



## **Proverbs 16:3 - 'Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed.'**

- *With regular and high levels of attendance and punctuality, pupils will be able to make excellent progress and achieve. This verse expresses commitment, determination and resilience to attend school every day and be punctual to all lessons.*

### **Rationale:**

High, regular levels of attendance and excellent punctuality support the ethos of this school. Partnership with parents/carers is essential in ensuring this aim is achieved and that the ethos is maintained. There is a strong link between good attendance and punctuality, and levels of progress and achievement.

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The 'otherwise' includes home education. The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations make provisions for the necessity of admission registers and attendance registers of pupils as well as the granting of leave of absence for pupils. Parents may not authorise absence; only headteachers or those authorised by the headteacher can do this.

Monitoring and controlling school attendance are a key part of Saint Cecilia's Church of England School objectives. We believe that:

- Responsibility for promoting school attendance is shared by everyone in the school.
- The attendance policy touches all aspects of the school's life, and relates directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Rigorous collection and analysis of data about attendance enables the school to check its progress against measurable outcomes.

Attendance at school is a vital part of a pupil's/student's education and has a heightened profile in this school with an Assistant Headteacher having responsibility for whole school attendance as well as oversight of the school's pupil welfare system.

Pupils are required by law to attend school until the end of year 11. However they must then, until the age of 18:

- Stay in full-time education at a school or college.
- Start a recognised apprenticeship or traineeship.
- Spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training.

### **Aims:**

The aims of the pupil attendance and absence policy are:

- To encourage pupils to attend school regularly and therefore be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
- To secure attendance at school unless absence is authorised.
- To identify problem areas that would explain non-attendance.

- To work together with the other agencies to maintain good attendance, securing possible help for pupils with attendance concerns.

## **Procedures:**

The school has implemented the following procedures:

- Publication to the parents of the arrangements for notifying absence and the school's policy towards authorised absence via the school's website.
- The governors, headteacher and members of staff will be kept aware of the school's policy on attendance and absence.
- A reward system for good attendance at school.
- A first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge.
- Attendance checks, scheduled or unscheduled, to monitor post-registration truancy.
- An Assistant Headteacher is responsible for attendance. They will also liaise with the Education Welfare Service and other Local Authority services on measures to be taken if a pupil appears to be missing from education.
- Registers will be marked accurately according to the DFE guidance document School attendance [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance) and in the register files.
- Attendance records are kept for every class from year 7 to 13 and all non-attendance checked against the daily register that will be taken at the beginning of the morning session and P5.
- Regular attendance checks will highlight any pupil/student whose attendance is below 90% and the parents will be informed of this and asked to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting with the Assistant Headteacher and or the Year Leader, the school Education Welfare Officer and on occasion, a School Nurse. Parents will be reminded of their obligations to ensure attendance and any possible support will be agreed. For any further occurrence, parents will be reminded of the legal action that can be taken and the fine that can be imposed – a referral will also be made to The Education Welfare Service.
- Family holidays must be requested at least a fortnight in advance, will be considered on an individual basis and will not normally be granted except in exceptional circumstances.
- Support from the EWS will also be sought for pupils who are persistently late – 10% lateness. FPN may be applied for if persistent lateness continues.
- For pupils who are persistently late, the school will amend the start time to 8.30 to ensure that the pupil attends Period 1. If lateness continues the school may isolate a pupil.

## **Partnership between School and Parents/Carers:**

In order to promote clear communications and strengthen the partnership with parents/carers, it is necessary to:

- Establish clear links between the home and the school
- Make clear to parents what they should do when their child is absent from school, encouraging prompt action by parents to contact the school
- Hold and maintain accurate and up to date information

- Establish with parents whether absences are authorised by the Headteacher or remain unauthorised
- Ensure that phone calls are made promptly by school staff to parents/carers when absences are unexplained or un-notified
- React quickly where a pattern of lateness or non-attendance is emerging

**Authorised absences include:**

- Illness or other unavoidable cause
- Emergency medical or dental treatment (where appointments cannot be made outside school time) – appointments should always be made outside of school hours unless as an emergency
- Religious observance
- Transport failure where travel to the school is not within walking distance
- Work placement, training placement or college placement
- Participation in a school-approved performance or sporting activity
- Education off-site approved by the school
- Exclusion
- With the school's approval, bereavement concerned with a close family member
- With the school's approval, a college or job interview

**Unauthorised absences include:**

- Any absence that cannot be justified. This may include an absence supported or condoned by a parent. Such absence is truancy.
- Un-notified absence from school
- Missing lessons, having registered

**Registration procedures:**

Pupils are registered at the start of every lesson. The official morning registration is taken at the beginning of Period 1 at 8.50am. The official afternoon registration is taken at the beginning of Period 5 at 1:50pm. Only pupils physically present may be registered. Where pupils are taken by other staff (e.g. for small group work, mentoring, etc.) the usual member of staff should be informed by the member of staff working with the pupil.

Staff must use the following codes when registering:

- / present
- N not present
- L late

Other codes should not be used unless a code has been entered in advance by Reception, e.g. I (illness), M (medical), etc., nor should pre-entered codes be overwritten.

If a pupil/student who has been marked N subsequently arrives at the lesson, the N code should be amended to L and the number of minutes late recorded.

If a member of staff is unable to take the register in SIMS for any reason, a paper register should be taken and passed to Reception as soon as possible, particularly if period 1 or 5. If there is an on-going problem with taking a register in SIMS, Gaia should be contacted to resolve any IT issue.

If a child is absent from a lesson with no known reason (e.g. peripatetic music lesson, etc.) but has been marked present for previous lessons, the teacher should call or e-mail a Pupil Support Manager to locate the absent child.

## Following-Up Absences:

Where no reason has been given for absence either before or on the day of the absence, the main office will attempt to contact parents/carers to determine the reason. If no reason is established after two weeks, the N ('No reason given') will be amended to O ('Unauthorised absence').

## Supporting attendance and/or punctuality:

Where a pupil/student builds up a pattern of absence that is unauthorised, unnotified or unjustified, this school is committed to working closely with parents/carers, mentors, teachers and external agencies to establish regular attendance. The Assistant Headteacher, in discussion with the child's mentor and/or Year Leader will agree the appropriate course of action to take.

The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance and Punctuality will meet with the Education Welfare Officer approximately once a month to discuss cases of poor attendance, referring cases as needed so that the EWO will become involved in order to support the parents/carers and pupils. The school will run termly School Attendance Panel meetings alongside the EWO and invite in families of pupils/students who have low attendance. The EWO and may take legal action where this is appropriate.

The school is required to return its PA (persistent absence) figure to the Local Authority.

## Family Holidays

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, as amended, state that schools do not have to agree to requests for family holidays. Absence during term time should not normally occur and each request for absence is looked at separately by the Headteacher, who will consider all the attendant circumstances. Only in exceptional circumstances will the school agree to an absence. **Term-time holidays will not normally be a circumstance considered to be exceptional.** The absence will be entered on the register as 'unauthorised' if a holiday is taken without the headteacher's permission or if it extends beyond an agreed period. The School follows the "Wandsworth Borough Council

PENALTY NOTICE CODE OF CONDUCT" that is attached to this policy. Penalty notices will be issued (£60, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days). If the fine is not paid, the parents may be prosecuted. If leave is taken without prior permission being sought or agreed, or if more than ten days' leave is taken, these days will be recorded as unauthorised absence (effectively truancy). The school has the right to involve the Education Welfare Officer if the pupil is of statutory school age.

Pupils who fail to return within ten days of any agreed date of an authorised absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Service, an outcome of which may be that the pupil is deleted from the roll, unless there is good reason for continued absence.

If a pupil is taken abroad to visit family and a date of return is not specified, the school will inform the Education Welfare Service who may instruct the school to remove the pupil from roll. Re-enrolment will not be automatic, since the parent has effectively removed the pupil from the school.

## Long-term absence resulting from physical or psychiatric illness:

Where there are medical reasons for a pupil/student failing to attend school for a long period of time (exceeding 15 days of convalescence), the Local Authority (LA) has a duty to provide some educational support. Medical evidence stating that a pupil is unfit to attend school must be supplied to the school to enable support from the LA to be sought. This may take place at home

where a parent/carer is present or in a public place or educational premises by arrangement. If a pupil is in hospital for a prolonged period, tuition may be provided on the ward if the pupil is fit enough for this.

### **Truancy and/or lateness:**

Pupils who miss lessons with no good reason are considered to be truanting. They are required to make up the time and work that they have missed in their own time.

### **Governors:**

Governors have a responsibility to oversee the school policy relating to attendance and recommend changes, and to receive regular up-dates on pupil attendance. The Headteacher is required to report annually on the effectiveness of the Policy.

### **Punctuality to school:**

Pupils/students are expected to arrive in good time to school in order for the first lesson to start promptly at 8.50am. The school gates are locked at 8.45 am every morning and pupils/students arriving after this time must enter via Reception and their names recorded by a PSM. Names of late pupils are passed to Year Leaders and a late detention set.

### **Punctuality to lessons:**

Pupils/students are expected to move promptly between lessons and to lessons after breaks. A reasonable length of time should be given by teachers to allow for movement around the school but excessive lateness should be marked in the registers as L and the number of minutes late recorded. Pupils/students should be sanctioned with a detention as set out in the [Behaviour Policy](#).

For the specifics of escalations following persistent lateness please see the behaviour policy.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>
Review and Approve	Curriculum & Standards Committee	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
Next Review	Curriculum & Standards Committee	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

# APPENDICES 1: Wandsworth Borough Council

## PENALTY NOTICE CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this code of conduct is to ensure that the powers are applied consistently and fairly across the Wandsworth area and that suitable arrangements are put in place for the administration of the scheme.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct is agreed between:
- Wandsworth Borough Council (The Local Authority)
  - Governing Bodies and Headteachers of Wandsworth Schools
  - The Wandsworth Division of the Metropolitan Police Service
  - The Integrated Youth Service
- in accordance with The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 sections 12 to 14.

### 2. LEGISLATION

- 2.1 Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 as inserted by The Anti- Social Behaviour Act 2003 section 23(1) enables authorised personnel to issue penalty notices to the parents of absent or truanting pupils. It enables the parent concerned to avoid liability for conviction for an offence under s444 (1) by paying to the local authority a penalty defined in the notice.

### 3. CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE A PENALTY NOTICE MAY BE ISSUED

- 3.1 The normal response to a first offence should be a warning rather than a penalty. However, the Authorised Officer [**see (4) (i) below**] has the discretion to issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence in exceptional circumstances. For instance:
- (a) where the unauthorised absence was for an extended period and allowed by the parent; or
  - (b) where the parent has chosen to take their child on unauthorised holiday during term time; or
  - (c) where a parent has condoned unauthorised absence identified in the course of a truancy sweep.
- 3.1 The main consideration for issuing a penalty notice will be whether it is an effective mechanism in getting the pupil who is truanting back into school or alternative education provision.
- 3.2 Where the school or alternative education provider has previously referred the pupil to the Education Welfare Service and casework is in progress (**for exceptions see para: 3.1 above**). The Education Welfare Service letter as to court proceedings will need to be amended to include reference to Penalty Notices.
- 3.3 A Penalty Notice is a suitable primary intervention in circumstances where the parent is judged capable of securing their child's regular attendance, but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so. For example, where the parent has failed to engage with any voluntary or supportive measures proposed. It will be particularly useful as a sanction at an early stage before attendance problems become entrenched and where the Local Authority considers that a prosecution would be too heavy-handed. A Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent in respect of each of their children who meet the criteria set out in this section.

- 3.4 Where there is an issue as to whether authorisation was sought by the parents, the school or education provider will be required to provide clear written evidence that the parents were provided notice in advance of the school's refusal to authorise the request for absence and, if not complied with, a penalty notice might be issued.
- i. Where a child's attendance falls below **80% in a given period (6 weeks is proposed)** without reasonable justification.
  - ii. Where a child's attendance falls **below 90% in a given period (6 weeks is proposed)** without reasonable justification and a specific issue is involved e.g. unauthorised term-time holiday or stopped by a truancy patrol.
  - iii. Where Parenting Contracts or Orders have been unsuccessful or not complied with.
  - iv. Where parents are unwilling to sign a contract.
  - ix. The Education Welfare Service will determine whether a notice should be issued following receipt of a completed data entry form. The form will contain a section where the circumstances of the offence and the reasons for requesting a notice can be set out.
  - x. There is no right of appeal [but see 4 below]
- 3.5 The Authority must have regard to the ability of the **parent/carer** to pay and other factors. Multiple Penalty Notices may be issued by agreement with its partners, but generally no more than three Penalty Notices per child will be issued during each school year.

#### **4. Withdrawal of Penalty Notice**

- 4.1 A penalty notice can only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:
- i. where it ought not to have been issued, i.e. it was issued outside the terms of the code of conduct or where no offence has been committed; or
  - ii. where it has been issued to the wrong person; or
  - iii. the penalty has not been paid in full before the expiry of the period for payment but it is not appropriate to prosecute the recipient for the offence in connection with which the notice was issued.
- 4.2 Where a penalty notice has been withdrawn in accordance with the above:
- iv. notice of the withdrawal shall be given to the recipient;
  - v. except where the notice is withdrawn under point (iii) above, any amount paid by way of penalty in pursuance of that notice shall be repaid to the person who paid it; and
  - vi. no proceedings shall be continued or instituted against the recipient for the offence in connection with which the withdrawn notice was issued or for an offence under S.444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996 arising out of the same circumstances.

#### **5. Arrangements for co-ordination between Wandsworth Local Authority, Neighbouring Local Authorities where appropriate and the Police.**

- 5.1 The Authorised Officer for the purpose of section 444A(1) of the Education Act 1996 and section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, shall be the Education Welfare Service Courts Officer or, in their absence, the Head of Education and Inclusion Service, on behalf of the Director of Education and Social Services.
- 5.2 Wandsworth Education Welfare Service will draft a protocol for cross-borough co-ordination covering both penalty notices and parenting contracts/orders, consult our neighbouring Local Authorities and share the information with our partners.
- 5.3 A steering group will be constituted to monitor the operation of the regulations and to modify and adapt the code of conduct in the light of experience. Representatives of

Headteachers, Governors, the Police and the Integrated Youth Service will be invited to participate.

- 5.4 The Head of Education Inclusion Service will negotiate appropriate arrangements for revenue collection with another part of the Local Authority already engaged in such activities.
- 5.5 All schools should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance, which should be set out in an attendance policy covering Penalty Notices and Parenting Contracts (see DfE Guidance). The Education Welfare Service will assist schools with this process where required.



Penalty Notice

S.444A EDUCATION ACT 1996

Please read the notes overleaf carefully.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence under s.444 (1) Education Act 1996.

To: Ms Another Example
Of: 2 Sample Drive, Nowhere, London, SW18 2BB ID Number 2

You are a parent of Ann Example who is a 1registered pupil at Wishbone Primary School.

Between Date and Date Ann failed to 2attend regularly at the school.

This notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted for the offence given above. The amount of the penalty is £60. If you pay the penalty you will discharge any liability for the offence detailed above.

Payment should be made within 21 days. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty is doubled to £120. Payment should be made to Wandsworth Borough Council and can be made in person at Wandsworth Town Hall or by posting this notice, with a cheque or postal order made payable to Wandsworth Borough Council, to:

Education Welfare Service,
Wandsworth Council,
TheTown Hall,
Wandsworth High Street,
London SW18 2PU

If payment is received after 28 days, or you do not pay the penalty, you may be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually and could be subject to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months in prison.

Issued by: Name of Officer (Senior Welfare Education Officer – Legal Proceedings)

Signature: .....Date of Issue: February 10, 2020

Please complete the following and return this notice with your payment to the address given above:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

I attach payment in the sum of £60.00 (sixty pounds)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTES

### Code of conduct

This notice is issued in accordance with a local Code of Conduct drawn up by Wandsworth Local Authority.

Any questions or correspondence about the notice or the code should be addressed to Education Welfare Service, Wandsworth Borough Council, The Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU Tel: 020 8871 8306

### Amount of penalty.

The amount of the penalty is as follows:

When paid	Penalty
Within 21 days	£60
Within 28 days	£120

### Right of Appeal.

There is no right of appeal.

### Withdrawal.

Wandsworth Local Authority may withdraw this notice if it is shown that it should not have been issued to you. The Local Authority (LA) may also consider withdrawing it if you do not or cannot pay the amount shown by the due date but you must contact the LA to ask for it to be withdrawn. The LA will consider your request and may decide to withdraw the notice or to prosecute you for the offence that your child has failed to attend school regularly.

### Payment.

You should complete the notice overleaf and either send it with your payment or deliver it to the LA at the address given between 9.00am and 4.30pm.

### Prosecution.

If you do not pay the penalty, and the notice is not withdrawn, you will be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. You will receive a separate summons for this which will give you notice of the time and date of the court hearing. You will be able to defend yourself and you would be advised to seek legal representation; in some circumstances you may be entitled to legal aid.

<sup>1</sup> Compulsory school age is defined as beginning from the start of the term commencing on or after the child's fifth birthday. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

<sup>2</sup> Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. The register must show whether any absence is authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.

<sup>3</sup> Schools, not parents, authorise absence. Schools must adhere to DfE Guidelines in authorising absence. Schools should be consistent in applying the same rules in authorising absence.

Wandsworth Borough Council  
Education Welfare Service

**Penalty Notice Referral Form**

School / Police / EWO <i>please delete two</i>	Name of Referrer	
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Establishment <i>e.g. school name / police station</i>	
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Full Name of Child		
<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>

Full Name of Mother	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>
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Full Name of Father	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>
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Address	Postcode	
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Period of absence for which a Penalty Notice is requested	<i>From (Monday Date)</i>	<i>To (Friday Date)</i>
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Specific reasons for believing a Penalty Notice is appropriate:

I certify that during the period indicated above, the school was open for \_\_\_\_ sessions during which time the named pupil attended for \_\_\_\_ sessions. \_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_ absences were **unauthorised** by the school.

Name:.....Signature:.....

Position:.....Date:.....

# Appendix 1.3

