BSAS);
- refer to Sutton's Attendance Graduated Response (see Appendix 5);
- seek advice from appropriate websites such as Family Lives (formerly Parentline) – www.familylives.org.uk and Advisory Centre for Education - www.ace-ed.org.uk
- attend parent workshops run by the school.

Monitoring Punctuality

Below is the process the school employs to monitor and support students' punctuality for Secondary and Sixth Form:

If a student in Years 7-11 arrives after the register closes at 8.25am, they should report to reception to sign in and register. If a student in Sixth Form arrives after the register closes at 8.25am, they should report to reception and use their electronic entry card to tap in on the reception reader. The Attendance Officer will mark the student as late on the register (L) and record the reason for lateness. Unless there is an exceptional reason, the student will receive a negative point.

Before 9am:

- If a student is late 3 times within a half-term (roughly 6 weeks) they will receive a 60 mins detention on a Wednesday or a Friday
- If the student is late again within the half-term they will receive an automatic 60 mins detention, a late report and there will be a meeting with parents and the Head of Year

After 9am:

- If a student arrives to school after 9am they will receive a 60 mins detention on a Wednesday or a Friday
- If a student arrives to school after 9am 3 times within a half-term (roughly 6 weeks) they will receive a Headteacher detention, a late report and there will be a meeting with parents and the Head of Year

The student must not be late in the immediate 2 weeks after the student has been taken off report – this will be monitored by the Form Tutor and Head of Year. If there is no improvement in the number of lates to school the student will be placed on red report to an Assistant Headteacher. Parents/carers will be contacted by the Assistant Headteacher and a meeting will be arranged.

The school understands that many students travel by public transport and will take any known serious delays into consideration when reviewing a student's punctuality record.

Parents/ carers are reminded that it is part of the Home School Agreement that parents/carers "ensure your child attends school regularly (holidays in term time cannot be authorised)" and that they are on time.

Appendix 1

Sutton's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (2024) -

www.cognus.org.uk/services/attendance-support-team/attendance-support-for-professionals/attendance-support-in-schools/penalty-notices/

Wallington High School for Girls

STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES DURING TERM TIME

The Pupil Registration Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013:

Leave of absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. This is not an automatic right of parents/carers.

- Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, considering the circumstances for the request, the supporting evidence provided and the overall attendance of your child, their stage of education and progress and, where appropriate, internal and external examinations and assessments.
- Please do not book leave of absence until permission is given.
- If the absence is approved by the Headteacher you will be advised as to how many days the Headteacher has approved.
- If the school does not agree the absence and you take leave of absence without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may also lead to your child being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of a statutory action and a fine.

This form is to be completed by the parent/carer and sent to the Attendance Officer, **at least one month** before the proposed absence. Please allow 10 working days to receive a response regarding your request. Please send all forms to - attendance@wallingtongirls.org.uk

Absence from school is not allowed unless approval has been given in advance.

Name of Student:			
Tutor Group:		Number of days requested:	
Dates of absence:			
Reason of request: (Please attach any additional evidence you have e.g. from an organisation asking for participation in an event)			
Name of parent/carer:		Signed by parent/carer:	
Date form submitted:		Mobile phone number:	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

School checklist - To be completed by the Attendance Officer – once completed please send to the Headteacher.

Student name & tutor Group	
% attendance year to date	
% attendance in previous academic year	
Any attainment/progress concerns	
Any safeguarding concerns	
Previous leave of absence requested / taken	
Evidence provided confirming nature of exceptional circumstances	

Recommendation from Attendance Officer to Headteacher:	
I recommend: Authorise leave / do not authorise leave	
Reason for recommendation:	
Signed:	Date:

Headteacher's decision		
Authorise leave / Do not authorise leave	Number of days authorised:	Fine: Yes / No
Comments:		
Signed:		Date:

Attendance use only	
Attendance record updated on Arbor	
Form/evidence uploaded on CPOMS	
Email reply to parent/carer	
Holiday spreadsheet updated	

Appendix 3

DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2026) –

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4f9ec6a6586e258d371bd0/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2026.pdf

Appendix 4

DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026) –

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4cf903b7203c4c023fd2f3/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026_.pdf

Appendix 5

Sutton's Attendance Graduated Response (2024) –

<https://www.cognus.org.uk/services/attendance-support-team/attendance-graduated-response>

Sutton's Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy (2024) –
[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – Cognus](#)